WIOA STATE PLAN FOR THE STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA FY-2018

CONTENTS

WIOA State Plan for the State of West Virginia FY-2018 1
Overview 3
Options for Submitting a State Plan 3
How State Plan Requirements Are Organized 4
I. WIOA State Plan Type 7
Combined Plan partner program(s) 7
II. Strategic Elements 8
a. Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis 8
b. State Strategic Vision and Goals 55
c. State Strategy 64
III. Operational Planning Elements 83
A. State Strategy Implementation 83
b. State Operating Systems and Policies 109
IV. Coordination with State Plan Programs 139
V. Common Assurances (for all core programs) 140
VI. Program-Specific Requirements for Core Programs 142
Program-Specific Requirements for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities under Title I-B 142
Program-Specific Requirements for Wagner-Peyser Program (Employment Services) 178
Program-Specific Requirements for Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs 190
Program-Specific Requirements for Vocational Rehabilitation 214
VII. Program-Specific Requirements For Combined State Plan Partner Programs 346
Appendix 1. Performance Goals for the Core Programs 347
Table 1. Employment (Second Quarter after Exit) 348
Table 2. Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit) 349
Table 3. Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit) 349
Table 4. Credential Attainment Rate 350
Table 5. Measureable Skill Gains 351
Table 6. Effectiveness in Serving Employers 352
Table 7. Additional Indicators of Performance 352
Appendix 2. Other State Attachments (Optional) 353

OVERVIEW

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

OPTIONS FOR SUBMITTING A STATE PLAN

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

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

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

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

---

* States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) and 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 that are included would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

HOW STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS ARE ORGANIZED

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

- The **Strategic Planning Elements** section includes analyses of the State's economic conditions, workforce characteristics, and workforce development activities. These analyses drive the required vision and goals for the State's workforce development system and alignment strategies for workforce development programs to support economic growth.
- The **Operational Planning Elements** section identifies the State's efforts to support the State's strategic vision and goals as identified in the Strategic Planning Elements section. This section ensures that the State has the necessary infrastructure, policies, and activities to meet its strategic goals, implement its alignment strategy, and support ongoing program development and coordination. Operational planning elements include:

- State Strategy Implementation,
- State Operating Systems and Policies,
- Assurances, and
- Program-Specific Requirements for the Core Programs, and
- Program-Specific Requirements for the Combined State Plan partner programs. (These requirements are available in a separate supplemental document, Supplement to the Workforce and Innovation Act (WIOA) Unified and Combined State Plan Requirements. The Departments are not seeking comments on these particular requirements).

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

_____

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

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

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

• The Operational Planning Elements section identifies the State's efforts to support the State's strategic vision and goals as identified in the Strategic Planning Elements section. This section ensures that the State has the necessary infrastructure, policies, and activities to meet its strategic goals, implement its alignment strategy, and support ongoing program development and coordination. Operational planning elements include:

State Strategy Implementation,

• State Operating Systems and Policies,

• Assurances,

• Program—Specific Requirements for the Core Programs, and

• Program—Specific Requirements for the Combined State Plan partner programs. (These requirements are available in a separate supplemental document,

Supplement to the Workforce 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.

While discussion of and strategies for every target population are not expected, States must address as many as are applicable to their State's population and look beyond strategies for the general population.

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

I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE

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

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

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

COMBINED PLAN PARTNER PROGRAM(S)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

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

A. ECONOMIC, WORKFORCE, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

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

1. ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

A. ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

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

I. EXISTING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS

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

II. EMERGING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATION

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

III. EMPLOYERS' EMPLOYMENT NEEDS

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

West Virginia's economy can be divided into 11 major sectors: mining and logging; construction; manufacturing; trade, transportation and utilities; information; financial activities; professional and business services; educational and health services; leisure and hospitality; other services; and total government. Between 2014 and 2024, many of these sectors will see strong employment declines while others will experience moderate growth.

All industries of the mining and logging sector are forecasting declines, with the most notable employment declines expected in Animal Production, Forestry and Logging, and Mining (except oil and gas).

All industries of the construction sector are forecasting slight declines.

Employment in manufacturing industries in the state are expected to continue declining through 2024, with the most considerable losses in Beverage and Tobacco Product Manufacturing. However,

three industries, Wood Product Manufacturing, Non-metallic Mineral Product Manufacturing, and Miscellaneous Manufacturing are all anticipating slight employment growth through 2024.

The major sector of trade, transportation and utilities appears a mixed bag of employment growth and decline. Growth is anticipated in Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers, Electronics and Appliance Stores, Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers, Health and Personal Care Stores, Transportation and Warehousing, Air Transportation, Support Activities for Transportation, Couriers and Messengers, Warehousing and Storage. The most notable employment decline in this industry is expected in Food and Beverage Stores.

The information sector should see employment growth in both Motion Picture and Sound Recording Industries and Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services. Employment declines are expected in Publishing Industries (except internet), Broadcasting (except internet), Telecommunications, and Other Information Services.

All industries within the financial services sector are forecasting declines.

The professional and business services sector should see steady growth through 2024. Industries within the sector expecting growth include Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; Administrative Support and Support Services, Waste Management and Remediation Services.

The educational and health services sector overall will see growth through 2024, with most employment growth in Ambulatory Health Care Services, followed by Health Care and Social Assistance. West Virginia's aging population as well as the opioid epidemic solidify the need for these services. Employment in Educational Services is forecasting a slight decline.

The leisure and hospitality sector anticipates minimal growth in Performing Arts, Spectator Sports, and Related Industries; Museums, Historical Sites, and Similar Institution; and Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries. Accommodation and Food Services, Accommodation including Hotels and Motels, and Food Services and Drinking Places should see a decline through 2024.

The other services sector should see growth in Personal and Laundry Services. Repair and Maintenance; Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional and Similar Organizations; and Private Households should expect minor declines.

Employment decline is expected in all major sectors of government, Federal, State and Local, through 2024.

The Division of Research, Information and Analysis of WorkForce West Virginia produces both short-term and long-term occupational and industry projections. Short-term projections are produced annually, and long-term projections are produced biennially.

Figure 1: WIOA Region 1 Industry Projections 2014-2024 (Contains top five growing and declining industries by Annual Growth Rate.)

WIOA Region 1 Industry Employment Projections 2014-2024				
Industry Title	Estimated 2014 Employment	Projected 2024 Employment	Annual Growth Rate	Numeric Change
Growing Industries				
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	3,717	4,189	**1.2**	472
Couriers and Messengers	316	353	**1.1**	37
Hospitals	6,395	6,747	**0.5**	352
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	2,863	2,935	**0.3**	72
Personal and Laundry Services	602	617	**0.3**	15
Declining Industries				
Mining (except Oil and Gas)	5,813	4,751	**-2**	-1,062
Food and Beverage Stores	2,327	1,956	**-1.7**	-371
Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing	329	298	**-1**	-31
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	466	433	**-0.7**	-33
Machinery Manufacturing	718	693	**-0.4**	-25

Growing Industries in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Region 1 are scattered throughout various employment categories that fall within the Service-Providing Sector. The health services sector contains the greatest numeric growth of the industries on the list including Nursing and Residential Care Facilities; and Hospitals. Other growing industries are found throughout various sectors including Couriers and Messengers; Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; and Personal and Laundry Services. The greatest declines in WIOA Region 1 are found in the mining (except oil and gas) sector, and Food and Beverage Stores.

Figure 2: WIOA Region 2 Industry Projections 2014-2024. (Contains top five growing and declining industries by Annual Growth Rate.)

WIOA Region 2 Industry Employment Projections 2014-2024				
Industry Title	Estimated 2014 Employment	Projected 2024 Employment	Annual Growth Rate	Numeric Change
Growing Industries				
Ambulatory Health Care Services	7,104	8,238	**1.5**	1,134
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	2,707	3,051	**1.2**	344
Electronics and Appliance Stores	313	330	**0.5**	17
Warehousing and Storage	464	482	**0.4**	18
Crop Production	85	88	**0.4**	3
Declining Industries				
Mining (except Oil and Gas)	5,271	3,826	**-3.2**	-1,445
Food and Beverage Stores	1,828	1,536	**-1.7**	-292
Machinery Manufacturing	545	526	**-0.4**	-19
Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component Manufacturing	275	266	**-0.3**	-9

Growing Industries in WIOA Region 2 are scattered throughout various economic sectors with the greatest increase within Service-Providing industries. Both Ambulatory Health Care Services and Nursing and Residential Care Facilities are projected to gain employment through 2024. Slight increases in employment are projected for Amusement, Gambling and Recreational Industries; Personal and Laundry Services; Electronics and Appliance Stores; and Warehousing and Storage. More than two-thirds of the declining industries in WIOA Region 2 are found among the Goods-

Providing sectors, with the greatest loss in Mining (except oil and gas), and Food and Beverage Stores.

Figure 3: WIOA Region 3 Industry Projections 2014-2024. (Contains top five growing and declining industries by Annual Growth Rate.)

WIOA Region 3 Industry Employment Projections 2014-2024

Industry Title	Estimated 2014 Employment	Projected 2024 Employment	Annual Growth Rate	Numeric Change
Growing Industries				
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	1,794	2,022	**1.2**	228
Waste Management and Remediation Service	170	190	**1.1**	20
Electronics and Appliance Stores	324	342	**0.5**	18
Hospitals	8,205	8,657	**0.5**	452
Administrative and Support Services	6,255	6,516	**0.4**	261
Declining Industries				
Broadcasting (except Internet)	312	296	**-0.5**	-16
Machinery Manufacturing	130	125	**-0.4**	-5
Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	803	787	**-0.2**	-16
Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores	948	935	**-0.1**	-13
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	227	225	**-0.1**	-2

All growing Industries within WIOA Region 3 are found in the Service-Providing Sector. Nursing and Residential Care Facilities; Hospitals, and Administrative and Support Services are projected to have the greatest growth. Modest declines in WIOA Region 3 are scattered throughout various economic sectors.

Figure 4: WIOA Region 4 Industry Projections 2014-2024. (Contains top five growing and declining industries by Annual Growth Rate.)

WIOA Region 4 industry Employment Projections 2014-2024				
Industry Title	Estimated 2014 Employment	Projected 2024 Employment	Annual Growth Rate	Numeric Change
Growing Industries				
Waste Management and Remediation Service	504	563	**1.1**	59
Electronics and Appliance Stores	158	167	**0.6**	9
Administrative and Support Services	2,107	2,195	**0.4**	88
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,338	1,372	**0.3**	34
Support Activities for Transportation	167	170	**0.2**	3
Declining Industries				
Food and Beverage Stores	1,016	854	**-1.7**	-162
Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores	263	257	**-0.2**	-6
Nonstore Retailers	267	261	**-0.2**	-6
Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	383	376	**-0.2**	-7
Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	930	921	**-0.1**	-9

Growing Industries in WIOA Region 4 are all found in the Service-Providing Sector and include Waste Management and Remediation Services; Administrative and Support Services; and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services. Industry declines are found mostly in the Service-Providing sector, with the greatest decline in Food and Beverage Stores.

Figure 5: WIOA Region 5 Industry Projections 2014-2024. (Contains top five growing and declining industries by Annual Growth Rate.)

WIOA Region 5 Industry Employment Projections 2014-2024				
Industry Title	**Estimated 2014 Employment**	**Projected 2024 Employment**	**Annual Growth Rate**	**Numeric Change**
Growing Industries				
Social Assistance	1,397	1,596	**1.3**	199
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	2,452	2,764	**1.2**	312
Electronics and Appliance Stores	457	482	**0.5**	25
Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries	927	947	**0.2**	20
Support Activities for Transportation	111	113	**0.2**	2
Declining Industries				
Credit Intermediation and Related Activities	1,303	1,275	**-0.2**	-28
Utilities	561	550	**-0.2**	-11
Telecommunications	128	127	**-0.1**	-1
Private Households	215	214	**-0.1**	-1
Specialty Trade Contractors	1,406	1,401	**0**	-5

Top growing industries in WIOA Region 5 are health-care related, with the most growth in Social Assistance and Nursing and Residential Care Facilities. Declining industries are scattered throughout the employment sectors with only slight losses through 2024.

Figure 6: WIOA Region 6 Industry Projections 2014-2024. (Contains top five growing and declining industries by Annual Growth Rate.)

WIOA Region 6 Industry Employment Projections 2014-2024				
Industry Title	**Estimated 2014 Employment**	**Projected 2024 Employment**	**Annual Growth Rate**	**Numeric Change**
Growing Industries				
Ambulatory Health Care Services	8,247	9,563	**1.5**	1,316
Social Assistance	4,122	4,711	**1.3**	589
Waste Management and Remediation Service	620	693	**1.1**	73
Electronics and Appliance Stores	369	390	**0.6**	21
Administrative and Support Services	4,393	4,576	**0.4**	183
Declining Industries				
Machinery Manufacturing	265	256	**-0.3**	-9
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1,629	1,584	**-0.3**	-45
Primary Metal Manufacturing	439	428	**-0.3**	-11
Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation	85	83	**-0.2**	-2
Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores	484	474	**-0.2**	-10

The Industries in WIOA Region 6 projecting the greatest growth are found within the Service-Providing Sector. Health- care related industries including Ambulatory Health Care Services; and Social Assistance make up the greatest numeric change in employment in the region. Some decline is expected in the manufacturing sector; however, the greatest numeric decline is expected in Management of Companies and Enterprises.

Figure 7: WIOA Region 7 Industry Projections 2014-2024. (Contains top five growing and declining industries by Annual Growth Rate.)

WIOA Region 7 Industry Employment Projections 2014-2024				
Industry Title	**Estimated 2014 Employment**	**Projected 2024 Employment**	**Annual Growth Rate**	**Numeric Change**
Growing Industries				
Social Assistance	1,829	2,090	**1.3**	261
Electronics and Appliance Stores	195	206	**0.6**	11
Crop Production	244	253	**0.4**	9
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,904	1,952	**0.3**	48
Health and Personal Care Stores	615	626	**0.2**	11
Declining Industries				
Mining (except Oil and Gas)	287	225	**-2.4**	-62
Food and Beverage Stores	1,983	1,667	**-1.7**	-316
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	312	290	**-0.7**	-22
Credit Intermediation and Related Activities	1,193	1,167	**-0.2**	-26
Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	518	508	**-0.2**	-10

All Industry growth in WIOA Region 7 through 2024 is found in the Service-Providing Sector, with the greatest numeric growth occurring in Social Assistance. Declining industries in the region are mostly found in the Service-Providing sector, including Food and Beverage Stores, with one exception being Mining (except oil and gas).

West Virginia's economy can be divided into 11 major sectors: mining and logging; construction; manufacturing; trade, transportation and utilities; information; financial activities; professional and business services; educational and health services; leisure and hospitality; other services; and total

government. Between 2014 and 2024, many of these sectors will see strong employment declines while others will experience intense growth.

All industries of the mining and logging sector are forecasting declines, with the most notable employment declines expected in Animal Production, Forestry and Logging, and Mining (except oil and gas).

All industries of the construction sector are forecasting slight declines. Employment in manufacturing industries in the state are expected to continue declining through 2024, with the most considerable losses in Beverage and Tobacco Product Manufacturing. However, three industries, Wood Product Manufacturing, Non-metallic Mineral Product Manufacturing, and Miscellaneous Manufacturing are all anticipating slight employment growth through 2024.

The major sector of trade, transportation and utilities appears a mixed bag of employment growth and decline. Growth is anticipated in Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers, Electronics and Appliance Stores, Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers, Health and Personal Care Stores, Transportation and Warehousing, Air Transportation, Support Activities for Transportation, Couriers and Messengers, Warehousing and Storage. The most notable employment decline in this industry is expected in Food and Beverage Stores.

The information sector should see employment growth in both Motion Picture and Sound Recording Industries and Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services. Employment declines are expected in Publishing Industries (except internet), Broadcasting (except internet), Telecommunications, and Other Information Services.

All industries within the financial services sector are forecasting declines.

The professional and business services sector should see steady growth through 2024. Industries within the sector expecting growth include Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; Administrative Support and Support Services, Waste Management and Remediation Services.

The educational and health services sector overall will see growth through 2024, with most employment growth in Ambulatory Health Care Services, followed by Health Care and Social Assistance. West Virginia's aging population as well as the opioid epidemic solidify the need for these services. Employment in Educational Services is forecasting a slight decline.

The leisure and hospitality sector expects minimal growth in Performing Arts, Spectator Sports, and Related Industries; Museums, Historical Sites, and Similar Institution; and Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries. Accommodation and Food Services, Accommodation including Hotels and Motels, and Food Services and Drinking Places should see a decline through 2024.

The other services sector should see growth in Personal and Laundry Services. Repair and Maintenance; Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional and Similar Organizations; and Private Households should expect minor declines.

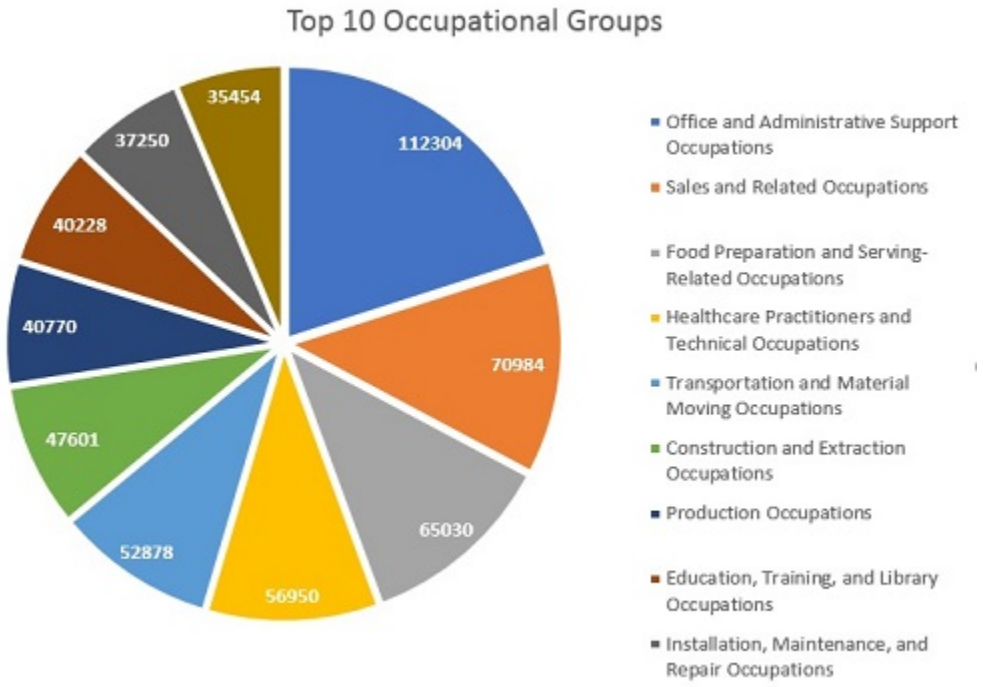
Employment decline is expected in all the major sectors of government, Federal, State and Local through 2024.

Occupational Demand 2014-2016

Many outside of our state erroneously believe that most West Virginia workers are employed in the coal-mining industry, but this is hardly the case. Coal mining and other extraction occupations make up only a small part of the entire labor force. As a matter of fact, Construction and Extraction

Occupations rank sixth among the top ten employment groups in 2016. Figure 1 shows that the largest employment group is Office and Administrative Support Occupations (112,304). This is followed by Sales and related Occupations (70,984), Food Preparation and Serving-Related Occupations (65,030), Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations (56,950), and Transportation and Material Moving Occupations (52,878) rounding out the top five.

Figure 8: Pie Chart of Top 10 Occupational Groups 2014-2016. (Pie chart is divided into ten sections and contains employment numbers for these largest occupational groups.)

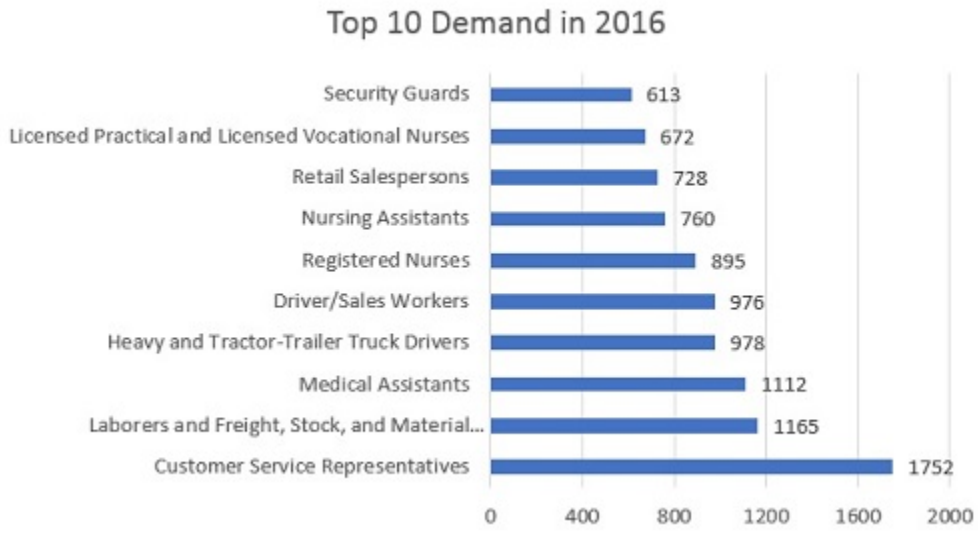


The years 2014 through 2016 have seen high demand for Office and Administrative Support Occupations. Customer Service Representatives and Production, Planning, and Expediting Clerks have ranked high among In-Demand occupations for West Virginia employers. Additional occupation groups ranking high on the list include Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations, containing Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses, and Transportation and Material Moving Occupations such as Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers; Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand; and Drivers/Sales Workers.

Figure 9: Occupational Groups with Highest Job Demand 2014-2016. (Bar graph reflecting demand for workers within Occupational Groups for the three-year period of 2014-2015-2016.)

Within the last three years (2014-2016), Office and Administrative Support, Transportation and Material Moving, and Healthcare Practitioners and Technical are the occupational groups with the highest demand. However, if including Healthcare Support with Healthcare Practitioners and Technical, healthcare-related occupations rank first with the most job openings in West Virginia during this three-year period.

Figure 10: Top 10 Demand Occupations in 2016. (Bar graph reflects the top 10 occupations requested by employers through WorkForce West Virginia in 2016.)



Breaking down the data into greater detail, Customer Service Representatives are in greatest demand currently, with 1,752 openings in 2016, followed by Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers (1,165); Medical Assistants (1,112), Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (978); and Driver/Sales Workers (976). Rounding out the top ten are Registered Nurses (895), Nursing Assistants (760), Retail salespersons (728), Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses (672), and Security Guards (613).

Figure 11: Job Openings by Occupation Group 2014-2016. (Table shows 22 Occupational Groups and the number of job openings within these groups for the years 2014-2015-2016.)

I. Job Openings by Occupational Group 2014-2016			
Occupation Group	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**
Transportation & Material Moving	4,344	5,171	4,166
Office & Administrative Support	7,027	5,652	4,052
Sales & Related	2,853	2,665	2,695
Healthcare Support	1,877	2,593	2,638
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	2,833	4,994	2,568
Construction & Extraction	3,763	2,626	2,196
Production	2,781	1,939	1,784
Building & Ground Cleaning & Maintenance	1,766	2,076	1,431
Management	1,612	2,208	1,398
Food Preparation & Serving	1,556	2,137	1,335
Protective Service	3,196	2,214	981
Business & Financial Operations	980	1,041	981
Installation, Maintenance, & Repair	1,202	1,289	946
Personal Care & Service	591	831	853
Computer & Mathematical	592	1,128	672
Community & Social Service	513	625	647
Architecture & Engineering	533	537	525
Life, Physical & Social Science	388	461	479
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	531	403	436
Education, Training, & Library	250	313	327
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, & Media	334	277	261
Legal	54	153	63

Occupations in demand through the year 2024 are scattered throughout various occupational clusters. Sales and Related Occupations, Food Preparation and Serving-Related Occupations, and Office and Administrative Support Occupations make up over one-half of the top ten occupations by total annual openings. These clusters include such occupations as Cashiers; Retail salespersons; Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers; Waiters and Waitresses; Office Clerks, General; and Customer Service Representatives.

Figure 12: Annual Openings by Occupation 2014-2024. Table displays ten occupations with a high number of Total Annual Openings between 2014 and 2024. Includes Estimated and Projected Employment.)

Annual Openings by Occupation Projected 2014-2024			
Occupation	**Estimated Employment**	**Projected Employment**	**Total Annual Openings**
Cashiers	22,079	20,714	939
Retail Salespersons	23,422	23,382	812
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	21,509	22,434	787
Registered Nurses	21,324	23,090	680
Office Clerks, General	31,111	29,414	671
Waiters and Waitresses	11,805	11,286	568
Personal Care Aides	14,081	17,771	483
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	12,251	12,335	373
General and Operations Managers	12,933	13,070	341
Customer Service Representatives	11,030	11,653	334

Nearly all the top ten occupations ranked by annual growth rate are contained within four occupational clusters: Computer and Mathematical Occupations; Education, Training, and Library Occupations; Healthcare Support Occupations; and Personal care and Service Occupations. These clusters include such occupations as Occupational Therapy Assistants; Home Health Aides; Statisticians; Information Security Analysts; Personal Care Aides; Skincare Specialists; Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary; and Nursing Instructors and Teachers, Postsecondary.

Figure 13: Annual Job Growth Rate for Select Occupations 2014-2024. (Table contains top ten occupations by Annual Growth rate for the years 2014-2024.)

Annual Job Growth Rate for Select Occupations 2014-2024		
Occupation	**Annual Growth Openings**	**Annual Growth Rate**
Occupational Therapy Assistants	8	2.9
Home Health Aides	133	2.6
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	16	2.6
Statisticians	5	2.4
Personal Care Aides	369	2.4
Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary	35	2.2
Skincare Specialists	1	2.2
Information Security Analysts	4	2.2
Nursing Instructors and Teachers, Postsecondary	6	2.1
Meeting, Convention, and Event Planners	9	2.1

In general, employers assess employees based on three categories: Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.

A. Knowledge

With fast growing technology and globalized trends dominating the workplace, knowledge is imperative. According to the late management guru Peter Drucker, "Today, knowledge has power. It controls access to opportunity and advancement." It is always a basic need for everyone. If someone has a better knowledge base, he or she will acquire confidence and work more effectively. That's why employers prefer their employees to be knowledgeable in order to perform a job properly. Employers are also willing to send employees to advanced training classes, because "An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest" (Benjamin Franklin).

Table 1: Model Knowledge, Skills, & Ability for Registered Nurse (Table 1 shows the top Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities needed for Registered Nurses.)

KNOWLEDGE	SKILLS	ABILITIES
• Health • Medicine & dentistry • Therapy & counseling • Business • Customer Service • Math & Science • Psychology • Arithmetic, algebra, geometry, calculus • Arts & Humanities • English language	• Basic Skills • Listening to others, not interupting, and asking good questions • Talking to others • Social • Understanding people's reactions • Looking for ways to help people • Problem Solving • Noticing a problem and figuring out the best way to slove it	• Verbal • Communicate by speaking • Listen & understand what people say • Ideas and Logic • Notice when problem happens • Make a general rules from detailed information • Attention • Do two or more thing att the same time • Focus to do something without distracted • Visual Understanding • Quickly compare groups of letters, numbers, pictures, or other things

With the intensive growth of Healthcare and Social Assistance industries through 2022, the need for education and higher—skill workers is anticipated. Table 2 shows, that for a nurse, therapist, or physician assistant, knowledge of medicine is a must (ranks 86 to 98 out of 100). Fluent English is necessary to understand medical terminology and communicate with patients and medical staff. Customer and Personal Services knowledge is also important for Registered Nurses and LPNs (86 of 100) and Physical Therapists (87 of 100) because of the close relationships formed between nurse and patient.

Table 2: Knowledge Assessment for Top 5 Healthcare Occupations (Table 2 assesses the knowledge needed for the top five healthcare occupations.)

Knowledge	Registered Nurses	Occupational Therapists	Licensed Nurses	Physical Therapists	Physician Assistants
Customer & Personal Services	86	76	86	87	83
English Languages	81	82	82	77	84
Psychology	84	92	82	83	87
Medicine & Dentistry	89	86	92	93	98
Therapy & Counseling	78	92	75	82	84

Similarly, Table 3 shows that Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Programming Skills are essential for people working in the computer science field (rank from 70—90 of 100). However, several skills in certain jobs are not evaluated depending on the field and skill value. Table 3 shows only the most required skills that rank from 70 to 100. The higher ranking, the more important the skill.

Table 3: Skill Assessment for Top 5 Computer Occupations (Table 3 provides skills assessment for the top five computer-related occupations.)

Skills	User Support Specialist 15-1151	System Analysts 15-1121	Programmer 15-1131	Software developers 15-1132	Network Admins 15-1142
Analysis		70	70	75	75
Active Listening	80	70	70		70
Speaking	80	70			70
Critical Thinking	75	75	72	70	75
Reading Comprehension	78	70	80		75
Complex Problem Solving	70		72	78	72
Programming	n/a	n/a	90	78	70

Numerous occupations in West Virginia require licensing. This is to ensure the competency of those practicing these professions, and in many cases the safety of those utilizing their services. There are approximately 110 occupations that require licensure in the State of West Virginia, eleven of which are in-demand occupations. The majority of these In-demand occupations are found in the healthcare field, such as Physician Assistant, Registered Nurse, Licensed Practical Nurse, Pharmacist, Physical Therapy Assistant, Radiologic Technologist, and Dental Hygienist. The remaining in-demand occupations that require licensing include Accountant, Attorney, Elementary School Teacher, and Social Worker.

B. WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3 of WIOA.* This population must include individuals with disabilities among other groups** in the State and across regions identified by the State. This includes: Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals. ** Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth, and others that the State may identify.

I. EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

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

II. LABOR MARKET TRENDS

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

III. EDUCATION AND SKILL LEVELS OF THE WORKFORCE

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

IV. SKILL GAPS

Describe apparent 'skill gaps'.

(I) Employment and Unemployment

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

Demographics of the State's Economy

Age

The U.S. Census Bureau's 2016 American Community Survey estimates West Virginia's population 16 years of age and older at 1,509,212. Approximately 53.8 percent of this total is in the labor force. The employment to population ratio is 49.7 percent, while the unemployment rate for this population is 7.5 percent.

West Virginians aged 16 to 19 are estimated to number 88,684, 34.2 percent in the labor force. The employment to population ratio for this group is 26.0 percent, and the unemployment rate is 24.1 percent, the highest unemployment rate among all age groups. Many teenagers have difficulty finding or keeping employment because of lack of experience, and because some employers are unwilling to hire teens due to labor laws and the inconvenience of scheduling around school functions and extracurricular activities. In 2015, the number of unemployed in this age group who exhausted their benefits was 26. This number rose only slightly to 31 in 2016.

The group containing those 20 to 24 years of age is estimated at 123,410. Of these, 67.9 percent are in the labor force. The employment to population ratio for this group is 58.8 percent, while the unemployment rate is 13.3 percent. In 2015, 921 unemployed in this age group exhausted their unemployment benefits. In 2016, the number rose slightly to 942.

The group containing residents 25 to 29 years old is estimated at 108,617. The labor force participation rate is 75.4 percent. The employment to population ratio is 67.3 percent, while the unemployment rate for this group is 10.6 percent. In 2015, the number of unemployed in this age group who exhausted their benefits was 1,506. This number climbed to 1,692 in 2016.

West Virginians aged 30 to 34 years are estimated at 110,016. The labor force participation rate is 75.5 percent, and the employment to population ratio is 69.2 percent. The unemployment rate is 8.0 percent. The number of unemployed in this age group who exhausted their benefits in 2015 was 1,677. This number climbed to 1,799 in 2016.

The age group of those 35 to 44 years old contained 228,148 residents. The labor force participation rate is 75.7 percent, the highest among the established age groups. The employment to population ratio is 70.7 percent, also the highest among the established age groups. The unemployment rate is 6.4 percent. The number of unemployed in this age group who exhausted their benefits in 2015 was 3,398. This number jumped to 3,850 in 2016, the highest among all the age groups.

The group containing those ages 45 to 54 years is estimated at 252,328. The labor force participation rate is 70.5 percent, and the employment to population ratio is 66.8 percent. The unemployment rate for this age group is 5.2 percent. The number of unemployed in this age group who exhausted their benefits in 2015 was 3,247. This number climbed to 3,625 in 2016.

The group containing residents ages 55 to 59 is estimated at 137,566. The labor force participation rate is 61.0 percent and the employment to population ratio is 58.5 percent. The unemployment

rate is 4.2 percent. The number of unemployed in this age bracket who exhausted their benefits in 2015 was 1,455. This number climbed to 1,678 in 2016.

West Virginians aged 60 to 64 years numbered 132,319, with a labor force participation rate of 42.5 percent. The employment to population ration is 40.9 percent, with an unemployment rate of 3.8 percent. The number of unemployed in this age group who exhausted their benefits in 2015 was 1,064. This number rose to 1,260 in 2016.

The group containing those ages 65 to 74 years of age is estimated at 190,104, with a labor force participation rate of 18.8 percent. The employment to population ratio is 18.2 percent, and the unemployment rate is 3.4 percent, the lowest among all the age groups. The number of unemployed in this age group who exhausted their benefits in 2015 was 548. This number rose to 693 in 2016.

The number of West Virginia residents ages 75 and over is estimated at 138,020. The labor force participation rate is 5.0 percent, and the employment to population ratio is 4.8 percent. The unemployment rate is 3.5 percent. The number of unemployed in this age group who exhausted their benefits in 2015 was 100. This number fell to 83 in 2016.

Disability

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2016 American Community Survey, West Virginia's total civilian noninstitutionalized population 16 years of age and older is estimated at 1,480,837, with 336,199 having a disability and 1,144,638 having no disability. Of this total noninstitutionalized population, 50.7 percent are employed. The percentage of those with some form of disability who are employed is 17.7 percent. The percentage of those with no disability who are employed is estimated to be 60.4 percent.

The percent of the total civilian noninstitutionalized population not in the labor force is estimated at 45.2 percent. The percentage of those with some form of disability who are not in the labor force is 79.6 percent. The employed population age 16 and over is estimated to be 750,407. Of this number, 59,476 are estimated to have a disability, while 690,931 are estimated as having no disability.

The total number of West Virginians age 25 and older is 1,271,436, with 319,784 having a disability and 951,652 having no disability. The number of West Virginians age 25 and older holding less than a high school diploma or its equivalent is approximately 14.4 percent. The percentage of West Virginians with a disability who did not graduate from high school is estimated at 27.4 percent.

Those state residents age 25 and older with a high school diploma, GED, or alternative are estimated at 40.4 percent. An estimated 43.3 percent of residents with a disability are contained in this group. The percent of the population age 25 and over with some college or an associate's degree is approximately 25.4 percent. An estimated 20.3 percent of residents with some college or an associate's degree also have a disability. The portion of the population age 25 and older who hold a Bachelor's Degree or higher is 19.8 percent. An estimated 9.0 percent of West Virginians with a disability are contained within this group.

The West Virginia population age 16 and over for whom the poverty status is determined during the 2016 survey is estimated to be 1,464,024, with 335,247 estimated to have a disability and 1,128,777 having no disability. Approximately 16.1 percent of this total civilian noninstitutionalized population is below 100 percent of the poverty level. An estimated 23.3 percent in this group report a disability. Those West Virginians at 100 to 149 percent of the poverty level registered at 10.6

percent. An estimated 15.9 percent within this group report a disability. Persons at or above 150 percent of the poverty level are estimated at 73.3 percent. An estimated 60.9 percent of persons reporting a disability are contained within this category.

In 2015, the number of unemployed with a disability who exhausted their unemployment benefits was 133. In 2016, this number rose slightly to 136. Among this number, 53 individuals aged 25 to 44, and 44 individuals aged 55 to 64 exhausted their unemployment benefits in 2016.

Sex and Race

West Virginia's population 20 to 64 years of age is approximately 1,092,404, with an estimated 67.7 percent in the labor force. The employment to population ratio for this group is 62.8 percent. The estimated unemployment rate for those aged 20 through 64 is 7.1 percent.

The population age 20 to 64 years broken out by sex is 546,640 males and 545,764 females. It is estimated that 72.5 percent of males are in the labor force, while 62.9 percent of females are in the labor force. The employment to population ratio for males aged 20 through 64 is 66.5 percent and 59.1 percent for females. The estimated unemployment rate for males is 8.1 percent and 5.9 percent for females. In 2015, 9,676 males exhausted their unemployment benefits. The number jumped to 11,646 in 2016. The number of females who exhausted their unemployment benefits in 2015 was 4,266. That number declined to 4,007 in 2016.

West Virginia's population 16 years and older broken out by race and Hispanic or Latino origin stood at 1,509,212 during the 2012-2016 estimate period. Of this total, 1,418,522 are White alone, 51,396 are Black or African-American alone, 2,894 are American Indian and Alaskan native alone, 11,862 are Asian alone, 497 are Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander alone, 4,446 are Some other race alone, and 19,595 are Two or more races. The total of Hispanic or Latino origin of any race stood at 18,557, and White alone, not Hispanic or Latino stood at 1,405,040.

In 2015, the number of unemployed who exhausted their unemployment benefits was as follows: White 12,803, Black 535, Asian 72, American Indian/Alaskan Native 66, Pacific Islander 5, and Hispanic 381. In 2016, these numbers were as follows: White 14,438, Black 527, Asian 59, American Indian/Alaskan Native 53, Pacific Islander 10, and Hispanic 274.

Race and the Labor Force

The estimated racial breakout of the West Virginia labor force is as follows: 53.9 % of the White alone population is in the labor force and 49.9 % is employed. 51.8% of the Black or African American alone population is in the labor force, and 45.9 % is employed. 62.8% of the Asian alone population is in the labor force, and 60.1% is employed. 37.6% of the American Indian and Alaska Native alone population is in the labor force, and 34.7% is employed. 62.0% of the Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone population is in the labor force and 49.9% is employed. 58.4% of Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race) is in the labor force, and 54.0% is employed. 62.4% of some other race alone population is in the labor force, and 56.9% is employed. 49.0% of two or more races population is in the labor force and 43.0% is employed.

Education and the Labor Force

Per the American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2012-2016) table B23006, the total number of West Virginians ages 25-64 is 968,994. The estimated number who did not graduate from high school is 112,767 (11.6 %) with 39.4% in the labor force, and 33.7% employed. This group exhibits the lowest amount of employment among the categories of educational attainment.

Those with a high school or equivalent education number 385,450, with 63.8% in the labor force and 58.5% employed. Those with some college or an Associate's Degree number 265,423, with 72.3% in the labor force and 67.8% employed. 205,354 have a Bachelor's Degree or higher with 84.4% in the labor force and 82.1% employed. The unemployment rate runs from 2.6 % for those who have a Bachelor's degree to 14.5 % for those who have less than a high school diploma.

Population

West Virginia's overall population is expected to decline by 6,000 or 0.3% from 2015 to 2025. Regionally, it is anticipated that the most significant population decreases will occur primarily in Southern West Virginia and the Northern Panhandle, while the Eastern Panhandle and Northeastern West Virginia are expected to grow. Correspondingly, the greatest employment gains are expected in the regions experiencing population growth.

Labor Force

The labor force participation rate (LFPR) in West Virginia increased slightly from 53.0% in 2015 to 53.2% in 2016, mirroring the national trend. For several decades, the state's LFPR has been significantly (about 9%) lower than the nation but generally follows the national pattern.

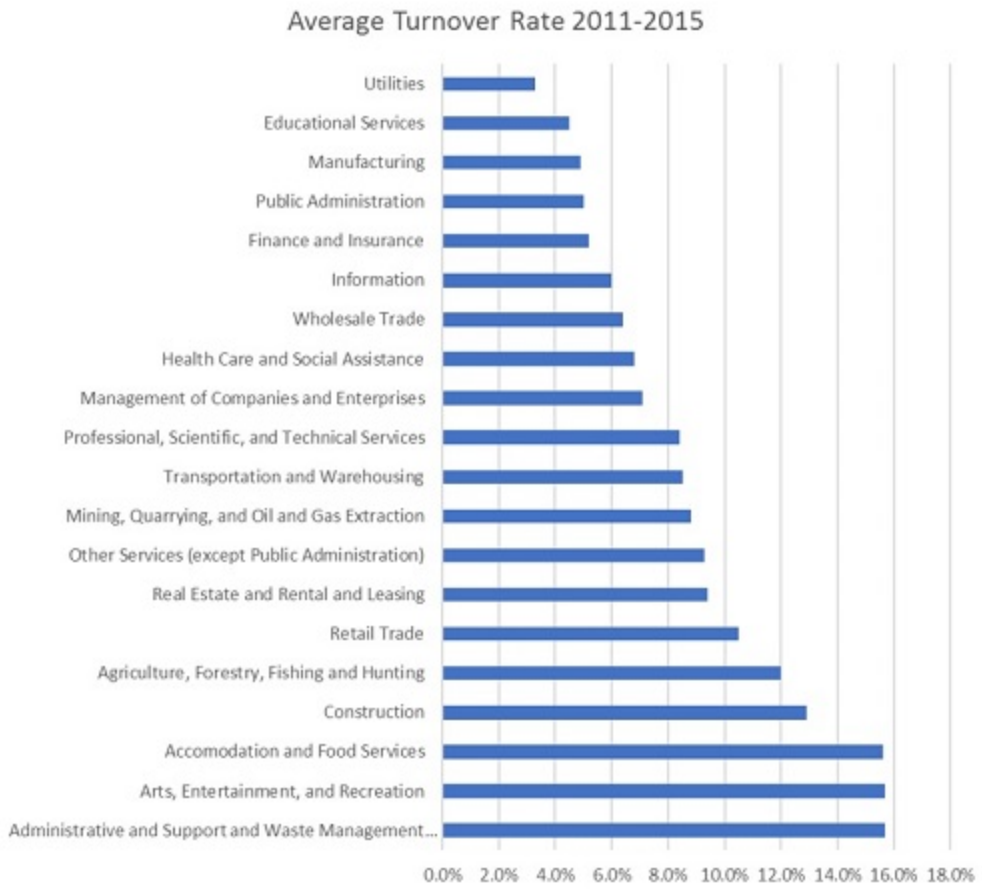
Per BLS projections, the U.S. labor force is projected to grow at an annual rate of 0.6, from 159.2 million people in 2016 to 169.7 million people in 2026, an increase of about 10.5 million people, slightly higher than the 2006-2016 decade. Several factors including population decline, uncertainty around population migration patterns in the coming decade*, and age composition* continue to affect the state's projected LFPR. Workforce-related factors include the discouraged worker effect, health-related limitations, education, and retirement. Educational attainment and social factors such as the state's opioid epidemic present challenges as well. As of 2016, West Virginia's LFPR was the lowest among all states.

*WVU Economic Summary

*WVU BBER

Turnover rates are another important aspect to consider in reviewing employment trends. Turnover rates can vary by industry and by a variety of demographic characteristics, such as education, race, sex, and age. In West Virginia, industry sectors with the highest average turnover rates include Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation; Administrative and Support and Waste Management.and Remediation Services; and Accommodation and Food Services. Sectors with the lowest turnover rates include Utilities, Educational Services, and Manufacturing. High turnover rates in industry sectors can indicate a number of possibilities, including, but not limited to, seasonality, short business cycles, part—time employment status, employee dissatisfaction, and health risks.

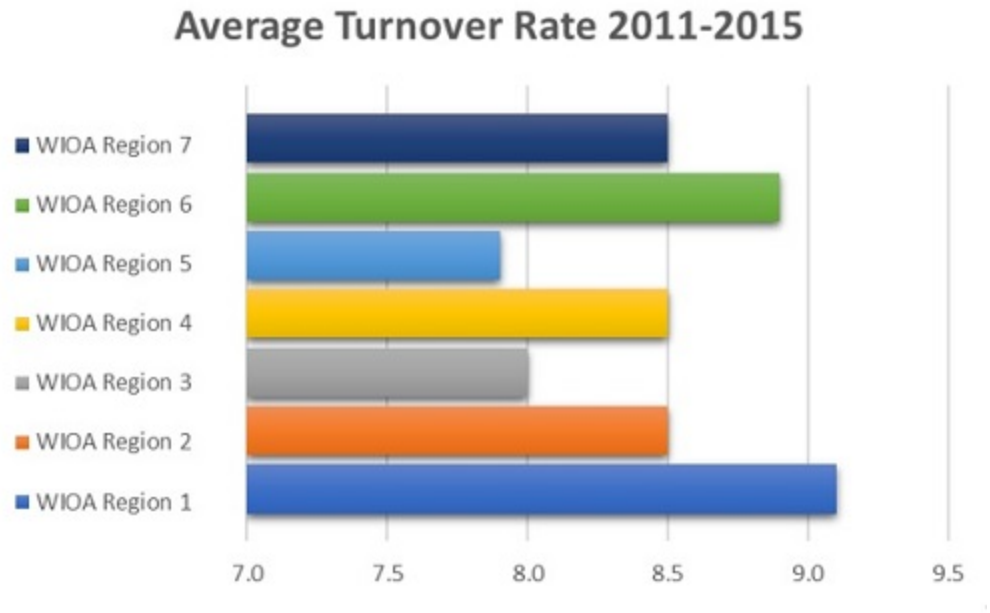
Figure 14: Average Turnover Rates 2011-2015. (Bar Graph reveals a list of industries ranked from lowest to highest turnover rates for the period 2011-2015.)



Among the various demographic characteristics between 2011 and 2015, turnover rates were higher among males (9.0%) compared with females (8.1%). Regarding race, turnover rates were lowest among Whites (8.3%) and Asians (9.8%); the highest turnover was among African Americans (12.0%), American Indians/Alaskan Natives (13.2%), Native Hawaiians (13.4%), and Two or More Races (13.4%). Turnover rates were highest among the age group of 14-18 years of age (29.2%) and lowest for the age group of 55-64 years of age (4.7%). Also, higher levels of education correspond with lower rates of job turnover, with the average turnover rate of those with less than a high school diploma at 9.4 percent compared with 6.2 percent for those with a Bachelor's Degree or higher.

From a regional perspective, overall employment turnover rates ranged from 9.1 percent in Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act Region 1, to 7.9 percent in Workforce Investment and Opportunity Region 5.

Figure 15: Average Turnover Rates for WIOA Regions 2011-2015. (Bar Graph reflects turnover rates for the seven WIOA regions for the years 2011-2015.)



Occupations

Among the seven WIOA regions in West Virginia, occupations anticipating the greatest annual growth rates between 2014 and 2024 are largely healthcare-related. This trend can be attributed to the state's aging population, as well as the state's high concentration of health issues including obesity and smoking.

Many of the occupations with declining growth rates are those linked to changing technologies and declining industries. Occupations such as Telephone Operators and Data Entry Keyers are declining due to advances in technology, while declines in occupations such as Mine Shuttle Car Operators and Continuous Mining Machine Operators are due to both technological advances and competition from alternative forms of energy production.

WIOA Region 1 Occupational Employment Projections 2014-2024

The top five occupations with the greatest annual growth rate within WIOA Region 1 are all healthcare-related. These include Home Health Aides; Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary; Personal care Aides; Physical Therapy Assistants; and Nursing Instructors and Teachers, Postsecondary.

Occupations with the greatest rate of annual decline in the region include Fallers; Log Graders and Scalers; Data Entry Keyers; Switchboard Operators, Including Answering Service; and Roof Bolters, Mining

WIOA Region 2 Occupational Employment Projections 2014-2024

Three of the top five occupations with the greatest annual growth rate within WIOA Region 2 are healthcare-related. The top five consists of Personal Care Aides; Diagnostic Medical Sonographers; Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary; Computer Systems Analysts; and Meeting, Convention, and Event Planners.

The five occupations with the greatest annual rate of decline include Mine Shuttle Car Operators; Continuous Mining Machine Operators; Switchboard Operators, Including Answering Service; Chemical Plant and System Operators; and Data Entry Keyers.

WIOA Region 3 Occupational Employment Projections 2014-2024

Healthcare Occupations lead the pack in the list of occupations with the greatest annual growth rate in WIOA Region 3. This group contains Occupational Therapy Assistants; Diagnostic Medical Sonographers; Medical Equipment Repairers; Personal Care Aides; and Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary.

Occupations leading declines in Region 3 include Data Entry Keyers; Switchboard Operators, Including Answering Service; Computer Operators; Legal Secretaries; and Mail Clerks and Mail Machine Operators, Except Postal Workers

WIOA Region 4 Occupational Employment Projections 2014-2024

Occupations with the most annual growth in Region 4 include Home Health Aides; Personal Care Aides: Physician Assistants; Physical Therapy Assistants; and Industrial Machinery Mechanics. The greatest annual rate of decline will be seen among Floral Designers; Butchers and Meat Cutters; Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants; Roofers; and Industrial Truck and tractor Operators.

WIOA Region 5 Occupational Projections 2014-2024

Occupations with the greatest annual growth rate within Region 5 include Personal Care Aides; Diagnostic Medical Sonographers; Physical Therapists; Home Health Aides; and Physical Therapist Assistants.

Occupations with the greatest declines in the annual growth rate include Data Entry Keyers; Switchboard Operators, Including Answering Service; Conveyor Operators and Tenders; File Clerks; and Meter Readers, Utilities.

WIOA Region 6 Occupational Projections 2014-2024

Occupations with the greatest annual growth rate in Region 6 include Home Health Aides; Diagnostic Medical Sonographers; Information Security Analysts; Meeting, Convention, and Event Planners; and Operations Research Analysts.

Occupations with the greatest declines in the growth rate include Data Entry Keyers; Fallers; Mine Shuttle Car Operators; Meter Readers, Utilities; and Floral Designers.

WIOA Region 7 Occupational Projections 2014-2024

The top five occupations with the greatest annual growth rate in Region 7 include Meeting, Convention, and Event Planners; Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists; Computer Systems Analysts; Software Developers, Applications; and Marriage and family Therapists.

Occupations with the greatest declines in annual growth in the region include Data Entry Keyers; Computer Operators; Meter Readers, Utilities; Switchboard Operators, Including Answering Service; and Butchers and Meat Cutters.

(iii) Education and SkiII LeveIs ofthe Workforce. Provide an analysis of the educationaI and skiII leveIs ofthe workforce.

Education

Over the coming decade, it is expected that West Virginia's job market will trend toward jobs that require more postsecondary education. Presently, based on 2016 data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS), West Virginia ranks last in percent of population age 25 years or older with a Bachelor's degree or higher. As of 2016, 20.8 percent of West Virginians 25 and older have a Bachelor's degree or better compared to 31.3 percent nationally. Based on WorkForce West Virginia's employment projections (2012—2022), it is expected that jobs requiring a Bachelor's degree or higher will increase 11,613 (Table A). More broadly, the trend is toward more education, and the demand for jobs necessitating any postsecondary education will be greater than jobs that do not. Categorically, occupations requiring a High School Diploma or less are anticipated to grow by 18,322, while jobs requiring formal education beyond high school will expand by 20,790.

Figure A: Projections by Level of Education (Figure A shows employment projections based on eight education levels for the year 2022.)

Table 7 Projections by Level of Education

	2012 Estimate	2012 % of Workforce	2022 Projection	2022 % of Workforce
Less than High School	218,328	27.76%	230,486	27.91%
High School / GED	326,775	41.54%	332,939	40.32%
Some College no degree	6,267	0.80%	6,540	0.79%
Postsecondary no degree	49,923	6.35%	54,379	6.59%
Associate Degree	38,140	4.85%	42,885	5.19%
Bachelor's Degree	112,489	14.30%	119,171	14.43%
Master's Degree	14,691	1.87%	16,681	2.02%
Doctoral or Professional Degree	19,983	2.54%	22,627	2.74%
Total	786,596		825,708	

Beyond formal secondary and postsecondary education, some occupations require additional on—the—job—training. In general, it is expected that jobs requiring this additional training will comprise a slightly smaller share of the total employment by 2022. Table B depicts the expected change by job training between 2012 and 2022. For most categories, the relative share of employment is expected to change only slightly. It is notable that jobs requiring no additional training are anticipated to make—up a larger share of the employment.

Figure B: Projections by Training (Figure B shows projected employment based on six levels of job training for the year 2022.)

Table 8 Projections by Training

	2012 Estimate	2012 % of Workforce	2022 Projection	2022 % of Workforce
Apprenticeship	15,655	1.99%	15,638	1.89%
Internship	30,981	3.94%	32,994	4.00%
Long Term OJT	41,122	5.23%	41,716	5.05%
Moderate Term OJT	122,215	15.54%	124,844	15.12%
Short Term OJT	338,419	43.02%	353,596	42.82%
None	238,204	30.28%	256,920	31.12%
Total	786,596		825,708	

Education attainment scales with both poverty status and median annual earnings. As educational levels increase, earnings increase, and consequently poverty decreases. In Table C, data from the U.S. Census Bureau depict the relative poverty levels by educational attainment. Across-the-board, rates are higher for females than for males.

Figure C: Poverty Rate by Education Level (Figure C depicts the poverty rate for West Virginians broken out by sex and four levels of education.)

Table 9 Poverty Rate by Education Level – West Virginia

	Total	Male	Female
Less than high school graduate	30.3%	27.7%	33.1%
High school graduate or GED	14.8%	12.6%	16.9%
Some college or associate's degree	13.3%	9.5%	16.3%
Bachelor's degree	5.5%	4.9%	6.0%

Similarities can be observed when comparing median annual earnings by educational attainment (Table D). Again, higher levels of education correlate to higher levels of earnings, with females earning comparatively less in all categories.

Figure D: Median Annual Earnings by Education Level (Figure D depicts median annual earnings for West Virginians broken out by sex and levels of education.)

Table 10 Median Annual Earnings by Education Level – West Virginia

	Total	Male	Female
Population 25 years and over with earnings	$31,426	$38,840	$25,344
Less than high school graduate	$20,404	$26,245	$13,359
High school graduate or GED	$26,671	$34,337	$19,916
Some college or associate's degree	$30,545	$40,065	$25,265
Bachelor's degree	$40,963	$49,127	$35,956
Graduate or professional degree	$52,574	$64,051	$49,299

Based on 2014 Census data, levels of unemployment correlate with levels of education (Table E). The higher the level of education, the higher the level of participation in the labor force and, conversely, the lower the rate of unemployment. Individuals with less than a high school diploma or equivalent had an unemployment rate (13.1%), nearly six times higher than individuals with a Bachelor's degree or higher (2.3%), and more than twice the unemployment rate of individuals with only some college or an Associate's degree (5.9%).

Figure E: Employment Status by Education Level (Figure E depicts employment status of West Virginians based on educational attainment.)

Table 11 - Employment Status by Education Level – West Virginia

Educational Attainment	Total	In Labor Force	Employed	Unemployment Rate
Less than a high school graduate	111,289	37.4%	32.5%	13.1%
High School Graduate or GED	392,169	63.0%	58.5%	7.0%
Some College or Associate degree	260,722	72.4%	68.0%	5.9%
Bachelor's degree or higher	203,115	83.5%	81.4%	2.3%

Also, as education levels increase, job turnover rates decrease. Using combined Census and BLS data from 2nd quarter of 2010 through 3rd quarter 2014, an average turnover rate was calculated (Figure F).

Figure F: Turnover Rate by Education Level (Figure F depicts turnover rates for West Virginians based on four levels of educational attainment.)

Table 12 - Turnover Rate by Education Level - West Virginia

	Less than a high school graduate	High School Graduate or GED	Some College or Associate degree	Bachelor's degree or higher
Turnover Rate	9.4%	7.3%	6.9%	6.2%

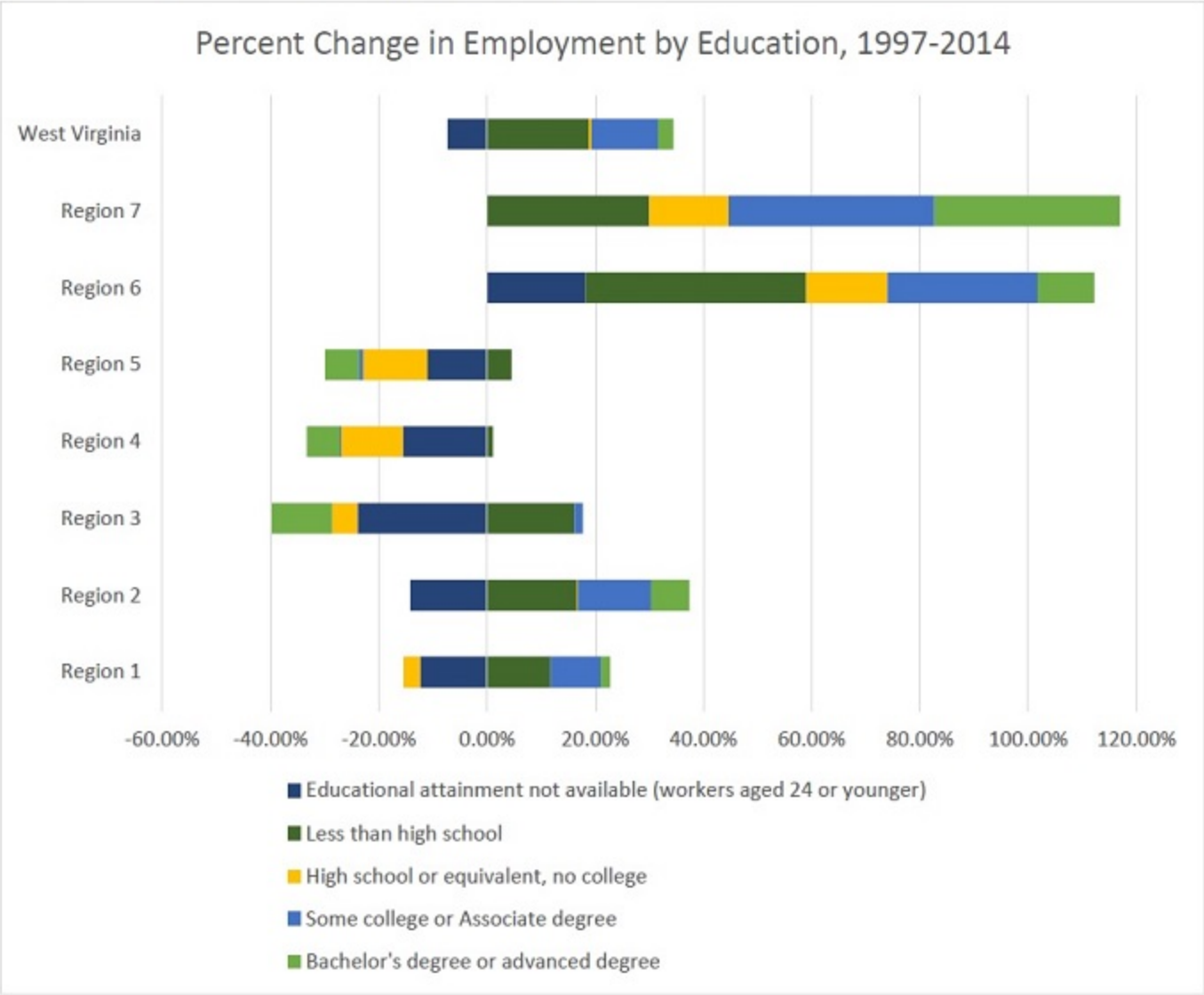
The educational makeup of West Virginians in the labor force, specifically those who were employed as of the 4th quarter, 2014, varies considerably by region of the state. As a whole, between 1997 and 2014, the number of West Virginia job holders increased at all levels of

education. Over this 17- year period, jobholders with less than a high school diploma increased by 18.9 percent, while those with a High School diploma or equivalent increased by a slim margin of 0.48 percent. West Virginia job holders with either some college or an Associate degree increased by 12.33 percent, and jobholders with a Bachelor's degree or higher increased by a mere 2.82 percent.

Regionally, the percent change in employment by education varied considerably by region. Table G depicts how these changes occurred over the 17-year period. The areas with the largest changes in positive growth were Region 6 (North Central WV) and Region 7 (Eastern Panhandle). Both regions have also experienced the greatest population growth over the past decade, and are anticipated to have the strongest population growth in West Virginia through at least 2020. In terms of jobholders with at least some college completion, Region 7 has experienced the fastest growth, followed moderately by Region 6.

Figure G: Regional Change in Employment by Education (Figure G is a chart depicting the percent change in education by WIOA regions from 1997 through 2014.)

Figure 14 Regional Change in Employment by Education



Conversely, Region 4 (Northwestern WV) and Region 5 (Northern Panhandle) experienced an increase in jobholders with less than a high school diploma only, with all other levels of education having decreased. The picture for Region 3 (Kanawha County) was mixed, with increases in jobholders with less than a high school diploma and some college or an Associate degree, and declines in those with Bachelor's degrees and a high school diploma or equivalent. Region 1 (Southeastern WV) saw modest increases in jobholders with all levels of education, while Region 2 (Southwestern WV) experienced slightly less growth at all education levels except a high school diploma or higher, which declined slightly. For a map of West Virginia's Workforce Regions see Figure 16.

Visit a Career Center.

1. BECKLEY
300 New River
Town Center
Beckley, WV 25802
Phone: (304) 256-6796
Fax: (304) 256-6805

2. GREENBRIER VALLEY
330 Red Oaks
Shopping Center, Suite 1
Ronceverte, WV 24970
Phone: (304) 647-7410
Fax: (304) 647-7412

3. MERCER COUNTY
195 Davis St., Suite 104
Princeton, WV 24740
Phone: (304) 425-1896
Fax: (304) 431-2517

4. SUMMERSVILLE
830 Northside Drive
Suite 123
Summersville, WV 26651
Phone: (304) 872-0821
Fax: (304) 872-0848

5. WELCH
110 Park Ave., Suite 100
Welch, WV 24801
Phone: (304) 436-2527
Fax: (304) 436-6310

6. HUNTINGTON
2699 Park Ave., Suite 240
Huntington, WV 25704
Phone: (304) 528-5525
Fax: (304) 528-5529

7. LOGAN
130 Stratton Street,
2nd Floor
Logan, WV 25601
Phone: (304) 792-7010
Fax: (304) 792-7023

8. CHARLESTON
1321 Plaza East
Shopping Center
Charleston, WV 25330
Phone: (304) 558-0291
Fax: (304) 558-1979

9. PARKERSBURG
300 Lakeview Center
Parkersburg, WV 26101
Phone: (304) 420-4625
Fax: (304) 420-4615

10. WEIRTON
100 Municipal Plaza
Suite 330
Weirton, WV 26062
Phone: (304) 794-2000
Fax: (304) 794-2003

11. WHEELING
1275 Warwood Ave.
Wheeling, WV 26003
Phone: (304) 238-1035
Fax: (304) 238-1034

12. CLARKSBURG
153 West Main Street
Suite B
Clarksburg, WV 26301
Phone: (304) 627-2125
Fax: (304) 627-2170

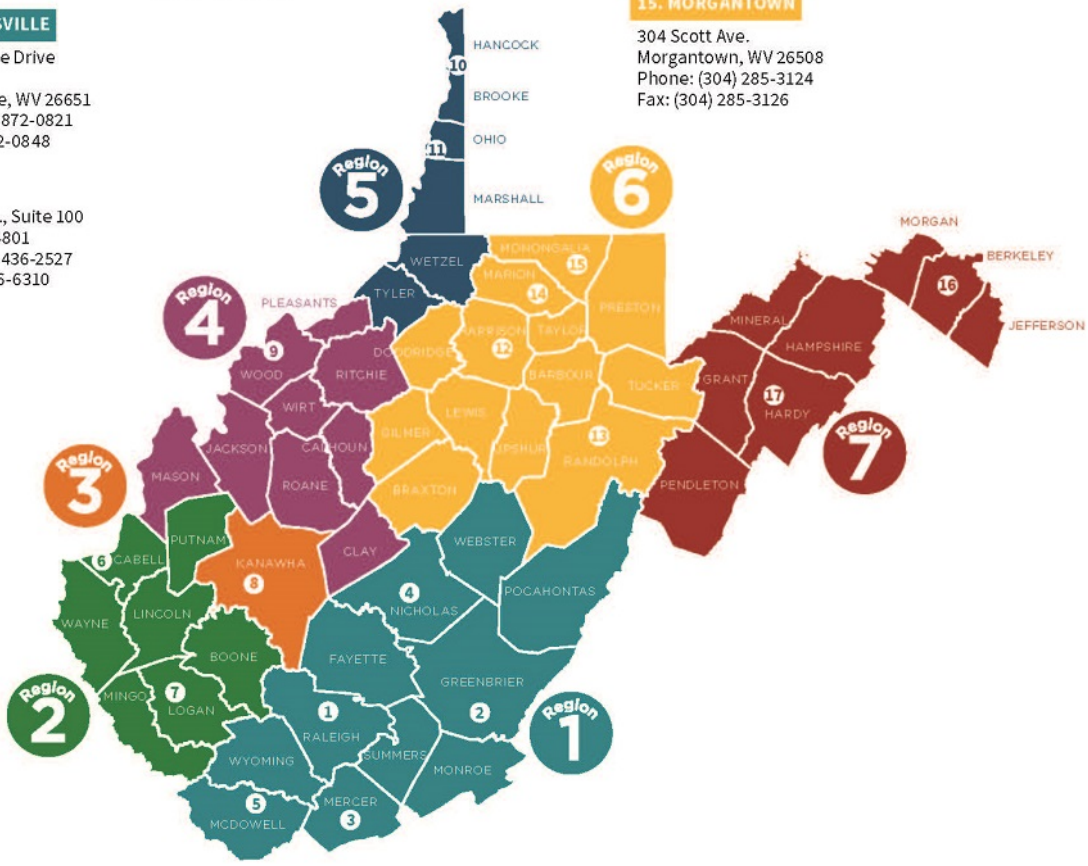
13. ELKINS
1023 North Randolph Ave.
Elkins, WV 26241
Phone: (304) 637-0257
Fax: (304) 637-0263

14. FAIRMONT
416 Adams St., Suite 220
Fairmont, WV 26554
Phone: (304) 363-0654
Fax: (304) 367-2779

15. MORGANTOWN
304 Scott Ave.
Morgantown, WV 26508
Phone: (304) 285-3124
Fax: (304) 285-3126

16. MARTINSBURG
200 Viking Way
Martinsburg, WV 25401
Phone: (304) 267-0065
Fax: (304) 267-0071

17. SOUTH BRANCH
151 Robert C Byrd
Industrial Park Road
Suite 1
Moorefield, WV 26836
Phone: (304) 538-3176
Fax: (304) 538-3178



www.workforcewv.org WorkForce WEST VIRGINIA 1-800-252-JOBS (5627)

(iv) Describe apparent 'skill gaps'.

The term Skills Gap, defined as "a significant mismatch between the needs of employers for skills and the current capabilities of available workforce", has been a constant source of conversation and debate for many years. The unemployment rate is relatively high in West Virginia, and businesses have expressed concerns about finding skilled workers to fill vacancies.

1. Communication Skills

Communication skills are expected to have the greatest demand in West Virginia through 2022. Those specific skills are Active Listening, followed by Social Perceptiveness, Speaking, Service Orientation, and Reading Comprehension (Figure H). Active Listening may be defined as "giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions appropriately, and not interrupting at inappropriate times"26. This simple and basic skill is necessary in many occupations, especially in healthcare and other service—related fields that require good communication and comprehension between service provider and customer. Over the next ten years, employers will need at least 452,472 employees with this skill, while the current supply is 421,376. This means we need more than 30,000 people to acquire or develop this skill to meet the expected demand. The occupational group with the highest demand for this skill falls mostly in healthcare support occupations, with 12,000 workers, who share 38.75% of the total need.

Figure H: Skills Gap 2012—2022 (Figure H depicts the current and projected demand for selected skills through 2022

Table 13: Skills Gap 2012-2022

Skill	Current (2012)	Projected Demand (2012-2022)
Active Listening	421,376	31,096
Social Perceptiveness	243,727	23,126
Speaking	370,528	21,947
Service Orientation	226,134	20,974
Reading Comprehension	264,409	18,037
Critical Thinking	237,638	17,753
Monitoring	196,762	13,644
Writing	153,770	13,284
Judgment and Decision Making	139,391	11,601
Coordination	171,849	11,071
Time Management	139,214	7,548
Complex Problem Solving	94,235	7,418
Active Learning	99,526	7,052
Instructing	73,040	4,507
Persuasion	84,994	4,047
Learning Strategies	55,509	3,674
Negotiation	82,699	3,252
Management of Personnel Resources	64,843	2,260
Science	14,555	1,968
Systems Analysis	17,883	1,609

The state's workforce will require more than 66,000 additional employees to develop Social Perceptiveness, Speaking, and Service Orientation skills by 2022. These communication skills depict a substantial need, particularly in the healthcare support industry, in which occupations related to customer services are in high demand. Reading Comprehension is also an issue for many West Virginians in the workforce. This skill refers to the person's ability to read and understand information presented in written form. Good readers interact with text, making and validating predictions, and connecting the text events to their knowledge and experiences. Generally, this skill, together with Critical Thinking and Writing are acquired during K—12 education.

Figure I: Skills Gap Distribution (Figure I depicts skills gaps by WIOA regions.)

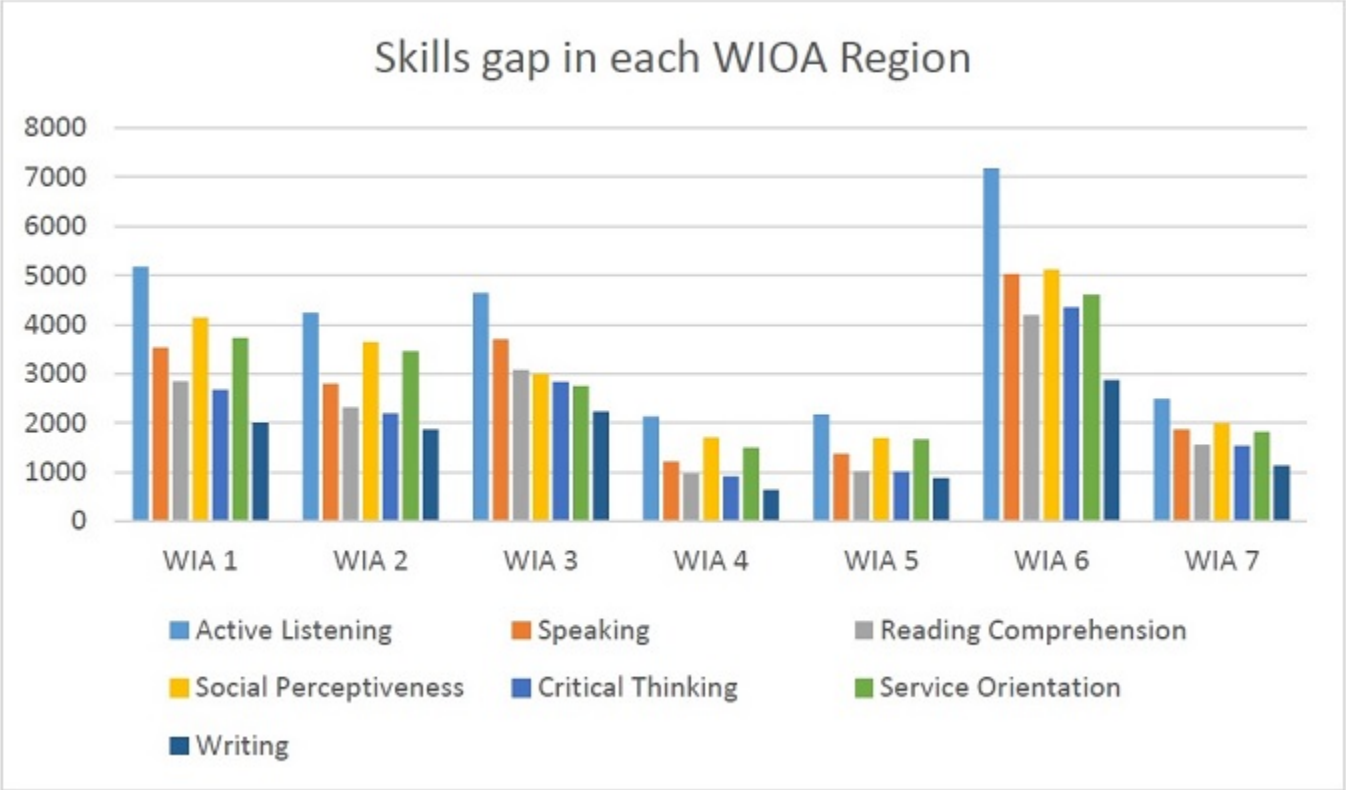


Figure I depicts how skills gaps vary by region. While Active Listening is still the highest need in all WIOA regions, the demand for other skills vary. Social Perceptiveness and Service Orientation take second and third places in almost all WIOA regions. The need for Speaking and Reading Comprehension skills rank second and third respectively in Kanawha County (WIOA Region 3).

Figure J: Gain/Loss of Workers in Each WIA Region/Statewide by Educational Attainment Level 2008—2014 (Figure J presents gains and losses of workers in each WIOA region by educational attainment for the period 2008-2014.)

Table 14: Gain/Loss of Workers in Each WIA Region/Statewide; by Educational Attainment Level, 2008-2014

Education Attainment	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Region 6	Region 7	West Virginia
Bachelor's degree or advanced degree	287	1251	-2712	-661	-740	2693	3156	3274
Some college or Associate degree	2266	3375	468	-52	-146	8742	4838	19489
High school or equivalent, no college	-892	50	-1479	-2305	-2573	5650	2355	806
Less than high school	1020	1317	1299	58	237	4001	1465	9399
Educational attainment not available (workers aged 24 or younger)	-1471	-1711	-2820	-1094	-679	2630	0	-5145

3. Knowledge and Ability also create a big effect on Skills gaps

As we examine the skills gap, it will be important to understand the relationship among Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities. Knowledge is a level of information or experience that an individual must have to be qualified for a position. Skills are learned or trained, and can be developed through the transfer of knowledge. Abilities are the enduring attributes of the individual that influence performance. A person's ability can affect their capacity to perform the job. Many recruiters use KSAs (Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities) to determine who the best applicants are among candidates.

Among West Virginia's workforce, the greatest gap in knowledge is Customer and Personal Service (see Figure K). More than 30,000 positions will be needed by 2022 that require competency with the principles and processes for providing customer and personal services; including customer needs assessment and evaluation of customer satisfaction. English, surprisingly, is the second—highest knowledge gap requirement. The growing healthcare sector needs at least 10,000 employees who have knowledge in Psychology and Medicine and Dentistry. The occupations that require most Medical knowledge are Registered Nurses (2,543 employees), Licensed Practical Nurses (1,174 employees), and Medical Assistants (783 employees). An estimated 8,000 Personal Care Aides, Home Health Aides, and Customer Service Representatives are in positions that require knowledge of Customer and Personal Service and English.

Figure K: Knowledge Gaps (Table K depicts projected knowledge gaps for the period 2012 through 2022.

Table 18: Knowledge Gaps

Knowledge	Current Supply (2012)	Projected Demand (2012-2022)
Customer and Personal Service	459,393	30,223
English Language	337,443	21,759
Psychology	99,876	11,434
Medicine and Dentistry	58,389	10,212
Education and Training	96,791	7,887
Therapy and Counseling	47,018	7,030
Clerical	134,190	6,877
Mathematics	141,926	6,753
Administration and Management	104,652	4,004
Computers and Electronics	62,692	3,741
Biology	15,190	2,833
Sociology and Anthropology	14,013	1,762
Law and Government	35,844	1,723
Personnel and Human Resources	40,745	1,578
Sales and Marketing	59,761	1,422

By 2022, West Virginia employers will need more than 30,000 employees who have the ability to comprehend and express information orally (see Figure L). Additionally, people with Problem Sensitivity will also be in high demand (27,885 in total). Aside from communication abilities, people with visual acuity will be in demand (20,362 employees).

Figure L: Ability Gaps (Figure L depicts projected ability gaps for the period 2012 through 2022.)

Table 19: Ability Gaps

Ability	Current Supply (2012)	Projected Demand (2012-2022)
Oral Comprehension	505,813	32,277
Oral Expression	463,645	31,114
Problem Sensitivity	363,326	27,885
Speech Recognition	369,577	22,908
Written Comprehension	293,906	20,475
Speech Clarity	344,121	20,376
Near Vision	324,976	20,362
Written Expression	257,974	17,358
Deductive Reasoning	222,431	16,966
Inductive Reasoning	176,235	14,034
Information Ordering	204,793	12,460
Category Flexibility	37,053	3,368
Fluency of Ideas	47,899	3,072
Originality	44,242	1,801
Multi-limb Coordination	96,420	1,257

Skills Gaps for West Virginia (2012—2022)

The skill with greatest expected demand and gap is active listening. Literacy and communication skills top the list, comprising four out of the top five skills. Active listening is followed by social perceptiveness, speaking, service orientation and reading comprehension. The complete list skills projected to be in demand can be found in Figure H.

Content skill ranking for most of the WIOA Regions follow the same pattern as the state. Active listening is, by far, the highest demand skill across all WIOA Regions. All four communication skills (i.e., active listening, social perceptiveness, speaking, and reading comprehension) rank in the top five in each region with the exception of Region 6, where critical thinking moved into the top 5, replacing reading comprehension.

Appendix

A. Knowledge

O*Net generates 33 requirements related to knowledge for all occupations in United States as shown in Figure M.

Figure M: Knowledge Requirements (Figure M provides definitions of O*Net knowledge terms.)

Knowledge	Knowledge Description
Administration and Management	Knowledge of business and management principles involved in strategic planning, resource allocation, human resources modeling, leadership technique, production methods, and coordination of people and resources.
Biology	Knowledge of plant and animal organisms, their tissues, cells, functions, interdependencies, and interactions with each other and the environment.
Building and Construction	Knowledge of materials, methods, and the tools involved in the construction or repair of houses, buildings, or other structures such as highways and roads.
Chemistry	Knowledge of the chemical composition, structure, and properties of substances and of the chemical processes and transformations that they undergo. This includes uses of chemicals and their interactions, danger signs, production techniques, and disposal methods.
Clerical	Knowledge of administrative and clerical procedures and systems such as word processing, managing files and records, stenography and transcription, designing forms, and other office procedures and terminology.
Communications and Media	Knowledge of media production, communication, and dissemination techniques and methods. This includes alternative ways to inform and entertain via written, oral, and visual media.
Computers and Electronics	Knowledge of circuit boards, processors, chips, electronic equipment, and computer hardware and software, including applications and programming.
Customer and Personal Service	Knowledge of principles and processes for providing customer and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction.
Design	Knowledge of design techniques, tools, and principals involved in production of precision technical plans, blueprints, drawings, and models.
Economics and Accounting	Knowledge of economic and accounting principles and practices, the financial markets, banking and the analysis and reporting of financial data.
Education and Training	Knowledge of principles and methods for curriculum and training design, teaching and instruction for individuals and groups, and the measurement of training effects.
Engineering and Technology	Knowledge of the practical application of engineering science and technology. This includes applying principles, techniques, procedures, and equipment to the design and production of various goods and services.
English Language	Knowledge of the structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
Fine Arts	Knowledge of the theory and techniques required to compose, produce, and perform works of music, dance, visual arts, drama, and sculpture.
Food Production	Knowledge of techniques and equipment for planting, growing, and harvesting food products (both plant and animal) for consumption, including storage/handling techniques.
Foreign Language	Knowledge of the structure and content of a foreign (non-English) language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition and grammar, and pronunciation.
Geography	Knowledge of principles and methods for describing the features of land, sea, and air masses, including their physical characteristics, locations, interrelationships, and distribution of plant, animal, and human life.
History and Archeology	Knowledge of historical events and their causes, indicators, and effects on civilizations and cultures.
	Knowledge of laws, legal codes, court procedures, precedents, government regulations,

B. Skills

Like knowledge, skills can be learned and developed with experience. More than that, through study, a skill represents a person's ability to develop knowledge, enhancing his or her capacity to perform the work. Each occupation requires different skills with different levels of importance. Generally, employers evaluate their employees' skills based on 6 groups: Basic, Social, Resource Management, System, Technical, and Complex Problem Solving Skills (Figure N).

Figure N: Skill Requirements (Figure N provides definitions of O*Net Skills terms.)

Group	Description	Skills
Basic Skills	Developed capacities that facilitate learning or the more rapid acquisition of knowledge	Active Learning, Active Listening, Critical Thinking, Learning Strategies, Mathematic, Monitoring, Reading Comprehension, Science, Speaking, and Writing
Social Skills	Developed capacities used to work with people to achieve goals	Coordination, Instructing, Negotiation, Persuasion, Service Orientation, Social Perceptiveness
Complex Problem Solving Skills	Developed capacities used to solve novel, ill-defined problems in complex, real-world settings	Complex Problem Solving
Technical Skills	Developed capacities used to design, set-up, operate, and correct malfunctions involving application of machines or technological systems	Equipment Maintenance, Equipment Selection, Installation, Operation and Control, Operation Monitoring, Operation Analysis, Programming, Quality Control Analysis, Repairing, Technology Design, Troubleshooting
System Skills	Developed capacities used to understand, monitor, and improve socio-technical systems	Judgment and Decision Making, System Analysis, System Evaluation
Resource Management Skills	Developed capacities used to allocate resources efficiently	Management of Financial Resources, Management of Material Resources, Management of Personnel Resources, Time Management

C. Ability

Ability is what someone is capable of doing. Employers assess their employees' ability based on 52 elements in 4 groups (Figure O).

Figure O: Ability Assessment (Figure O provides definitions of O*Net Ability terms.)

Group	Description	Elements
Cognitive Abilities	Abilities that influence the acquisition and application of knowledge in problem solving	Category Flexibility, Deductive Reasoning, Flexibility of Closure, Fluency of Ideas, Inductive Reasoning, Information Ordering, Mathematical Reasoning, Memorization, Number Facility, Oral Comprehension, Oral Expression, Originality, Perceptual Speed, Problem Sensitivity, Selective Attention, Spatial Orientation, Speed of Closure, Time Sharing, Visualization, Written Comprehension, Written Expression
Psychomotor Abilities	Abilities that influence the capacity to manipulate and control objects	Arm-Hand Steadiness, Control Precision, Finger Dexterity, Manual Dexterity, Multi-limb Coordination, Rate Control, Reaction Time, Response Orientation, Speed of Limb Movement, Wrist-finger Speed
Physical Abilities	Abilities that influence strength, endurance, flexibility, balance and coordination	Dynamic Flexibility, Dynamic Strength, Explosive Strength, Extent Flexibility, Gross Body Coordination, Stamina, Static Strength, Trunk Strength
Sensory Abilities	Abilities that influence visual, auditory and speech perception	Auditory Attention, Depth Perception, Far Vision, Glare Sensitivity, Hearing Sensitivity, Near Vision, Night Vision, Peripheral Vision, Sound Localization, Speech Recognition, Speech Clarity, Visual Color Discrimination

2. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the workforce development activities, including education and training in the State, to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, as identified in *Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce* above, and the employment needs of employers, as identified in *Employers' Employment Needs* above. This must include an analysis of –

A. THE STATE'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Provide an analysis of the State's workforce development activities, including education and training activities of the core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required and optional one-stop delivery system partners.*

---

* 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.

The State of West Virginia is comprised of seven local workforce investment areas. A minimum of one (1) comprehensive America's Job Center is located in each area.

• Region One: The Region One Workforce Development Board, headquartered in Beckley, administers workforce activities in an eleven—county region covering the southeastern portion of the State.

• Region Two: The Southwestern West Virginia Workforce Development Board, located in Huntington, governs a seven—county region in the southwestern portion of the State.

• Region Three: The Workforce Development Board of Kanawha County oversees activities in the State's only single—county workforce development region from its office in Charleston.

• Region Four: Nine counties are served by the Workforce Development Board Mid—Ohio Valley, which is located in Parkersburg.

• Region Five: The Northern Panhandle Workforce Development Board provides services in six counties and is based in Wheeling.

• Region Six: The Region Six Workforce Development Board, located in Fairmont, provides services in a thirteen—county region in the north—central portion of the State.

• Region Seven: Eight counties in the easternmost portion of West Virginia are served by the Region Seven Workforce Development Board located in Moorefield.

All core programs are participating either by physical presence or part of a shared electronic referral system. Further, required partners participating include:

• Trade Adjustment Assistance

• Second Chance Act

• Jobs for Veterans Grant (LVER/DVOP)

• Job Corp

• Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)

• Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

• National Farmworker Jobs Program

• Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP)

• Unemployment Compensation

• Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

• Career and Technical Education (Perkins)

• Indian & Native American Programs

• Youthbuild

The Interagency Collaborative Team (ICT) was established under the state Workforce Investment Act to ensure coordination between the agencies engaged in workforce development activities, the local workforce Development Boards and WorkForce West Virginia.

The ICT continues to operate as a state interagency source for addressing issues or concerns related to building and maintaining the most effective and efficient implementation of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the overall workforce development system in West Virginia. The team's focus is on how best to collaborate between and among the state agencies directly involved in workforce development activities. ICT serves as a forum for the WDBs to seek

information or recommendations to fulfill their responsibilities. Workforce West Virginia convenes the team at least monthly to provide administrative and other services.

Customers entering the workforce development system through any of the core partner's services will be provided a common intake process that will allow all of the partners to access information and provide referrals. WorkForce West Virginia often serves as the entryway into the workforce development system. As the provider of unemployment services and Wagner—Peyser services, WorkForce West Virginia is uniquely poised to welcome customers into the workforce system via the One—Stop service delivery model and provide comprehensive and targeted referrals to the other core partners.

Customers are provided career services (previously core and intensive services) through the core partners. These services are provided through the one— stop system and other affiliate sites. If the customer is deemed to be ready for gainful employment after receiving career services, WorkForce West Virginia staff assists the customer with job search and placement. If the customer is deemed to need training services, then the WorkForce West Virginia staff refers the customer to the other core partners based on the needs of the customer. Training services are then provided to the customer through WorkForce West Virginia, West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services, and/or Adult Education Services.

With integration of service delivery, it is anticipated that more WIOA customers will access core partner services. Core partners have gathered data about the current strategies and resources devoted to basic skills development; researched the current and projected need; learned about promising practices for system redesign; and engaged diverse stakeholders in conversations about improving adult learning opportunities and results.

The WIOA core partners work, in tandem, on many workforce development activities. The partners all have memorandums of understanding at the state and regional levels and also collaborate on specific projects at local levels. For example, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services and Adult Education are collaborating with a university to assist adult education students in transitioning to post—secondary education through a curriculum that teaches time management, a basic math refresher, and any other identified needs for individuals with disabilities returning to post—secondary education. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services, WorkForce West Virginia, and Adult Education also collaborate in all workforce development regions as part of WIOA One—Stop Management Partner meetings with local development groups to better identify and facilitate needed services for the local area.

SPOKES (Strategic Planning in Occupational Knowledge for Employment and Success) is a robust partnership between Adult Education and West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources. SPOKES was created by WV Adult Education under a contract between the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development and West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, and in collaboration with the WDBs. The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services works within this partnership to increase efforts to reach potential VR consumers being served by Adult Education and the SPOKES program.

The state understands the importance of having a recognized postsecondary degree from the perspectives of both employers and job seekers. The core partners have always strived for quality, career—based employment outcomes for its consumers, when appropriate. A wide range of education and training paths are offered by the partners. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services for example, offers individuals with disabilities opportunities to prepare them for the West

Virginia economy. Pre—employment transition services, including job exploration counseling; work—based learning experiences; counseling on enrollment opportunities; workplace readiness training; and instruction in self—advocacy, are provided for those who need assistance in finding a career path that matches their interests and abilities. Once a career path has been selected, post—secondary education and training programs are made available with West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services funds to help individuals get the specialized college, apprenticeship, or employment supports they need to be successful in the workplace.

All seven of the state Workforce Development Board (WDB) regions have participated in delivering services for many of the Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) programs in the state of West Virginia. When stimulus funding became available, the relationship established by the ICT provided a forum for WorkForce West Virginia and the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources to develop new and mutually beneficial workforce development initiatives. Those new collaborations included a Summer Youth Employment Program; Employment Subsidy Program; Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and an Excel Career Club.

The Summer Youth Employment Program provided temporary work experience during the summer months for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) eligible youth between the ages of 14 and 21. The "first priority" was to focus on assisting TANF Work Eligible Recipients between the ages of 18 and 21.The WDB's role was to advertise and promote the program, as well as recruit employers and low income youth to participate in the program. The employment was 100 percent subsidized by the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources. Job activities were varied, and included manufacturing, clerical, and warehouse—related work. The Program allowed youth to earn money to spend at their discretion. Older youth were placed with private sector employers, and many obtained permanent employment with that employer following their work experience. The work experiences also included a Job Readiness curriculum that focused on career exploration, work ethics, and job seeking skills.

The Employment Subsidy Program (ESP) was a "win—win" for all. The task of working directly with employers to place the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources clients in jobs was administered by the Workforce Development Boards with assistance from the One—Stop Partners. Because they had previous experience working with the employee sector, they were able to quickly identify those employers who would hire clients.

While the program was discontinued due to lack of funding, the state has strengthened partnerships and communication with the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources. Future collaborations between the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources and the local regions can focus on job placement through state or federal Department of Health and Human Resources grants to support the staff and services. Collaboration between WorkForce West Virginia and the West Virginia Department of Education has produced several opportunities for Out of School Youth. Labor market research indicates that the state's 16 to 19 year olds are estimated to number 91,827, with 32.9 percent in the labor force and 26.6 percent employed. The estimated unemployment rate for the group is approximately 19.1 percent, the highest rate among all age groups. Many teenagers have difficulty finding employment because of a lack of experience, and because some employers are unable or unwilling to hire teens due to strict labor laws and the inconvenience of scheduling around school functions.

Given these two critical pieces of information; 1) Reading Comprehension is the greatest demand gap and 2) the state's highest unemployment rate is among ages 16 to 19. West Virginia has focused

on increasing work readiness certification in basic skills in partnership with the West Virginia Department of Education and Adult Education partners, and Community and Technical Colleges.

In partnership with the West Virginia Department of Education, West Virginia Career and Technical Colleges and WorkForce West Virginia, more than 44,000 Career Readiness Certificates have been issued in West Virginia. Job seekers and students who take the assessments in West Virginia have access to free remedial online programs called KeyTrain and Win to improve their skill levels and achieve certification.

WorkForce West Virginia has dedicated staff to work with statewide industry organizations such as the West Virginia Oil and Natural Gas Association and the Independent Oil and Natural Gas Association. These staff members will attend industry job fairs, forums and promote job opportunities statewide.

The state encourages WIOA (adult, dislocated worker & youth) customers to seek retraining and reemployment opportunities in the emerging Marcellus Shale industry and will continue to support all Local Workforce Development Boards with funding for training in the gas and oil industry.

In the LMI analysis section of this plan, the subsection on education presents employment by education for West Virginia compared to that of the nation. Compared with the United States, West Virginia has a lower proportion of jobs requiring Bachelor's degrees, and a larger proportion of jobs requiring post—secondary vocational education. Specific examples of these middle skills occupations in high demand can be referenced in the LMI section of this plan.

Communication skills, such as Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing will have the highest skills gap, as will jobs requiring technical skills, which are expected to have some of the strongest job growth over the next decade. It will also be very important for the vast majority of the State's workforce to continuously upgrade, expand, and improve their existing job skills to remain competitive as technology becomes even more entrenched in the workplace environment over the coming years.

Given the low level of formal education in the state, West Virginia will concentrate on training for "middle skill" occupations that require additional training or education beyond high school, but not a four—year college degree. This graduated approach will target certifications, and 12 to 24 month programs in highly transferrable technical skills.

This approach will allow the state to meet workers "where they are" in their skill sets and build on that base. One example of this approach is the partnership with education on the National Emergency Grant to train coal miners impacted with mass dislocation.

The state will encourage Local Workforce Development Boards to engage in partnerships with local educational entities, businesses, community—based organizations, etc. in order to communicate the benefits of technical training and the development of robust and comprehensive career pathways models.

WorkForce West Virginia will work with Adult Education, CTEs and CTCs to develop and promote streamlined training courses for individuals who already possess some transferable skills. These streamlined programs will have multiple points of entry and lead to nationally recognized credentials in technical occupations and will allow job seekers to enter the workforce more quickly.

WorkForce West Virginia will promote technical training through our website and also through activities such as workshops, job fairs, rapid response activities, youth programs, social media,

informational meetings, etc. We will support efforts to better understand the connections between technology—based economic development and education and skills development for existing workers.

(B) The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities. Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in (A), directly above.

B. THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

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

West Virginia's workforce development system partners are historically successful in serving customers and putting it's populace to work. These alliances can be amplified at the state and local level to identify and overcome any areas of weakness that emerge. The strength of West Virginia's workforce development system is demonstrated by the relationships already formed through the Interagency Collaborative Team (ICT) and the identified prospects for coordinated service delivery.

West Virginia's Mid Atlantic Career Consortium (MACC) system provides a powerful tool to assist the workforce development system with the coordination of service delivery. The MACC is an integrated case management, referral, and federal reporting system that supports WIOA, Wagner—Peyser, TAA, VETs, NEG, and Rapid Response programs. The MACC's capacity to support integrated case management, data sharing, and reporting, allows case managers to see the full range of services participants have received from any covered program.

The West Virginia Sector Strategy Project exhibits a system strength. Thanks to two major grants from the U.S. Department of Labor (TAACCT Grant — Bridging the Gap), our state administration is implemented a statewide business sector evaluation and development of a comprehensive strategy to address the regional workforce skill needs for the state's economy. This involves a number of planning meetings with local businesses, community and technical colleges, education and employers so training and workforce preparedness programs will:

1. Integrate and align,

2. Meet employers' (large and small) needs,

3. Maximize economic opportunities that are currently taking place across the state and

4. Address each region's unique workforce challenges/needs.

The goal will be to establish and implement workforce—business sector strategies in West Virginia through a regional system that will address the current and emerging skills gaps in the economy.

The state's Community & Technical College System continues to implement a number of major new programs to develop skilled workers who can take advantage of quality job opportunities that are available due to recent business and economic development activities. These include:

• Manufacturing —— Learn and Earn Program Initiative

• Oil and Gas Education and Training Initiatives

• Dislocated Coal Miner Training Initiative

• National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) SPACES Grant

• Construction Management Certificate

Another strength is the Learn and Earn Program Initiative. The Learn and Earn Program, which operates through the Community & Technical College Chancellor's office, provides students opportunities for paid cooperative educational experiences in high—demand fields. Students enrolled in applied technology programs attend school while earning valuable on—the—job training and a living wage at partner businesses. Students must be paid no less than $10 per hour. The employer provides 50 percent of the students' wage, with the Chancellor's office providing a 50 percent match. Currently, there are cooperative opportunities for students at Toyota, Gestamp, DuPont, Kureha, NGK, Union Carbide (Dow), and others. The Chancellor's office actively seeks opportunities to expand this program.

West Virginia's Workforce Development System partners have discovered that overlaps and duplication of efforts are warranted. That overlap and duplication is contributed to focused eligibility requirements for some program and open enrollment to others. To illustrate, the WV Division of Rehabilitation Services has identified a weakness. The issue is a lack of human resources caused, in part, by vacant positions and increased retirements. The Agency is currently under an Order of Selection (OOS) and has closed OOS Categories 3 and 4; these individuals may still apply for services and be placed on a waitlist. While Rehabilitation Services is unable to serve these individuals, referrals will be made, as appropriate, to WorkForce West Virginia and Adult Education for services. If additional resources become available, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services may serve individuals from the waitlist. The system is complex and takes a coordinated effort among all program partners to develop a skilled workforce able to meet the diverse demands of business and industry.

West Virginia's workforce development partners agree to sustain an integrated comprehensive workforce development system for the delivery and information sharing of the core partner program services. The creation of this system will ensure universal access by all customers by providing a program that is uniform, consistent and responsive to the job seeker and employer communities. The system will encourage cross—training of mandated partners to ensure true integration of the core programs within the system. As a result, programs will remain flexible; yet, they will be expandable in the One—Stop system. Through input from customers and core partners, the program will promote continuous improvement.

Collaboration, coordination, and constant reexamination by partners will ensure continuous improvement of how the system serves customers. Working together to overcome identified issues such as accessibility of network computer systems, better alignment of efforts and policies, community visibility and infrastructure costs will be key to stay ahead of the ever-changing economy and the diverse needs of workers and employers.

C. STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

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

The West Virginia Workforce Development System (WDS) is comprised of three primary entities: WorkForce WV, Adult Education, and the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS). The WDS provides career and training services statewide to over 100,000 West Virginians each year. In Program Year 2014 (July 1, 2014 — June 30 2015), WorkForce WV served 102,371 job seekers, while Adult Education enrolled 7,789. DRS served 13,209 individuals with disabilities during

Federal Fiscal Year 2015 (October 1, 2014 — September 30, 2015). The WDS assists participants in gaining employment by virtue of resourceful and committed personnel, statewide coverage via a plethora of convenient locations, a wide variety of services, and continuing relationships with businesses.

Personnel

The WDS employs a number of professional staff throughout the state to fulfill its mission to put West Virginians to work by providing career and training services to the various participants in the labor market.

WorkForce West Virginia employs 345 permanent employees and 80 temporary employees statewide. Staffing includes the positions of Employment Program Interviewers, Veterans Representatives, Unemployment Insurance Deputy's, Administrative/Supervisory staff, and Support Staff of various job categories. WorkForce West Virginia is a one-stop center for work force resources, including job opportunities, unemployment compensation, training, tax incentives, veteran's services and labor market information. WorkForce WV staff play a vital role in providing services at 17 One Stop Centers located strategically throughout the state. WorkForce WV services are available to claimants, job seekers and employers using the largest online database of job seekers and job openings in the state.

WV Adult Education employs over 200 Local Teachers (82 part-time, 120 full-time), paraprofessionals, and administrative/supervisory staff to provide educational services to adult learners in the State. Over 60% of the Adult Education Teachers have more than three years of teaching experience, and over 90 of Adult Education Teachers have a specialized certification (i.e., Adult Education, K-12, Special Education, or TESOL). WV Adult Education employs six Regional Coordinators located in six of the eight Regional Education Service Agencies (RESA). The Regional Coordinators provide technical assistance to program administrators and instructors in the areas of student retention, professional development, data management, partnership development, curriculum and instruction.

DRS employs 102 rehabilitation counselors statewide (as of November 2015), currently serving approximately 13,500 individuals with disabilities. DRS anticipates an increase in the number of consumers in its caseload system to a projected 14,500 individuals in Federal Fiscal Year 2020. DRS also has, as part of its 102 rehabilitation counselors, a subset of 45 counselor positions assigned to high schools throughout the State to provide pre-employment transition services, as well as other services, to students with disabilities. Additionally, DRS has 12 Employment Specialists throughout the State maintaining relationships with businesses, providing job placement and job development services, and acquiring labor market information.

Locations

West Virginia's WDS provides convenient coverage for all 55 counties of the State. Workforce development services are provided from over 100 locations, with higher concentrations in more densely populated areas.

One of the goals of WorkForce WV Career Centers is to offer job seekers and employers ready access to the many workforce development resources available in a local region. WorkForce WV consists of seven geographic regions, with each having at least one comprehensive career center, at minimum. In total, the seven regions hold 10 comprehensive centers, 10 satellite centers and 23 affiliate sites throughout the State.

Adult Education programs are established in all 55 counties in WV with some counties having multiple locations. There are approximately 154 class locations statewide. Programs are located in various sites such as Adult Learning Centers, Career Technical Centers, Community College Campuses, Libraries, Community-based Organizations, and Workforce Centers.

DRS is comprised of six geographic districts, with multiple branch offices within each district. In total, DRS has 28 branch offices, including offices at One-stop career centers and co-location (within the same building) with WorkForce WV at several sites. Additionally, DRS holds office space within some of the largest high schools in the State, to facilitate service provision to students with disabilities.

Services

The WDS provides a wide array of career and training services to promote quality employment outcomes to job seekers in West Virginia and assist WV employers with their labor needs. These services are provided not only at One-stop Career Centers and field offices, but also at homes, in schools, at places of business, and even online.

WorkForce WV provides a number of services to the people of West Virginia, including Job Seeker Services, Veterans Services, Dislocated Workers Services, Employer Services, Unemployment Compensation, and Labor Market Information.

Adult Education services include Orientation, Assessment, On-Site Classes, Customized Training (conducted in cooperation with employers), Technology Training, and Navigator Services, designed to enhance student transition and retention.

DRS is fully committed to provide comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities, especially those with significant disabilities, who seek to obtain, retain, or maintain competitive, integrated employment. Because DRS provides services exclusively to individuals with disabilities, service provision is highly individualized. DRS services, including pre-employment transition services, cover a spectrum of individualized needs, including Medical, Educational, Employment, Career and Training, and other Support needs.

Business Relations

A key component of the success of the WDS is the success that the system has had in maintaining strong relationships with businesses and employers across the State.

Workforce WV is able to produce and provide extensive labor market information to its participants, and to the public in general, thanks to communication and exchange of information with employers regarding opportunities, expected growth, and the knowledge, skills, and abilities that these employers expect from potential employees.

DRS employs 12 Employment Specialists who provide statewide coverage in their task of maintaining business relations in the State of West Virginia. These relations entail not only placement of individuals with disabilities into positions, but also the acquisition of labor market information, complementing the information acquired by WorkForce WV. DRS and Workforce WV work together to provide the most comprehensive labor market information available.

West Virginia is taking a comprehensive approach to improving its workforce development and training efforts. These efforts are being driven at the highest level by the Workforce Planning Group, a cabinet—level group chaired by Commerce Secretary Thrasher. The Council is a policy—

making entity that meets on a monthly basis to discuss workforce issues, outlines potential problems and solutions, and ensures inter—agency collaboration and integration whenever possible.

The group serves to align and integrate workforce assistance by supporting training programs provided by key departments such as: Commerce, Health & Human Resources, WorkForce West Virginia, K—12 Education, Higher Education.

Another key objective of the group has been to restructure or improve the effectiveness of the state's workforce training and support programs, so they meet the needs of the state's employers —— and new employers.

The State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) is structured to satisfy both federal and state requirements maintaining a majority of business representation and additional needs set forth by State legislation.

Continued emphasis on the improvement of service delivery through organizations such as the State Workforce Development Board and the Interagency Collaborative Team (ICT) will result in a more responsive and responsible system that will meet the needs of its customers. This will also promote increased economic development through the attraction, retention, and growth of businesses by providing properly trained workers who will equip businesses to compete in today's economy.

The ICT includes policy making representatives of all State agencies involved in workforce development. Monthly meetings are conducted to discuss new initiatives, collaborations, and provide cross training information on respective partner programs. These regular meetings ensure strong coordination of policies relating to workforce programs and activities.

B. STATE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS

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

1. VISION

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

Governor Justice understands the vital importance of West Virginia's employers having a well—trained, workforce—ready labor force. He also is equally aware of the critical need to provide more individuals with the opportunity to be productive members of the state's labor force and, thereby, to improve the state's labor participation rate.

As part of this, West Virginia is taking a comprehensive approach to improving its workforce development and training efforts. These efforts are being driven at the highest level by the Commerce Workforce Planning Group led by Commerce Secretary Thrasher. The Workforce Planning Group meets on a monthly basis to discuss workforce issues, outlines potential problems and solutions, and ensures inter—agency collaboration and integration whenever possible.

The Workforce Planning Group serves to align and integrate workforce assistance by supporting training programs provided by key departments such as: Commerce, Health & Human Resources, WorkForce West Virginia, K—12 Education, and Higher Education.

Another key objective of the group has been to restructure or improve the effectiveness of the state's workforce training and support programs so they meet the needs of the state's employers —— and new employers. The council also has a separate working group that focuses more on specific issues, obstacles or new policies.

Among the key matters that are the focus of the Governor's workforce integration efforts are:

• Workforce Program Alignment

• Innovative Workforce Preparation/Training Programs and Career Pathways

• Growing Entrepreneurship Activities

• West Virginia Sector Strategies Project

• Governor's Workforce Readiness Certification

• Workforce Outreach

• Workforce Transitioning

• Grant Coordination and Management

• Adult Education

• WIOA Planning and Implementation

The workforce programs and initiatives are broad in scope...ranging from ones for elementary and middle school students, to high school and college—level students to workers and displaced workers. However, all of the programs aim to provide resources and opportunities for West Virginians to learn new skills, improve workforce participation and ensure a well—trained workforce ready labor force so the state's employers can remain competitive and profitable.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Enacted in July 2014, WIOA is the first legislative reform in 15 years of the nation's public workforce system. West Virginia is well positioned to benefit early from the Act's provisions given that the state has been implementing key provisions, including:

1. Formation of the Workforce Planning Group;

2. Alignment of unified strategic planning across "core" programs, which include Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs; Adult Education and Literacy programs; the Wagner—Peyser Employment Service; and Title I of the Rehabilitation Act programs, and;

3. Implementation of a business—led statewide sector strategy project that includes state/local workforce boards and community colleges. The law is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.

WIOA also will emphasize engaging employers across the workforce system to align training with needed skills and match employers with qualified workers. The Act adds flexibility at the local level to provide incumbent worker training and transitional jobs as allowable activities and promotes work—based training, for example by increasing on—the—job training reimbursement rates to 75

percent. The law also emphasizes training that leads to industry—recognized post—secondary credentials.

• Simulated Workplace: This is an innovative, new statewide educational initiative that is restructuring the state's career—technical schools and implementing workplace and business learning protocols that align with general requirements and expectations of West Virginia's workplace, including teamwork, random drug testing, professionalism, attendance and safety. The education of the students in done in a business environment where the students manage the enterprise, review performance, collaborate on the objectives and develop work—ready skills and aptitudes (punctuality, attendance, teamwork, effective communications, etc.) All career—tech schools will have Simulated Workplace programs starting in the fall of 2016.

• Workforce Readiness Certification: The state Department of Education and the Secretary's Workforce Planning Group have continued the workforce readiness certificate program that will be available to high school graduates (and adults) so they can obtain this new certification as a way to better prepare and position themselves for employment.

• Learn and Earn Program Initiative: The Learn and Earn Program, which operates through the Community & Technical College Chancellor's office, provides students opportunities for paid cooperative educational experiences in high—demand fields. Students enrolled in applied technology programs attend school while earning valuable on—the—job training and a living wage at partner businesses. Students must be paid no less than $10 per hour. The employer provides 50 percent of the students' wage, with the Chancellor's office providing a 50 percent match. Currently, there are cooperative opportunities for students at Toyota, Gestamp, DuPont, Kureha, NGK, Union Carbide (Dow), ATS and Bob's Market in agriculture. The Chancellor's office actively seeks opportunities to expand this program.

• Let's Train: A WorkForce West Virginia program that provides on—the—job paid training in high—demand fields such as oil & gas, health care, wood products manufacturing, construction and administrative services. The program is open to individuals who have been unemployed for more than 6 months, or are at risk of exhausting unemployment benefits.

• Minority Affairs: The state's Herbert Henderson Office of Minority Affairs has been promoting its annual Minority Business Expo. Last year's event, held in Charleston in October, attracted 68 businesses, 300 attendees and students from seven schools. Three of four business owners walked away from the Expo with contracts.

West Virginia's 2015 Sector Partnership (SP) NDWG ($5.2 million): A grant partnership between WorkForce West Virginia and the Community Technical College System of West Virginia (CTCS) to build upon current sector—driven efforts in West Virginia. This grant will focus on Energy, Manufacturing, Health Care and IT industry sectors. The target population to be served through this grant is long—term unemployed individuals and those individuals likely to exhaust unemployment benefits. The purpose of this grant is to provide innovative services to the unemployed coal mining industry community and individuals dislocated from industries related to and affected by continued mining layoffs.

Adult: Aligning New C&TC Programs with Workforce

Opportunities West Virginia Sector Strategy Project

Thanks to two major grants from the U.S. Department of Labor (TAACCT Grant — Bridging the Gap), our state administration is implementing a statewide business sector evaluation and development of a comprehensive strategy to address the regional workforce skill needs for the state's economy. This involves a number of planning meetings with local businesses, community and technical colleges, public education and employers so training and workforce preparedness programs will:

• Integrate and align,

• Meet employers' (large and small) needs,

• Maximize economic opportunities that are currently taking place across the state and

• Address each region's unique workforce challenges/needs.

The goal will be to establish and implement workforce—business sector strategies in West Virginia through a regional system that will address the current and emerging skills gaps in the economy.

The state's Community & Technical College System continues to implement a number of major new programs to develop skilled workers who can take advantage of quality job opportunities that are available due to recent business and economic development activities. These include:

• Manufacturing —— Learn and Earn Program Initiative

• Oil and Gas Education and Training Initiatives

• Dislocated Coal Miner Training Initiative

• National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) SPACES Grant

• Construction Management Certificate

Adult: Career & Technical Education (WVDE — CTE) & Industry Credential Certificate Programs

Adult students in West Virginia have the opportunity to complete industry credentialed certificate programs at career and technical schools across the state. The adult CTE programs are offered at the public career and technical centers throughout the state and aligned with the West Virginia Department of Education CTE curriculum. Adults can enroll in secondary programs if space is available at no cost or in stand—alone adult programs that are nationally accredited by the Council on Occupational Education (COE) for financial aid access to those who qualify. Approximately 2,500 adults graduate annually from these programs with technical skills and credentials.

• Health

• Architecture and Construction

• Transportation

• Human Services

• Information Technology

Adult: Veterans

Inventoried existing Veterans workforce training and education programs available in West Virginia provided strong support for tuition assistance (Veteran's Re—Education Act Fund,

Veterans Upward Bound, etc.) and educational support programs for veterans, particularly for those who have exhausted the GI Bill and need a new vocation due to dislocation or unemployment. Special emphasis also was placed on programs to facilitate re—employment of returning active duty and reserve personnel.

Adult: Transitioning From Welfare Assistance to Self—Sustainability West Virginia Works — Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF): The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources is implementing changes to the state's temporary assistance benefits program (West Virginia Works) for families in need. The changes by the department are designed to reform this welfare program and restructure programs so they focus much more on incentivizing and transitioning these families into greater employment outcomes and, ultimately, self—sufficiency achievement. The best long—term outcome for everyone is if we align the direct assistance to these families so they can prepare themselves to realize the benefits of a job and a stable paycheck. A TANF educational assistance pilot project was recently announced at Southern WV Community & Technical College.

Juvenile Justice Reform has been spearheaded by the West Virginia Intergovernmental Task Force on Juvenile Justice that in 2014 conducted a comprehensive, data—driven study of the state's juvenile justice system. The analysis showed that the vast majority of youth removed from their homes and placed in state facilities are lower—level offender —— such as "status" offenses —— behavior that would not even be considered a crime if committed by adults. Not only is this costly, but also has the potential to undermine these youths from becoming future workers and productive members of society. Many of the task force's recommendations were enacted into law in early 2015.

Offender Reentry Initiative

The Offender Reentry Initiative addresses prisoners' health, mental health, job skills, education, substance abuse and other issues. The goal is to help prisoners succeed when they are released.

Title IV, Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Under Title IV, the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) provides services that help allow individuals with disabilities to avail themselves of work—based learning (work—based training, and on the job training). Title IV emphasizes the need to provide pre—employment transition services (PETS) for students with disabilities prior to their exiting the school system. Additionally, the new federal act emphasizes creating employer engagement within the community by creating work—based learning experiences for individuals, thus allowing employers to be matched with skilled workers.

Again, the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services is already providing services that will allow individuals with disabilities to avail themselves of work—based learning. We partner with employers to provide work—based training, and on the job training. This training is provided across all sectors of employment and ensures job—driven training rather than erroneous skills training.

Other:

• Development of apprenticeship training programs

• Alignment and expansion of entrepreneurship/start—up ventures

• Promotion of youth entrepreneurship in our school system

2. GOALS

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

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

_____

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

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

Goal 1: Workforce Development System Integration

In order for WIOA to be successful, a seamless one—stop delivery system must be created. As resources become more and more limited, partners in the workforce development system must work together in order to provide maximum benefit to our customers.

Goal 2: Customer—Driven Approach (Individual & Employer)

We will create an approach based on the needs of the job seekers as well as the needs of the employer. Our workforce development system must examine the needs of the employer, assess the skills and skills gaps of the workforce and then create solutions to ensure maximum benefit to both customer groups.

Goal 3: Career Pathways Development

It is imperative that the workforce development system provide education and training for skills that lead to quality employment in high—demand jobs or entry—level occupations that lead to high demand jobs. Career pathways must be diverse with multiple entry and exit points allowing individuals of varying abilities, including low—skilled adults and youth with multiple barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities, to have realistic access to pathways. The State will support career pathways that help adults and youth enter the labor force and/or advance among multiple occupations, advance within an occupation or move to a new occupation that has similar skills to a previous occupation.

Goal 4: Increase Opportunities for Youth

Unemployment rates for older youth and young adults remain substantially higher than those for the population as a whole. The likelihood of employment correlates with education level, rates of employment, and labor market participation for individuals with secondary credentials or less are substantially lower than for those with postsecondary credentials. For these reasons, the workforce development system must recognize the employment challenges faced by youth, particularly those without postsecondary credentials. Partners must work together to alleviate barriers and create opportunities for our youth.

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.)

See Appendix 1.

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.

The state will assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce system and those educational programs that support and work with it on the basis of their collective ability to produce career pathways leading to industry—valued, recognized postsecondary credentials and apprenticeship enrollments.

To match the supply and demand of the State's labor market, the West Virginia Workforce Development System (WDS) gathers employment needs data provided by employers and subsequently generates and disseminates Labor Market Information (LMI), both at the statewide and local level. This LMI, published by WorkForce WV, provides short- and long-term projections of high demand occupations throughout the State of West Virginia, at both the state and local level. From these projections, the State is able to recognize the credentials, certifications, and enrollments needed by its citizenry to achieve placement in the labor force in the coming years. Similarly, the State is able to identify the institutions of such enrollment and credentialing that the citizenry may utilize. One of the goals of West Virginia's Workforce Development System (WDS) is to develop career pathways for individuals seeking employment, particularly in high demand occupations. In order to do this, it is vital for the WIOA core partners to provide to those individuals: Labor Market Information, including information regarding projected high demand occupations; an enhanced sense of informed choice regarding their opportunities for employment; and information about how to obtain qualifications for employment, especially in projected high demand occupations. The WDS will assess effectiveness in this goal by monitoring enrollment and achievement at institutions related to these projected high demand occupations and use this assessment to determine where any underserved areas lie.

An emphasis will be placed on high—demand, job driven skills attainment. Specifically, the state will emphasize "demand—driven skills—attainment" in the policies it sets pertaining to local and regional workforce plans. For example, in setting performance standards for Local Boards, the state will give great weight to WIOA performance measures related to program completion and credential attainment, and will validate the labor market value of programs by examining the employment and wage outcomes of the individuals served.

The State Board will also work with regionally organized Local Boards and other state plan partners to determine the extent to which persons receiving training and education services aligned with regional industry needs are actually obtaining employment in occupations and sectors directly related to their programs of study.

Developing the capacity for tracking employment related to training and education programs of study will require the study and development of an operational plan for collecting the relevant information. The State Board will work with the three core partners and all mandatory partners to build this capacity.

General Policy Framework for Program Alignment

State Plan Policies

The state will employ and will require state plan partners to adopt or participate in (to the extent appropriate for each program), seven policy strategies that frame, align, and guide program coordination at the state, local, and regional levels. These policies (discussed in further detail in the section on strategies, tactics, and resources) will include the following:

• Sector strategies: aligning workforce and education programs with leading and emergent industry sectors' skills needs.

• Career pathways: enabling of progressive skills development through education and training programs, using multiple entry and exit points, so that each level of skills development corresponds with a labor market payoff for those being trained or educated.

• Regional partnerships: building partnerships between industry leaders, workforce professionals, education and training providers, and economic development leaders to develop workforce and education policies that support regional economic growth.

• "Earn and learn"—using training and education best practices that combine applied learning opportunities with material compensation while facilitating skills development in the context of actual labor market participation.

• Supportive services: providing ancillary services like childcare, transportation, and counseling to facilitate program completion by those enrolled in training and education courses.

• Creating cross—system data capacity: using diagnostic labor market data to assess where to invest, and also, the use performance data to assess the value of those investments.

• Integrated service delivery: braiding resources and coordinating services at the local level to meet client needs.

This State Plan provides the policy framework and direction for day—to—day operations of WIOA funded programs. The role of state agency and state department plan partners under

this plan is to provide policy direction, program oversight, support, and technical assistance for and to local and regional service providers covered by the plan. State plan partners include the following:

• WorkForce West Virginia (WFWV)

• West Virginia Workforce Development Board (WDB)

• West Virginia Community and Technical College System (CTCS)

• West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE)

• West Virginia State Board of Education (SBE)

• West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)

• West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR)

• Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development

Regional Plans and "Regional Sector Pathways"

Regional plans and partnership required by WIOA will function under this State Plan as the primary mechanism for aligning educational and training provider services with regional industry sector needs.

Alignment at the regional level will be accomplished through the regional implementation of three of the seven policy strategies emphasized by the State Plan. These include sector strategies, career pathways, and organized regional partnerships. All three of these policies will be required under the regional planning guidance issued by the State Board to Local Boards organized into the regional planning units required under WIOA Section 106.

A primary objective and requirement of regional plans will be to work with community colleges and other training and education providers, including the state's Adult Education Block Grant regional consortia to build "regional sector pathway" programs, by which we mean, career pathway programs that result in the attainment of industry—valued and recognized postsecondary credentials aligned to regional industry workforce needs. The State Board, working alongside other state agencies will provide technical assistance to regional partnerships, comprised of industry leaders, workforce professionals, and regional training and education providers to help align programs and services delivered with industry sector workforce needs.

Under the State Plan, the key regional partners involved with the development and implementation of regional plans will include the following:

• Industry sector leaders, associations, and business organizations

• Regionally organized local workforce development boards

• Local economic development organizations

• Regional consortia of community colleges

• Regional consortia of adult basic education providers (including both WIOA Title II and other state—funded basic education programs)

• Representatives of K—12 CTE programs funded by either federal Perkins funds or various state—specific CTE funding streams, when relevant county offices of education and other local educational agencies determine that participation will benefit the students participating in their CTE programs

The State Board will encourage and recommend broad and inclusive partnerships, but will grant considerable flexibility for Local Boards and their partners to determine the nature, scope, and depth of these partnerships based on local and regional needs and priorities as long as regional plans and partnerships are consistent with the policy direction and goals of this State Plan.

Regional efforts under WIOA are expected to build upon the State Board's regional Sector Strategies Project discussed later in the State Plan.

Local Plans and One—Stop Centers of West Virginia

Under the State Plan, the purpose of local workforce plans and partnerships is to facilitate access to workforce services at the local level.

Local workforce development plans will ensure a baseline level of WIOA core program alignment compliant with federal regulations at the local level, in and through the One—Stop Centers of West Virginia, the state's One—Stop system, so that program services are coordinated, and when appropriate, integrated to make accessible a menu of customizable services available to clients on the basis of client needs.

Under this State Plan and all relevant policies issued by the state concerning One—Stop design, operations, and partnerships, Local Boards will be directed to operate One—Stops as an access point for programs that provide for "demand—driven skills attainment." From this perspective, One—Stops will be operated as an "on ramp" or "gateway" to the "Regional Sector Pathways" programs either built—out or identified through the regional planning process described above.

One—Stops will continue to provide the full menu of One—Stop services, now known under WIOA as "career services", they have historically provided and One—Stops will continue to function as labor exchanges but there will be much greater emphasis on treating One—Stops as an access point for education and training services for those who want and need it. Further detail on One—Stop design and the operation of the One—Stop is provided in the body of the State Plan.

C. STATE STRATEGY

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the State's strategies to achieve its strategic vision and goals. These strategies must take into account the State's economic, workforce, and workforce development, education and training activities and analysis provided in Section (a) above. Include discussion of specific strategies to address the needs of populations provided in Section (a).

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

3(7) AND INCLUDES REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP. "IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTOR OR OCCUPATION" IS DEFINED AT WIOA SECTION 3(23).

We will create an approach based on the needs of the job seekers as well as the needs of the employer. Our workforce development system must examine the needs of the employer, assess the skills and skills gaps of the workforce and then create solutions to ensure maximum benefit to both customer groups.

Strategy 2.1: Work with employers to identify true workforce needs.

Strategy 2.2: Assess skill gaps and needs of individuals seeking employment and/or training.

Strategy 2.3: Ensure that individuals with barriers, especially those with disabilities, to employment have increased access to and for opportunities for employment, education, training, and support services.

Strategy 2.4: Make available training programs that solve both the needs of employers and individuals.

It is imperative that the workforce development system provide education and training for skills that lead to quality employment in high—demand jobs or entry—level occupations that lead to high demand jobs. Career pathways must be diverse with multiple entry and exit points allowing individuals of varying abilities, including low—skilled adults and youth with multiple barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities, to have realistic access to pathways. The State will support career pathways that help adults and youth enter the labor force and/or advance among multiple occupations, advance within an occupation or move to a new occupation that has similar skills to a previous occupation.

Strategy 3.1: Ensure career pathways development as set forth in WIOA is followed.

Strategy 3.2: Enhance current career pathways system.

Strategy 3.3: Educate individuals (job—seekers and employers) and encourage career pathways in training and employment environments.

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).

Goal 1: Workforce Development System Integration

In order for WIOA to be successful, a seamless one—stop delivery system must be created. As resources become more and more limited, partners in the workforce development system must work together in order to provide maximum benefit to our customers.

Strategy 1.1: Work with partners to create a better understanding of what a truly integrated workforce system looks like.

Regular quarterly partner meetings and Opportunity in Action meetings in each Region 1 counties encourage collaboration. We have developed and are utilizing a unified referral form. We have developed and are implementing our MOU / Infrastructure agreements with our core, required and additional partners.

One Stop Management Team/Inclusion Team is a partnership between the Region 4, One Stop Coordinator, Adult Education, UI, DRS, Community Resources—all partners in the One Stop providing services to our joint customers. The Team makes decisions on cross-training of staff, office issues and works together to solve problems, develop programs and activities to include the community.

Region 5, Core and Required Partners have developed operational policies and procedures for regional American Job Centers that reflect an integrated system of performance, communication and case management services. The NPWDB, Inc., Core and Required Partners have developed a Common Referral and Participant Information Release Form for use in the region. This should help decrease duplication of efforts spent on data and information collection for everyone.

DRS maintained and continues to maintain a presence with each of West Virginia's seven Local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs): Region 1 WDB; Region 2 — South Western WV WDB, Inc.; Region 3 — WDB of Kanawha County, Inc.; Region 4 Mid-Ohio Valley WDB; Region 5 — Northern Panhandle WDB; Region 6 WDB, and Region 7 WDB. DRS has signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFAs) with each board. Each Local WDB has a DRS representative who is active in the Board's activities and decision-making process.

Strategy 1.2: Ensure cross—training of all workforce development staff.

Region 4, continues to work with One-Stop Coordinator on creation of a One-Stop Manual so that all WIOA One-Stop partners will be able to help in daily operations of running the facilities. Once complete the One-Stop Coordinator will schedule and conduct a training session with all front-line partner staff to review programs and services available through partner and resource agencies. Area Interagency Meetings are held twice a year and include subjects that are relevant to staff from Adult Ed, DRS and WFWV as well as DHHR and other partners.

Region 5, Core and Required Partners work together to offer intensive training to Front-line Staff no less than twice a program year. Front-line Staff is knowledgeable about basic eligibility requirements and Core and Required Partner functions and programs, so they have the expertise in assisting customers properly and efficiently. Training typically focuses on: Customer service; Instructions on serving clients with disabilities; Properly assessing individuals with barriers to employment; How to access outside resources; and, The introduction of new regulations, policy, procedures, etc. Core and Required Partners, as well as Non-Required Partners and Front-line Staff, participate in Cross-Training Sessions offered at the Wheeling American Job Center no less than four times each program year. Cross-Training Sessions focus on familiarizing all Staff about any changes in the delivery of Core and Required Partners' Programs and Services or about any new Programs and Services to be offered in the region.

The Region 6 One Stop Operator has developed a partner resource book for distribution to all partners. The partners provided a description of their agency and the services they

provide. This information was compiled by the One Stop Operator and will be used for cross training and as a desk reference for front line staff to use when customers inquire about services available within the Region 6 WDB One Stop Partner Network.

The Region 7 WDB has developed a comprehensive case management manual as a resource guide for all One-Stop staff. The Region 7 WDB holds weekly staff meetings that include the One-Stop Director where cross training and other staff needs are continuously discussed. Quarterly One-Stop meetings with partners also address cross-training needs that may exist and how we can better serve mutual clients.

As data integration across the core partners' systems is being completed, training will be conducted for staff that utilize the system. Staff will be able to access relevant consumer data shared from partner programs in order to coordinate and improve service delivery and employment outcomes for all WDS consumers.

Cross-training for partner agencies is conducted at the local level at one-stop locations across the state. The agencies will strive to continue these cross-trainings.

Strategy 1.3: Maintain frequent communication with all partners within the workforce development system.

Region 1 continues to participate in monthly Interagency Collaborative Team Meetings, Workforce Development Board Directors' meetings and quarterly WV State Workforce Development Board meetings. We post weekly updates that are shared with dozens of partners within our region. We also host Partner and Opportunities in Action meetings in our region.

Quarterly Meetings of both Core Partners and required Partners are held in Region 2 to make sure headed in same direction. The centralized referral service with all referrals being made through the same person enables individuals to be brought closer into the system and make sure they have follow-up on referrals.

Local information is posted on Region 3 website as well as references to our partner agencies. Emails are sent when needed. www.region3wibkc.org Region 3 Executive Director attends monthly meetings with the state and quarterly state Workforce Development Board meetings.

Region 4 contracted One Stop Coordinator continues to conduct monthly One-Stop manager team meetings to identify areas of collaboration and share information about agency specific updates. One-Stop Coordinator will continue to conduct Partner Staff meetings at the Affiliate and Satellite office throughout the region to communicate program updates as well as events, such as Career/Job Fairs and schedule Workshops.

Through regular meetings every month and frequent daily communications between Region 5 Job Center Operator Staff, Core and Required Partners, we stay informed of the state of the local workforce development system.

Region 6 WDB will continue to meet with partners on a quarterly basis to discuss workforce issues at a central location in the region. Cross training and upcoming partner activities are highlighted at each meeting. Email blasts have continued to provide a means of keeping Region VI partners updated on activities and events happening in the region. The Region VI website provides the public with policies and program information on a regional level and

links to state and federal websites as a means of providing employers and job seekers with valuable information they need to make informed decisions about hiring and job search and training opportunities. www.regionviwv.org. The Facebook page for the Region 6 One Stop Partner Network was up and open to the public in August of 2017.

The Region 7 WDB has quarterly Management Consortium meetings with One-Stop partners and quarterly Business Services/Implementation Team meetings with employers and partners who deliver business services in the region.

The Region 7 WDB has quarterly Training Provider meetings with all approved educational institutions that deliver demand occupational training to WIOA clients within our region. Sector Partner Strategy meetings are held in conjunction with the community and technical colleges (Blue Ridge CTC and Eastern WV CTC).

Each Local WDB has a DRS representative who is active in the Board's activities and decision-making process.

DRS has maintained regular communication with WorkForce WV to stay abreast of trends in employment, including changes in education and training requirements. This has been accomplished through regular meetings of the workforce development system (WDS), written communications, teleconferences, and other media. DRS, particularly through its Employment Specialists, stayed informed of emerging careers and occupations via WorkForce WV's Labor Market Information website. DRS Employment Specialists have also continuously collected employment information from their business contacts. This information is shared within the WDS. DRS registers its job-ready consumers with WorkForce WV in order to better serve employers by providing them with a base of potential employees.

Strategy 1.4: Develop common IT system to be used by core partners.

Representatives from the 3 core partners meet on a regular basis to create a document outlining the required data elements to be shared and how those elements will be exchanged. Through the Re-employment Systems Integration Dislocated Worker Grant (RSI-DWG), the three core partner agencies continue to develop an integrated data sharing system. WorkForce West Virginia will modify the MACC to extend the integrated registration and case management system to incorporate sharing of customer information with the West Virginia's Division of Rehabilitation Services title IV programs and the West Virginia Adult Education title II programs. Each partner will be able to query data in real time to obtain information for the customer to review and correct as necessary prior to program enrollment. In addition, ongoing service delivery can be reflected in all partner systems by utilizing additional real time data exchanges. Each partner will integrate the data from the other systems into their current case management system in ways that are familiar to their case managers reducing the need to retrain front line staff. To fully support this undertaking, the MACC's underlying hardware and system level software will be upgraded to a private cloud architecture. This upgrade will allow Workforce West Virginia to quickly respond to changes in workload as well as maintain 24x7 availability.

Anticipated Benefits:

o Customers will not be required to enter or provide duplicative information across partner systems, reducing customer frustration.

o Case managers will be informed of relevant activities related to a particular customer allowing for more intensive service delivery.

o Programs will be able to better coordinate the delivery of services in order to eliminate duplicate services.

Goal 2: Customer—Driven Approach (Individual & Employer)

We will create an approach based on the needs of the job seekers as well as the needs of the employer. Our workforce development system must examine the needs of the employer, assess the skills and skills gaps of the workforce and then create solutions to ensure maximum benefit to both customer groups.

Strategy 2.1: Work with employers to identify true workforce needs.

Employer's needs in Region 1 are identified through one-on-one meetings, partner team meetings consisting of local Economic Development Authorities, representatives from the Governor's Guaranteed Workforce Program, as well as roundtable discussions sponsored by local chambers, Economic Development Authorities and the WV Manufacturing Extension Partnership. A spring Business Summit is planned which will provide a greater opportunity to identify needs throughout sector strategies and promote business and education collaborations.

Region 2 has affiliate sites on the campus of Community and Technical Colleges and assisting Southern CTC and Mountwest CTC to identify the needs of employers. Their Governing Boards are composed of local employers who take an active interest in what direction they are heading. This day to day communication and co-operative effort enables individuals at all levels of organizations to share common knowledge.

Region 3 has been collaborating with local labor unions to help identify their growing needs. By their statements, the trend is recognizing the age level within their labor halls are "baby boomers' and will be leaving the industry within the next few years, leaving them, perhaps, with a large skill gap amongst many trades.

HRDF's Youth Career Pathways, funded by the Region III Workforce Development Board, is meeting the need of youth and expanding access to partnerships with employers using contracts, as well as general partnerships. All youth have the opportunity to participate in various work activities, which may include mock interviews with local employers, worksite tours that promote awareness of types of positions and their availability in the local area, or job fairs where employers are hiring on the spot, amongst others.

Region 3 recently worked with BridgeValley CTC on developing an electrical lineman class course. We met with not only the school, but the potential employers. Potential employment in the field will be high paying, life sustaining positions. We have also been working to introduce a "DRONE" course that would end with the participant securing an FCC license to fly a commercial drone which will be used in the upcoming construction projects proposed by state. Drones equipped with sharp lens capability will be able to inspect bridges, cell towers, power towers and a host of numerous construction projects that would normally require man-hours to complete.

Region 4 Continues to work with employers through our sector strategy teams: Healthcare, Manufacturing and IT. Needs are discussed by employers and addressed by WDB and resource partners.

1. Manufacturing Sector Group: Common job descriptions have been created for the Manufacturing sector group. The Manufacturing Sector will meet with WVMA to discuss partnering in 2018 for a Manufacturing Day experience for high school students in the MOV.

2. The Healthcare sector continues to work with WV legislation issues that are hindering being able to hire qualified LPN instructors.

3. IT Sector is working on a Tech Camp in partnership with WVUP for 13-17-year-olds for 2018 summer, as well as creating common job descriptions for (yet to be determined) jobs.

After engaging employers and discussing their workforce needs, Region 5 Core and Required Partners work together to provide appropriate solutions that involve the coordination and delivery of Work-Based Training Programs and Services, like the On-the-Job (OJT) Program, Customized Training and Incumbent Worker Training. The region's Business Services Team (BST) strengthens relations with area employers by researching their workforce needs and subsequently providing them with access to a talent pipeline, especially for industry sectors experiencing a shortage of talent. The BST conducts informational session where businesses learn about grants, tax credits and other services available to help them become more competitive.

The Region 6 WDB On the Job Training policy and Transitional Job policy have been changed to allow for increased reimbursement rates with employers who will utilize those types of training to meet their hiring and training needs. Current program year to date, 23 employers have participated as Worksite Providers of Occupational Exploration or through On the Job Training contracts. The Region 6 WDB continues to work with Aerospace employers and the Mid Atlantic Aerospace Complex in North Central West Virginia in order to assist them in meeting the increasing needs of the Aerospace and Manufacturing sectors.

The Region 7 WDB has quarterly Business Services/Implementation Team meetings with employers and partners who deliver business services in the region. Sector Partner Strategy meetings are held in conjunction with the community and technical colleges (Blue Ridge CTC and Eastern WV CTC) in our region.

Use of DRS Employment Specialists -DRS used its Employment Specialists to gather information regarding employers at the local level, including information regarding job placements for individuals with disabilities and regarding current and expected employer needs.

DRS has an in-house Employer Services Section that specializes in providing employers with disability-related information, services, and pre-screened job seekers. The DRS Employer Services Section has 11 Employment Specialists that cover all 55 counties in West Virginia. Each Employment Specialist has a unique understanding of local labor market information (LMI) including what jobs are available, what jobs are in demand or decline, and employer networks.

DRS' team of Employment Specialists provided business owners and employers with critical business options and assistance in staffing, employee retention strategies, education on

disability-related issues, job accommodations, and information about financial incentives for employers who hire individuals with disabilities.

Direct contact with employers is a key strategy to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities for vocational rehabilitation (VR) consumers, including students with disabilities. Employment Specialists therefore contact employers directly to identify current and future job openings. To facilitate this, DRS utilizes labor market information provided by WorkForce WV to identify the top employers in each county; contact is always made with the top ten employers in each county. DRS Employment Specialists conducted over 1,000 employer visits with more than 800 employers in both FYs 2016 and 2017. Information from these employer visits is entered into the MACC system and is available to all partner agencies.

When meeting with employers, Employment Specialists provide valuable information, including the DRS Employer Resource Guide. The resource guide provides information regarding staffing services, training programs and incentives for hiring people with disabilities, financial incentives, accessibility assessments, accommodating employees with disabilities, basic disability etiquette, attitudinal barriers, the Americans with Disabilities Act, locating a DRS office, and where to find additional resources.

Each Local WDB has a DRS representative who is active in the Board's activities and decision-making process.

The Employer Services Section maintains a database of each DRS-employer interaction with VR employment specialists. The information collected includes the business name, contact person, and current job openings by occupation. If needed, a referral to the DRS Rehabilitation Technology Unit is made to address workplace accommodations. This list is distributed to Counselors to potentially match a job-ready VR consumer with a current job opening. Through positive working relationships, 19 employers, including some of the largest in the state, now send job postings directly to DRS' Employer Services Section.

Strategy 2.2: Assess skill gaps and needs of individuals seeking employment and/or training.

Region 3 currently has the successful "Women Work" pre-apprenticeship program in Kanawha County. We have met routinely with labor unions and our local USDOL apprenticeship representative to discuss how we can better serve our labor halls and our employers who have apprenticeship programs in-house.

Region 5 area employers are provided access to a number of Employer Programs and Services that can help them more readily identify individuals to fill current job postings, like: On-the-Job (OJT) Training; Customized Training; and, Incumbent Worker Training. All of this is done to promote more Work-Based Training in the region to ensure that employers maintain a competitive position and ensure their workers are as skilled and effective as possible.

Region 5 continues to work with area schools and institutions in examining/analyzing existing curriculum against the needs of targeted industry-related skills certifications. Area schools and institutions are doing a much better job identifying gaps in existing curriculum and developing new curriculum to fill skills gaps.

DRS completed Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs) for 4,225 individuals with disabilities in federal fiscal year (FY) 2016 and 3,637 individuals with disabilities in FY 2017. These IPEs follow an assessment made by counselors to determine the individuals' skills, needs, and desires pertinent to employment, as well as vocational counseling and guidance to help determine an appropriate employment goal.

Strategy 2.3: Ensure that individuals with barriers, especially those with disabilities, to employment have increased access to and for opportunities for employment, education, training, and support services.

The Region 1 Transitional Jobs Program provides work-based learning experiences and support services for those with chronic unemployment and many barriers to work, e.g., re-entry customers and individuals in recovery, many of which also have disabilities. Our partnership with Adult Education provides additional trainings and services to our customers in transition.

Region 2 WDB has a longstanding, co-operative efforts with Job Services, WV Rehab Services and TANF division of DHHR. Region 2 and these State Agencies have worked together to advance individuals in employment and training by working together with an individual to determine the services needed and how those services can be provided. We refer and co-operatively assess individuals to determine a recommended pathway for their success.

Region 2 One Stop provided a bus from 2 different areas of region to attend Construction Job Fairs to investigate job opportunities in a statewide road construction project and within the construction industry. Region 2 One-Stop is sponsoring March Madness Career Expo in Huntington, WV that will enable not only applicants to learn what businesses are hiring but will assist all partners to learn more about the businesses that are hiring and what jobs are available.

Region 4 is intent on providing accessible services to persons in all walks of life, regardless of ability/disability. The One Stop Managers Team has created an Inclusion Team to make sure that the not only the physical location is accessible, but that services are accessible to all as well. The Inclusion Team is responsible for a "re-work" of the Comprehensive One Stop Centers seating and clearing unused seating to make a more open path for persons with disabilities, and space at tables in the One Stops are marked for wheelchair access.

DRS has assisted in the setup and design of Region 5 American Job Centers in an effort to enhance the delivery of services to individuals with disabilities. WVDRS provides services such as training, job development, job placement, etc., to assist individuals with disabilities as well.

DRS registers its job-ready consumers with WorkForce WV in order to better serve employers by providing them with a base of potential employees.

DRS continues to work with agencies within the criminal justice system to improve services to individuals with disabilities. During the first half of Program Year 2017, 50 individuals referred by WV correctional institutions have become DRS consumers. Additionally, DRS has served 115 individuals with a self-reported ex-offender status.

DRS also works with the WV Division of Corrections, the Parole Services Employment Coordinator, and Oxford Houses in WV to jointly serve individuals residing in sober living homes across the state.

DRS is also working with the Parole Services Employment Coordinator to improve ongoing efforts to effectively serve parolees with disabilities who are seeking employment.

DRS will be presenting at the WV Division of Probation's Statewide Probation Education Conference to inform and improve outreach efforts among probationers with disabilities.

DRS is partnering with the Director of Community Services within the WV Division of Juvenile Services to better serve youth with disabilities involved in the juvenile justice system, particularly those attending school at the community-based youth reporting centers.

DRS has continued collaborative efforts with the WV Bureau of Behavioral Health and Health Facilities (BHHF) to expand employment opportunities for individuals with behavioral health challenges (e.g., mental health, substance use disorders, and developmental disabilities). During the first half of Program Year 2017, 284 individuals referred by mental health providers have become DRS consumers.

To better serve individuals with traumatic brain injuries, DRS collaborates with the WV Bureau for Medical Services to improve access to resources for its consumers.

DRS is also a member of the Bringing Recovery Supports to Scale Technical Assistance Center Strategy (BRSS TACS). In coordination with BHHF, BRSS TACS has developed an action plan. DRS will identify strategies for ensuring the credentialing process is accessible and relevant to people with all types of disabilities. DRS will also assist in the development and dissemination of a directory of recovery support services available in WV, including access to recovery coaches, recovery residences, peer centers, and other recovery supports.

Strategy 2.4: Make available training programs that solve both the needs of employers and individuals.

On-the-Job Training as well as Transitional Jobs, provides benefits to employers in Region 1 who are willing to train individuals to meet their needs and provide those individuals with opportunities to receive training and/or work-based experience while earning a wage. A spring Business Summit will be held to inform and promote the benefits of non-traditional Registered Apprenticeships to businesses throughout Region 1.

Region 2 WDB provides an aggressive array of employment products that includes OJT. As of January, 62 positions have been developed from 72 business contacts in the Region. Career and Technical Centers are now included as a resource.

Region 3 is working with the local DOL rep to obtain a list of Registered Apprenticeship programs statewide. Region 3 works with "Women Work", a pre-apprenticeship exclusively for women. The Office of Apprenticeship will provide technical assistance to grantees and will promote the creation and growth of apprenticeship programs in Region 3 will build new, and strengthen existing partnerships, with employers to increase work-based learning experiences.

Region 3 is consulting with a start-up enterprise on converting the abandoned land mines of West Virginia to agricultural enterprise by growing lavender. Apparently, lavender thrives on soil that has been exposed to the mining industry. The start-up enterprise is working with EDA and ARC funding at present but once incorporated, they are expected to grow significantly statewide. Region 3 referred that consultant to BridgeValley and at this point, they are preparing course curriculum that will be applicable to the agricultural industry anywhere. It will have a variety of courses, including entrepreneurship classes and soil mixing, chemical courses. It will be a certificate course.

Region 3 will continue to support the "Simulated Workplace" in the Career and Technical Centers of Kanawha County. The SW project provides a real-life work experience in the classroom. Kanawha County has: Ben Franklin Career and Technical Center; Garnet Career and Technical School, and Carver Career and Technical Center. Region 3 will support the state strategy in the development and implementation of fast-tracked learning opportunities.

Region 4 has transitioned many youth work experiences into OJT's and helped create transitional job opportunities while providing some additional support services. WDB-MOV is working closely with apprenticeship trades to help provide training assistance, as well as work related out of pocket costs an apprentice will need.

Our priority in Region 5 is to increase training and education for job seekers, especially those with barriers to employment, to meet the needs of employers. Through regular meetings and frequent communications between Region 5, the Job Center Operator, Core and Required Partners, we stay informed of emerging careers and occupations through the sharing of current labor market data. In partnership with ABE and Career & Technical Education Schools/Institutions, we are integrating technical training and basic skills education that should lead to industry-recognized credentials and opportunities to continue a Career Pathway.

The Region 6 WDB has re-evaluated its' ITA policy tuition funding levels and determined that an increase in the tuition level will expand the opportunities of customers considering training. The policy increased tuition levels based on the length of the training.

Region 6 continues to support Apprenticeships through inclusion of registered Apprenticeship opportunities on the regional training provider list to promote them as a desirable means of obtaining training and certification while working to support the financial needs of the participants. Additionally, the Region 6 WDB has funded the WV Women Work Pre-Apprenticeship program as a non-traditional career pathway into specific Trade apprenticeships.

Region 6 WDB continues to work with Aerospace Employers and the Mid Atlantic Aerospace Complex in North Central West Virginia to assist them in meeting the increasing needs of the Aerospace and Manufacturing Sectors.

The Region 7 WDB works with employer partnerships, community and technical colleges, secondary and post-secondary schools to establish credentials that demonstrate job readiness, the attainment of employability skills, and measurable skill gains aligned to career pathways for individuals with barriers to employment especially those with disabilities.

DRS continues to inform its consumers about available career pathway programs available through Adult Education, Career and Technical Education, the Community and Technical College System, and four-year colleges. In 2016, DRS assisted 1,650 consumers with four-year college training, 423 consumers with junior/community college training and 259 consumers with other types of occupational/vocational training. In 2017, DRS assisted 1,660 consumers with four-year college training, 433 consumers with junior/community college training, and 326 consumers with other types of occupational/vocational training.

DRS continued to promote the expansion community rehabilitation programs to expand their services into potentially unserved or underserved areas. DRS identified new community rehabilitation programs to increase the availability of supported employment services (i.e., job coaching) for West Virginians with significant disabilities. In FY 2015, DRS identified 91 CRPs to serve West Virginians with disabilities. As of the beginning of 2018, the agency has identified 101 CRPs. The agency also emphasized job coaching for DRS consumers who are not in the supported employment program.

Goal 3: Career Pathways Development

It is imperative that the workforce development system provide education and training for skills that lead to quality employment in high—demand jobs or entry—level occupations that lead to high demand jobs. Career pathways must be diverse with multiple entry and exit points allowing individuals of varying abilities, including low—skilled adults and youth with multiple barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities, to have realistic access to pathways. The State will support career pathways that help adults and youth enter the labor force and/or advance among multiple occupations, advance within an occupation or move to a new occupation that has similar skills to a previous occupation.

Strategy 3.1: Ensure career pathways development as set forth in WIOA is followed.

Apprenticeship shows the ease of career pathways in many types of occupations. Region 2 Career Planners use this method of following the pathway in any occupation as you gain knowledge and skills you continue to progress through the training steps. We discuss the Career Pathway of our OJT positions that are developed and how pathways may split off to other pathways depending on your abilities and interest.

Industry-led partnerships are coupled with Career Pathways. Region 5 Job Center Operator, Core and Required Partners have implemented Career Pathways initiatives in Health Care, IT and CDL Training. Career Pathways Services are diverse with multiple entry and exit points that allow individuals with varying degrees of ability to have realistic access to pathways.

DRS continues to inform its consumers about available career pathway programs available through Adult Education, Career and Technical Education, the Community and Technical College System, and four-year colleges. In 2016, DRS assisted 1,650 consumers with four-year college training, 423 consumers with junior/community college training and 259 consumers with other types of occupational/vocational training. In 2017, DRS assisted 1,660 consumers with four-year college training, 433 consumers with junior/community college training, and 326 consumers with other types of occupational/vocational training.

Strategy 3.2: Enhance current career pathways system.

Region 1 is has developed a Partner Contact Spreadsheet that will help easily navigate across career pathways. We are currently developing training workshops to notify customers of their career pathway options. These workshops can be presented with partnering agencies.

Region 2 Career Planners meet with the faculty and counselors of Southern and Mountwest Career and Technical Colleges that are affiliated sites of our One-Stop to gain a better understanding of how participants can start on one career pathway and branch off to another pathway, potentially leading to additional training and enhancing your earning potential.

Region 3 is eager to work with the "Registered Apprenticeship" programs. Staff has met numerous times with our local Department of Labor representative to ensure that we are on target to roll-out programs that meet the needs of our employers. The Robert C. Byrd Institute has applied for and was awarded a grant of substantial value to roll out their apprenticeship program. Kanawha County also supports participants in a pre-apprenticeship program, "Women Work", which is also a nationally registered program.

Region 4 contracted One-Stop Coordinator and the One- Stop Management Team will continue working toward a desk manual of Career Pathways based on the Demand Occupation List within the MOV-WDB region. The Career Pathway manual will align occupations within industries as well as required degree, diploma, or certification. Career Planners will promote a career pathway system in MOV that includes ITA services potentially followed by OJT with an employer to complete or continue the career path of an individual. Working with employers to expand the career path of their employees through Incumbent Worker training to expand the skill sets of current employees and promote the development of new technology on the job.

The Northern Panhandle workforce development system allows customers to receive Career Pathway Services at any stage. Industry-led partnerships are being developed as a way to connect with the regional economic outlook. The needs of industry are tied to workforce projects that include training, recruitment industry sector partnerships, Career Pathways development and enhancement of training options. Region 5 will use Adult Basic Education (ABE) Career Pathways materials as a way of coordinating education and workforce activities with relevant secondary and post-secondary activities.

The Region 6 WDB has trained 57 individuals using Sector Partnership National Emergency Grant Funds in the areas of healthcare, energy, IT, and manufacturing.

DRS, through its involvement with the Interagency Collaborative Team, stays up-to-date with ongoing Sector Partnership programs. DRS consumers are made aware of these opportunities, as appropriate.

The Employer Services Section also worked with employers to better serve transitioning youth with disabilities, including providing career exploration opportunities for students with disabilities through the Positive Outcomes within Education and Rehabilitation (POWER) program. POWER is a job shadowing program that offers transitioning students, who may be having a difficult time choosing a career path, the opportunity to experience an occupation by spending time with a professional working in the students' vocational goal/career field of interest. The POWER program allows the student the opportunity to experience an occupation prior to committing to training. It guides the student to take a

serious, realistic look at the occupation, allowing the student to make a more informed choice. Currently, there are 81 employers statewide that participate in the POWER program.

DRS works with employers to develop OJT opportunities. When appropriate, DRS refers its consumers to those employers for OJT. DRS provided OJT to 40 of its consumers in 2016 and 38 of its consumers in 2017.

Collaboration with WorkForce WV - DRS has maintained regular communication with WorkForce WV to stay abreast of trends in employment, including changes in education and training requirements. This has been accomplished through regular meetings of the workforce development system (WDS), written communications, teleconferences, and other media. DRS, particularly through its Employment Specialists, stayed informed of emerging careers and occupations via WorkForce WV's Labor Market Information website. DRS Employment Specialists have also continuously collected employment information from their business contacts. This information is shared within the WDS. DRS registers its job-ready consumers with WorkForce WV in order to better serve employers by providing them with a base of potential employees. Information from these employer visits is entered into the MACC system and is available to all partner agencies.

Strategy 3.3: Educate individuals (job—seekers and employers) and encourage career pathways in training and employment environments.

Region 1 provides counseling/career services to support individuals with their career goals. We utilize resources such as the WorkForce GPS and WV Career Pathways to help individuals navigate through the career pathway system to enter training that meets the demands of local businesses.

Region 2 encourages our OJT employers to discuss long range skill development and the pathway of learning leads to an understanding that the job-seeker has a pathway to advancement and increased income which also helps employer with attitude and retention. Employers who provide Incumbent Worker training to present employees find the loyalty gained is worth the investment.

Region 3 is supporting a pre-apprenticeship program in Kanawha County through WIOA funding, a program for women and look forward to participating with the Nationally Registered Apprenticeship programs that potentially offer a lifetime economically sustainable wage.

Region 3 WIB has linked our website to the state workforce website to support the dissemination of information to Kanawha County public regarding career pathways and information provided by the Department of Education around initiatives such as Simulated Workplace.

Region 4 contracted One-Stop Coordinator and the One- Stop Management Team goal of creating a Career Pathway desk manual is that it will serve as resource for Adult, Youth, and Partner Agency front-line staff to utilize in working with program participants to develop training and employment goals. The Career Pathway desk manual will be a resource utilized by the MOV-WDB contracted Business Service Rep. to assist the review of MOV-WDB Region employer needs based on the outlined training programs. training curriculums of specific programs, and skill-sets obtained through training program completion.

Region 4 continues to offer career path information in the MOV via the Green and Purple Books (MOVERG's) for Manufacturing, Healthcare, Construction, and Oil and Gas (Energy) by "driving" people to the wdbmov.com website for information on those career opportunities. We will continue developing pathways to promote the opportunities with employers in the MOV using the Sector meetings to vet the career paths.

Career Pathways Services offered in the Northern Panhandle WDB involve a combination of education, training and Supportive Services that align with the skill needs of industries. Services provide a "road map" for job seekers that detail certificate or degree requirements and employment outlook that lead that individual to this/her desired education and employment goals. Alignment of these Services offers job seekers and employers direct access to a broad range of services that are adapted and leveraged to address an individual's and employer's needs.

The Region 6 WDB has funded the WV Women Work Pre-Apprenticeship programs as a non-traditional career pathway into specific Trade apprenticeships.

The Region 7 WDB helps establish a statewide and regional list of industry-recognized credentials with a focus on identifying credentials along established career pathways.

DRS' vocational rehabilitation counselors provide vocational counseling and guidance and work one-on-one with consumers to develop Individualized Plans for Employment (IPE). These IPEs ensure informed consumer choice and a well-defined pathway to an in-demand occupation or career that is consistent with the individuals skills, abilities, and interests.

DRS has created PathwaysWV.org, a website for students with disabilities to gain valuable and relevant information on career pathways, education and training opportunities, and current and future in-demand occupations.

Goal 4: Increase Opportunities for Youth

Unemployment rates for older youth and young adults remain substantially higher than those for the population as a whole. The likelihood of employment is highly correlated with educational levels, rates of employment and labor market participation for individuals with secondary credentials or less are substantially lower than for those with postsecondary credentials. For these reasons, the workforce development system must recognize the employment challenges faced by youth, particularly those without postsecondary credentials. Partners must work together to alleviate barriers and create opportunities for our youth.

Strategy 4.1: Implement new WIOA regulations regarding youth.

Region 1 WDB is increasingly working with employers who will provide paid work experiences for Out of School Youth. We are providing participants with relevant work experience and training. Many of these positions have led to regular employment.

For Region 3 Workforce Investment Board of Kanawha County partnering with Human Resource Development Foundation (HRDF), Recruitment and Enrollment is the cornerstone of a successful program. HRDF makes every effort to create recruitment opportunities, and is thankful for agencies such as Adult Education, Juvenile Justice System and programs, such as Mountaineer Challenge Academy, where staff are given opportunities to meet potentially eligible youth through coordinated efforts and the offering of presentations.

Strategy 4.2: Make youth services a priority within the workforce development system

The same contractor that operates Youth programs in Region 2 also operates Employment Products (OJT, Transitional, Incumbent Worker, etc.). Employment team has developed 62 positions, filled 50 with 20 of those being 18-24 years old

Region 3 will encourage the co-enrollment of high risk Out-of-school Youth, ages 18-24, as both WIOA Adult (Title II) and WIOA Youth participants. This has been realized through dual enrollments with the YouthBuild Program in the region, as well as the Employment for Independent Living Program, which serves foster youth. Blending and braiding these resources only increases the level of support offered to enrolled youth.

Region 3 WIB will collaborate with YouthBuild, Job Corps, and AmeriCorps sites and will encourage inclusion of those partnerships in the region. AmeriCorps Programs serve their members by creating jobs and providing pathways to opportunity for young people entering the workforce. Region 3 has an MOU on file with our local partner KISRA.

Region 5 maintains a Youth Workforce Development System that steers Youth to post-secondary education and sustainable employment. The NPWDB, Inc. maintains a strong partnership with YSS, Inc., the education community and area employers. The NPWDB, Inc. and YSS, Inc. has developed and implemented strategies that connect Youth with meaningful training, and subsequently, family-sustaining careers through past experiences, research and best practices.

Region 6WDB continues to work with HRDF (Youth Contractor) to expand the use of transitional jobs, OJT, and work experience for the youth of the region. Dual enrollment in the Adult program has been promoted over that last two years to provide the broadest array of services possible for the youth based upon their assessed needs. Post-secondary training through ITA's has been promoted to the Out of School youth. To date, three youth participants are participating in ITA's.

The youth program in Region 6 continues to partner with YouthBuild to enroll participants in the WIOA program. The Employment for Independent Living Program, which serves foster youth, also works with and co-enrolls in the Region VI YouthReady program

The Region 7 WDB provides applicable referrals to Job Corps as well as allows Job Corps Admissions staff to utilize the One-Stop Career Stop for intake and counseling as needed.

DRS counselors provided Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students with disabilities, especially job exploration counseling, in order to give students with disabilities and their parents/guardians a better understanding of labor market conditions, current and emerging career opportunities, and the necessary education and training requirements related to those opportunities. In program year (PY) 2016, DRS provided Pre-ETS to 2,185 students with disabilities in WV.

In addition to ongoing program activities, DRS hosted summer workshops [Career Exploration Opportunity (CEO) Summits] for transition students entering into their senior year of high school. In 2016, the CEO Summits were held in 7 areas across the state; in 2017, the Summits were held in 11 areas. DRS staff participating included the Pre-ETS Counselor, Employment Specialist, and Rehabilitation Service Associates (RSAs) assigned to the Pre-ETS territory. Class size for each of the workshops was approximately 30 students. Students

earned minimum wage for the time that they attend. DRS also included representatives from WorkForce WV and WV Adult Education to participate in the workshops to provide additional information to the students. A concerted effort was made to introduce Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) to students in the CEO Summits. Topics covered included career planning, career preparation, SSI/SSDI Information, understanding the importance of necessary personal documents, communication, conflict management, employer expectations, attendance and punctuality, timeliness of task completion, being able to work without supervision, positive work ethic, managing multiple tasks, high-growth jobs, personal brand, and job hunting tools such as resumes, cover letters, interviews, and digital profiles.

Throughout the academic year, DRS Employment Specialists also provided Pre-ETS at the local high schools. The Employment Specialists conducted mock interviewing, career exploration, and other employment related topics. The Providing Opportunities Within Education and Rehabilitation (POWER) program provides students that ability to job shadow careers that they are interested in. The Employment Specialists have worked to identify a vast array of employers located throughout the State. There are currently 81 employers involved in the POWER Program.

In 2016 and 2017, DRS partnered with Community Access, Incorporated (CAI) to implement a program, entitled "Pathways to the Future," to support the design and implementation of programming and outreach while addressing the new direction mandated by WIOA. Specifically, the program addressed the five required Pre-ETS for high school students with disabilities through an expansion of the Student Transition to Employment Program (STEP). The program assisted school districts by offering training and technical assistance in setting up community-based work experience programs for students with disabilities. The project helped level the playing field between resource-rich metropolitan areas and isolated rural settings that often have few services available. In addition, a strong statewide outreach to teachers, parents, students, and other VR stakeholders was a component of the project. The project had the following goals:

1. To assist school districts in setting up community-based Work Exploration programs.

2. To develop statewide parent training network utilizing the Parent Community Resource Centers.

3. To develop a network of specialists to work with DRS, WorkForce WV, and WV Department of Education (WVDOE) staff.

4. To develop a statewide cross-sector outreach program with a strong emphasis on traditionally underserved populations.

DRS has maintained a "Pathways to the Future" website (www.pathwayswv.org), which serves as a self-service resource for students with disabilities statewide to receive Pre-ETS. The website provides valuable information and tools regarding career planning, education planning, independent living, self-determination, and work-based learning. The website was bolstered by banners that were placed in high schools in all 55 counties of the state. Additionally, several pages of the College Foundation of West Virginia's website (www.cfwv.com) have links to the Pathways website. These banners and links directed students with disabilities to the website and its resources.

Strategy 4.3: Offer youth a clear path from their current situation to success.

Career specialists in Region 1 are working diligently to incorporate our 14 key elements and give our youth the career pathways they need to succeed. We have participated in joint projects and activities such as the Build It Keep It Share It Program with Mission West Virginia and the WV PASS Initiative. We are currently partnering with the Community Technical College System to provide Affordable Career Training workshops to area youth throughout the Career and Technical Education Centers in Region 1. These workshops will give students an overview of available programs and grants.

Career Advantage, youth program in Region 4 has set in place the system to provide a pathway to success for individuals who are willing to put forth the effort. From "Boot Camp" job readiness training, to Mentoring activities with local employers, this program continues to prepare young adults for success in the workforce, providing them with appropriate work experiences and activities to become tomorrow's leaders.

In order to ensure success for Region 5 Youth Participants, including those with disabilities, we are providing them with the following: Intensive Year-Round Programs and Services that meet their education and employment needs: Linkage to Career Technical Schools and Post-Secondary Schools that align Programs and Services with Career Pathways in response to current labor market data; Youth activities that lead to the attainment of a secondary school diploma, a recognized post-secondary credential or preparation for post-secondary education and training opportunities; Access to activities that enhance "choices;" Access to resources and funding streams that support pathways to provide them with education, skills and access to good jobs and successful careers; and Supportive Services.

The Region 6 YouthReady program has expanded support services to include a Housing Assistance support, based upon need, which will aid in providing a much-needed home base stability for youth trying to pursue steady training and or employment.

The HRDF YouthReady program in Region VI has promoted the youth program through visits to facilities such as the Mountaineer Challenge Academy, Kenneth Honey Rubenstein Center, and participation in Partner meetings, website marketing on the HRDF website and Facebook pages, and through marketing on the Region 6 One Stop Partner Network Facebook page. WVDRS continues to work with HRDF to provide referrals to the youth program as appropriate. A recruitment event held in Elkins, WV targeted youth with disabilities, with the youth referred by WVDRS to HRDF. Targeted recruitment of youth with disabilities through events like this will continue.

In 2016 and 2017, DRS worked with 8 county school systems to develop work exploration programs for students with disabilities. A Work Exploration Program Implementation Manual for school systems to utilize is available on PathwaysWV.org. This detailed guide can assist school systems in the development, or enhancement, of cost-effective work exploration programs.

To ensure alignment, all WIOA core programs have mutual memorandums of understanding that help facilitate an integrated service delivery system. The WIOA core partners will continue to maintain communication at the state and local levels on a regular basis. Information will be shared among the partners in order to provide better and more efficient services to individuals enrolled in one or more programs and to employers served by the system.

All core partners are represented on the State's Interagency Collaborative Team (ICT), a group centered around WorkForce West Virginia to provide on—going attention to addressing issues that will build and continually improve the overall WDS. The team is the single State—level interagency group for addressing issues or concerns regarding building and maintaining the most effective and efficient implementation of the overall WDS in WV. All partner agencies participate in regular, monthly meetings of the ICT, and is one of the signatories of the ICT Memorandum of Understanding, which is drafted annually. The ICT membership includes:

- WorkForce West Virginia
- Wagner—Peyser/Labor Exchange
- Bureau of Senior Services
- Council for Community and Technical College Education
- Department of Education and the Arts
- West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services
- Department of Education
- Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development
- Office of Institutional Education Programs
- Department of Health and Human Resources
- Division of Corrections
- Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety
- Regional Jail and Correctional Facility Authority
- West Virginia Development Office
- Business and Industrial Development

All core partners have a Memorandum of Understanding with each of the seven local Workforce Development Board regions in the State, and is represented within each local board. Core partners also provide services through One—Stop Centers located in the seven regions. Core partners also represented on the State's Workforce Development Board, which meets quarterly to assist in the development of a state plan that will enhance the capacity and performance of the WDS; align and improve the workforce programs and investments; and promote economic growth.

III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

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

A. STATE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include—

1. STATE BOARD FUNCTIONS

Describe how the State board will implement its functions under section 101(d) of WIOA (i.e. provide a description of Board operational structures and decision making processes to ensure such functions are carried out).

Training of the state board members

Training will be continual and will be in—person and electronically delivered. Orientation will be provided to all new members. Staff resources will be provided by WorkForce West Virginia to enable board to carryout functions.

The Board shall assist in implementing and overseeing a comprehensive state workforce system that prepares West Virginia citizens for employment opportunities offered by West Virginia businesses. The Board shall make recommendations regarding program implementation, operation, and modifications to all state agencies administering workforce investment programs. The Board shall also assist and encourage West Virginia's educational institutions and public assistance systems to improve their ability to prepare people for gainful employment.

The Governor appoints the members of the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) and designates one of the business representatives to serve as the Chairperson. The SWDB gives the Chairperson authority through the bylaws to create or dissolve committees and the taskforces in order to accomplish the state board functions of the Board as required under section 101 (d) of WIOA. The general Board meetings are scheduled to occur every quarter. Significant decisions are made with the approval of a simple majority of a Board quorum. Status updates on any current initiatives are given, as appropriate, to full Board during regular meetings and if action is required, the Board is able to act accordingly. Public notice of regular Board meetings will be provided to all members no less than seven days before the day of the meeting. All meetings of the Board will be publicly announced in advance and open and accessible to the general public.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGY

Describe how the lead State agency with responsibility for the administration of each core program or a Combined State Plan partner program included in this plan will implement the State's Strategies identified in Section II(c). above. This must include a description of—

A. CORE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES TO IMPLEMENT THE STATE'S STRATEGY

Describe the activities the entities carrying out the respective core programs will fund to implement the State's strategies. Also describe how such activities will be aligned across the core programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan and among the entities administering the programs, including using co-enrollment and other strategies, as appropriate.

***Below describes how the State will implement the strategies discussed in II(c) above.

Goal 1: Workforce Development System Integration

In order for WIOA to be successful, a seamless one—stop delivery system must be created. As resources become more and more limited, partners in the workforce development system must work together in order to provide maximum benefit to our customers.

Strategy 1.1: Work with partners to create a better understanding of what a truly integrated workforce system looks like.

• Coordinate and develop memorandums of understanding with all partners. These will be developed with a clear purpose of cooperation and service to all customers of the workforce system (individuals and employers).

• Share goals both locally and at the state level.

• Promote program integration in order to overcome silos and achieve unified goals.

Strategy 1.2: Ensure cross—training of all workforce development staff.

• The state will develop a comprehensive on—line training program for all workforce development staff. In depth information and on-line training platforms to enhance awareness, knowledge and skills is distributed regularly to WorkForce West Virginia's front-line staff. The materials cover disability topics, technology access, and related regulations and trends.

• Develop team—based case management for the customers at our one—stops. West Virginia will be moving toward team—based customer service as we work to develop a one—stop certification process. Training for one—stop partners and new tools will be needed to ensure consistency across West Virginia.

• A high priority will be placed on staff training in serving individuals with barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities. A Workforce Achievement type of certification will be developed to deliver a comprehensive training program for all staff at each level of the workforce system. It will support consistency and quality of service across the state.

• Technical training will be provided on the data—sharing IT system to all affected staff both at a regional and centralized location.

Strategy 1.3: Maintain frequent communication with all partners within the workforce development system.

• The state has monthly Interagency Collaborative Team Meetings to discuss workforce issues. The team consist of members from each agency subject to the reporting provisions of WIOA.

• Workforce development news and notices are maintained and updated frequently on the Workforce West Virginia website. www.workforcewv.org

• The state holds monthly workforce development board director meetings.

• The state holds quarterly state workforce development board meetings.

Strategy 1.4: Develop common IT system to be used by core partners.

• The state will develop IT system that will allow co—enrollment of individuals receiving services from the 3 core partners.

• The West Virginia WDS will utilize its integrated data system to monitor and evaluate the performance of the WIOA core partner programs in relation to the four state goals described above. The data collected for the common performance measures and the WIOA Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) will provide all of the data elements needed to monitor and evaluate performance on the state goals. Because these data are required to be collected by all WIOA core programs, there will be no additional burden posed on the programs.

Goal 2: Customer—Driven Approach (Individual & Employer)

The State will create an approach based on the needs of the job seekers as well as the needs of the employer. Our workforce development system must examine the needs of the employer, assess the skills and skills gaps of the workforce and then create solutions to ensure maximum benefit to both customer groups.

Strategy 2.1: Work with employers to identify true workforce needs.

• The State will use data and work with employers to identify the skills and competencies necessary to attain family—sustaining employment and will offer high quality training to individuals to obtain those skills.

• The State will promote and encourage sector strategies based on labor market information and employer need. This includes supporting the growth and expansion of the industry partnerships through increased state investment.

• The State will continue to encourage employers to participate in business—education partnerships. These partnerships connect schools, employers, and youth— serving community organizations with students and Out of School Youth (OSY) to provide career—related experiences and exposure opportunities for youth and young adults through soft skills development, internships, workplace shadowing, and career mentoring. When possible, business— education partnerships will recruit business representatives from Industry Partnerships, apprenticeship programs, or multi—employer groups that identify common workforce needs of businesses that provide jobs that pay.

• The State will rely on input from employers to validate the credentials developed as part of state and regional lists of recognized credentials, career pathways, and other statewide efforts.

• The State will develop and implement a workforce development survey to be sent to West Virginia employers. The State will utilize survey results in order to gain new and enhanced insights into workforce challenges and needs. The State will develop a dedicated survey unit focused on soliciting targeted employer input on a wide and diverse range of workforce issues as well as gauging the labor market from the employer perspective. Survey results will be used for strategic planning, measuring impact, and discovering opportunities.

• Governor's Office and agency executives will regularly meet with business leaders around the state to solicit feedback and ideas from employers.

Strategy 2.2: Assess skill gaps and needs of individuals seeking employment and/or training.

• The workforce system will provide comprehensive counseling to ascertain supportive service needs of individuals. Skills assessments will be provided in order to determine skills needs/upgrades pertinent to obtain desired employment.

• The State will encourage cross—program funding and programmatic integration of workforce preparation activities to develop employability skills, adult basic education, and occupational training, supplemented by supportive services, as part of career pathway models to ensure that the critical needs of individuals (including those with basic skills deficiencies) are met, allowing the greatest opportunity for employment success. When appropriate, job seekers will be co— enrolled between two or more core programs to accomplish this goal. In addition, integrated systems must incorporate customer—centric design components, where possible.

To demonstrate WorkForce West Virginia's encouragement of co-enrollment, the following numbers were queried from the MACC from July 1, 2016 through February 12, 2018:

• WP and WIOA Adult — 1,026

• WP and WIOA DW — 2,574

• WIOA DW and TAA - 310

• WIOA DW and NDWG — 1,454

• WIOA Adult and NDWG - 359

Strategy 2.3: Ensure that individuals with barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities, have increased access to and for opportunities for employment, education, training, and support services.

• The State will mainstream job seekers with barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities, to the maximum extent possible by offering realistic entry points into career pathways and by ensuring necessary supportive services are in place and coordinated across agencies, so that those individuals with the most significant barriers to employment are successful in accessing and navigating career pathways. When appropriate, job seekers will be co—enrolled between core and other partner programs in order to provide the most comprehensive services possible.

• Through integrated efforts, the WIOA core partners will increase awareness and access to services to individuals with barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities.

These efforts include maximizing resources, co—enrollment, and cross referrals, outreach and service delivery will allow for increased awareness and access to services.

Strategy 2.4: Make available training programs that solve both the needs of employers and individuals.

• The State will work with employer partnerships, community colleges, secondary and post—secondary certificate granting schools and LWDBs to establish micro— credentials that demonstrate job readiness, the attainment of employability skills and measurable skill gains aligned to career pathways for individuals with barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities. A component of this effort will include sharing best practices with the intent of scaling the effort statewide.

• The State will promote the development of Registered Apprenticeship programs, with a focus on non—traditional industries and occupations. The state will also support efforts of existing Registered Apprenticeship programs to recruit female and minority apprentices. The Office of Apprenticeship will provide technical assistance to grantees and will promote the creation and growth of apprenticeship programs beyond the grantees.

• The State will continue to foster relationships between the workforce development and adult education, post—secondary and secondary education systems to ensure system alignment, programs of study that support job seeker and employer needs, and leveraging of resources to provide students with the best possible chance for success. This includes continuing to look for ways to partner with education through competitive grant opportunities.

• The State will maintain a robust Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) to include performance data for WIOA students receiving training in all programs. This will allow for informed customer choice in selecting training programs and training providers. The State will ensure that there are a sufficient number of training providers serving individuals with barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities, on the ETPL.

• The Workforce Development System will work together to expand access to online education and training programs that result in industry—recognized credentials.

• The Workforce Development System will work together to develop and implement integrated education and training models that provide accelerated learning opportunities for youth and adults lacking a high school credential and/or who are basic skills deficient.

• The Workforce Development System will work together to build new and strengthen existing partnerships with employers to increase work—based learning experiences such as internships and apprenticeships that provide job seekers with the skills and credentials necessary to secure and advance in employment with family—sustaining wages. The State will encourage employers that receive state funds from economic development and other programs to utilize the public workforce development system and will give priority to employers providing high— quality jobs or jobs that are likely to lead to high— quality jobs.

Goal 3: Career Pathways Development

It is imperative that the workforce development system provide education and training for skills that lead to quality employment in high—demand jobs or entry—level occupations that lead to high demand jobs. Career pathways must be diverse with multiple entry and

exit points allowing individuals of varying abilities, including low—skilled adults and youth with multiple barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities, to have realistic access to pathways. The State will support career pathways that help adults and youth advance among multiple occupations, advance within an occupation or move to a new occupation that has similar skills to a previous occupation.

Strategy 3.1: Ensure career pathways development as set forth in WIOA is followed.

• The State adopts the WIOA Section 3(7) definition of career pathways.

• West Virginia Adult Education, Career and Technical Education and the Community and Technical College System of West Virginia will develop strategies to integrate career pathway programs meeting the requirements of WIOA. Existing career pathway programs will expand to include basic adult education offerings such as literacy and numeracy, English Language Acquisition (ELA), and high school equivalency instruction as well of contextualized instruction in bridge and pre— bridge programs, pre—apprentice programs and integrated education and training programs supporting next steps in the career pathways models. This integrated system will permit participants to enter the pathway at any of these levels in addition to entering at the postsecondary level.

Strategy 3.2: Enhance current career pathways system.

• The State will leverage the existing career pathways system to develop a comprehensive career pathway system that combines education, training, counseling, and support services from multiple programs, including secondary and postsecondary Career and Technical Education (CTE), Adult and Literacy education (WVAdultEd), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training, the Community and Technical College System (CTCS) of West Virginia and higher education financial assistance, in addition to core programs of WIOA.

• The State will continue to refine the Sector Partnership program to ensure career pathways are aligned to occupations that are high—demand, have higher skill needs and are likely to pay family—sustaining wages. The State will consult with LWDBs and engage employers to accomplish this goal.

• The State will also support placement of individuals with barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities, into quality entry—level jobs that provide the work experience and non—technical skills necessary to lead to employment in high— demand jobs, and will consult with LWDBs and engage employers to identify the career pathways for which such quality entry—level jobs can serve as pre—bridge and bridge models.

• The State will require On—the—Job Training (OJT) and incumbent worker training, whether provided through WIOA core programs or the industry partnerships, to be tied to a career pathway.

Strategy 3.3: Educate individuals (job—seekers and employers) and encourage career pathways in training and employment environments.

• The State will promote and support the creation of pre—apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship programs, (ApprenticeshipUSA) particularly in non— traditional occupations and for non—traditional populations, as part of relevant career pathway

models. The State will add apprenticeship opportunities to West Virginia WorkForce programs and will promote them as job/training options to job seekers.

• The State will establish statewide and regional lists of industry—recognized credentials with a focus on identifying credentials along established career pathways, including badges, micro—credentials and entry level credentials appropriate for individuals with barriers to employment. The lists will include academic credentials as well as credentials demonstrating job readiness and the attainment of employability skills through workforce preparation activities. The State will consult with LWDBs and engaged employers, including through Registered Apprenticeship programs and industry partnerships, to ensure that the credential lists reflect skills that are in demand.

• The State will enhance career guidance and navigation services to guide individuals, particularly individuals with barriers, especially those with disabilities, to employment and education, into programs and services that will provide them with an effective pathway to their career goals.

• The State will add information to the workforce development website regarding career pathways and will enhance information provided by the Department of Education around initiatives such as Simulated Workplace.

• The West Virginia Department of Education staff worked with numerous businesses and industries throughout the state to design Simulated Workplace. This new educational initiative was created to assist schools in integrating workplace environment protocols into the CTE programs that align with West Virginia workforce requirements. These protocols focus on transitioning the classroom to a student—driven "company" environment, random drug testing, professionalism, attendance, 5—S quality and safety. Simulated Workplace has enhanced instructional delivery of CTE and created a more engaged student. The Simulated Workplace environment provides students with the opportunity to take ownership of their individual performance as it impacts the overall success of their education while thriving in an authentic workplace culture. Simulated Workplace also encourages local business and industry experts to join onsite review teams to assist schools in meeting their workforce needs and expectations.

• Transcripted EDGE credit can be earned by these students to matriculate from secondary career technical education to the Community and Technical College System. The West Virginia EDGE was established in 2001 in Senate Bill 436. EDGE is an acronym for Earn a Degree—Graduate Early and is a result of the seamless curriculum initiative that focuses on curriculum alignment between educational levels. The alignment process identifies curriculum gaps, eliminates curriculum duplication and sets curriculum mastery levels to pre—determined standards while saving tuition money for students.

Goal 4: Increase Opportunities for Youth

Unemployment rates for older youth and young adults remain substantially higher than those for the population as a whole. The likelihood of employment is highly correlated with educational levels; rates of employment and labor market participation for individuals with secondary credentials or less are substantially lower than for those with postsecondary credentials. For these reasons, the workforce development system must recognize the employment challenges faced by youth, particularly those without postsecondary

credentials. Partners must work together to alleviate barriers and create opportunities for our youth.

Strategy 4.1: Implement new WIOA regulations regarding youth.

• Recognizing the new priority on OSY, the State will identify models and effective practices, including for recruitment, flexible enrollment (e.g. self—attestation, co— enrollment, career pathways and retention) to help local area staff successfully meet the needs of those individuals.

• The State will work with the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education, and also with local boards, to ensure that statistical models and negotiated performance levels are established and calibrated so that they accurately reflect the profiles of out—of—school youth being served within the State and in each local area.

Strategy 4.2: Continue serving youth as a priority within the workforce development system

• The State will support the development of transitional jobs, social enterprises and other work experience strategies to help OSY with limited work histories to develop the skills needed for workplace success.

• The State will encourage the co—enrollment of high—risk OSY, ages 18 to 24, as both WIOA Adult and WIOA Youth participants to allow for the leveraging of funds and provision of necessary services. Where appropriate, co—enrollment in Title II adult basic education services, EARN, TANF and other partner programs will also be encouraged. The State will offer technical assistance and effective—practice sessions to ensure the co—enrollment of OSY in WIOA Adult and WIOA Youth programs and to promote their co— enrollment in partner programs. The State will also continue to encourage the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for 18 to 24 year old youth, potentially combined with, either sequentially or concurrently, work—based learning opportunities. TANF, SNAP and other partner programs will refer clients for ITAs, as appropriate.

• The State will expand opportunities for youth to acquire post—secondary skills and credentials needed for high wage jobs through increased access to career and technical education programs and work—based learning experiences. The Departments of Education and the Community Technical College System will work cooperatively to explore and develop appropriate connections between WIOA youth activities and Perkins postsecondary and state—funded programming.

• The Department of Education will support the transformation and modernization of career and technical education (CTE) and align CTE with the career pathways recognized by the State.

• The State will support LWDB collaboration with YouthBuild, JobCorps, and AmeriCorps sites and will encourage inclusion of those partnerships in local plans. Strategy 4.3: Offer youth a clear path to success.

• To ensure that OSY have access to career pathways, the State will work with local boards to identify on—ramps, access points, and supports which enable participants to enter and successfully complete training and enter employment.

• The WV Division of Rehabilitation Services (WVDRS) has re—aligned its resources to increase and improve services to youth with disabilities, especially high school students with disabilities. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services has memorandums of understanding with all 55 county boards of education and has a vocational rehabilitation counselor assigned to each high school in the state. These counselors provide pre—employment transition services to students with disabilities to ensure students, and their parents, and school personnel are aware of available services, training, education, and employment options. Through the Positive Outcomes Within Education and Rehabilitation (POWER) program, students with disabilities have opportunities for job shadowing experiences. Through the Student Transition to Employment Program (STEP), students may receive services from teachers outside of the classroom, including job coaching and job placement. Youth may also continue to receive services from West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services after exiting high school. This often includes additional training and education required to achieve their chosen employment goal.

• The core agencies blend resources to provide more effective and efficient services to youth. This includes cross referrals and co—enrollment of consumers in addition to joint projects and activities at the state and regional level. In 2016, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services will be initiating a project, in conjunction with the other core partners, to assist school districts in setting up community—based work exploration programs. The project also includes a statewide cross—sector outreach component to market the services available to youth, parents, job seekers, and employers in West Virginia.

• The State will use the Office of Apprenticeship to promote apprenticeship and pre—apprenticeship opportunities to youth.

(A) Core Program Activities to Implement the State's Strategy. Describe the activities the entities carrying out the respective core programs will fund to implement the State's strategies. Also describe how such activities will be aligned across the core programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan and among the entities administering the programs, including using co—enrollment and other strategies, as appropriate.

Core Program Activities to Implement State Strategy

Each WIOA core agency has roles and responsibilities in serving consumers and employers through the One—Stop Center. These partners collaborate to better serve consumers utilizing these one—stop employment centers by sharing resources, reducing redundancies, and optimizing service delivery.Depending on the needs of individuals and the available services and resources from the programs (depending on eligibility), one or more agencies may provide services to a consumer. All three partners work with other agencies in various capacities to ensure its alignment with other WIOA programs.

To ensure the alignment of activities across programs, partners maintain ongoing communication to maintain awareness of the activities of other programs. In order to best serve consumers, state and local level staffs are kept well—informed of the services and other resources available from partner agencies. This communication occurs in several ways. At the state level, the Interagency Collaborative Team meets monthly to provide updates. At the local level, the three core partners are co—located at many American Job Centers, where daily interaction with partner agency staff occurs. Cross—training is also

available, if needed. These activities result in better services to American Job Center consumers because they are provided the most appropriate services while preserving resources for future consumers.

Further alignment of services will be conducted at the individual consumer level. As appropriate, consumers may be referred to any of the core partners. When this occurs and a consumer is served by more than one WIOA agency (co—enrolled), the benefits of West Virginia's integrated IT system become available to the consumer and service providers. The integrated system will update daily to inform service providers of the services that other agencies are providing a co—enrolled consumer. This knowledge will allow each agency to coordinate services while also avoiding the duplication of services. In addition, core partners will host and participate in community forums targeting special populations and provide public service announcements about services available. This system is in the process of being developed and in the initial stage of implementation Core and partner programs will collaborate to ensure that resources are leveraged and services are not duplicated. Integration among core partners enables the West Virginia Workforce System to remain flexible and adaptable while operating in an efficient and cost—effective manner.

The re—designed One—Stop services will provide improved access and efficiency, along with value— added services to customers of the state workforce system. System partners are responsible for the delivery of workforce education and training programs and related services, as well as education programs that support career preparation and advancement. Strategically, the programs and agencies serve either a common customer or are charged with achieving similar employment and education outcomes for their targeted customer groups, including those most in need and those with disabilities. These services will include:

• Providing services that facilitate the match between high—demand jobs, employers and job seekers;

• Providing employment, training, and retention services for eligible WIOA participants and prioritizing services to recipients of public assistance and other low—income individuals and individuals who are disabled and/or basic skills deficient, to spur financial self—sufficiency;

• Developing adult education and family literacy programs that ensure all adults have the basic education skills they need to contribute to their families and communities;

• Providing employment, training, and retention services to individuals with barriers to employment, including veterans, individuals with disabilities, trade—affected individuals, older individuals, ex—offenders, homeless individuals, long—term unemployed individuals, and youth;

• Encouraging the use of training services that provide portable, stackable and transferable credit and credentials;

• Providing "wrap around" support services, such as child care, unemployment insurance, and transportation to enable eligible individuals to work or participate in employment and training activities;

• Monitoring and evaluating compliance of local area service delivery for fiscal accountability and program effectiveness; and

• Providing technical assistance to local Boards and training providers to ensure the most effective delivery of workforce services.

The state will take further actions to coordinate services between WIOA core programs and non— core programs and services to create an effective career pathway system. These actions will include the following:

• The education agencies and educational institutions will work with the State WDB and LWDBs to build career pathways that include secondary and postsecondary career and technical education programs of study.

• The state will expand skill—building services funded through Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T), including leveraging federal funding available through SNAP E&T 50/50 funds for employment, training, and related support services, and coordinate those services with WIOA core programs.

• The state will increase the integration of TANF employment and training services with WIOA core programs.

• The state will design career pathways to have an entry point along the pathway that meets the adult education and workforce program alignment requirements in the "ability to benefit" provision of Title IV of the federal Higher Education Act, to enable eligible participants without a high school diploma to qualify for Pell Grants and other federal student financial assistance.

B. ALIGNMENT WITH ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE PLAN

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

The workforce development system in West Virginia extends beyond the core programs to include programs administered by numerous state agencies and quasi—governmental entities.

With a market—based and customer—focused plan, the Workforce Development Boards continue to refine and improve West Virginia's structure for aligning core and optional programs under WIOA and other available resources to realize the state's vision and achieve its goals.

The State WDB works diligently to promote alignment and collaboration across core programs. The Core Partners and all required partners are represented on the Board and attend meetings. The WDB is focused on promoting greater connections between workforce development boards and community organizations

There are numerous examples of specific collaborations among partner programs beyond the high level strategic and planning efforts taking place through the interagency work group and State WDB including:

• DRS works extensively with education partners including Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to coordinate the provision of pre—employment and other transition services for students with disabilities.

• WIOA Youth service providers coordinate with LEAs, adult education agencies, county human service offices, county assistance office income maintenance caseworkers, EARN contractors, juvenile justice and local law enforcement agencies, local housing authorities, DRS, economic development entities and other community and faith—based organizations to ensure participants have access to all the services they need to be successful in training activities and find employment. • WIOA Youth will be notified of opportunities to co—enroll in the TANF program and will also be referred to the Adult Education program as appropriate.

• The braiding of WIOA Title I—B funded programs with other youth—directed state and local entities allows comprehensive services to be offered to all eligible low—income populations under WIOA. Available TANF funding will continue to support WIOA year—round services and summer employment activities.

• Applicants for Title II funds are required to describe how they will align services with local workforce development plans and how they will coordinate with other available education, training, and social services in the community. Alignment with LWDB's goals is required for funding.

• Perkins postsecondary providers assist job seekers in identifying their interests and abilities and aligning these skills needs to training and financial resources to assist with training. Training is linked to the state's high—demand jobs and is designed to lead to credential attainment. Both credential attainment and high—demand jobs alignment assist job seekers in securing employment with family—sustaining wages.

• The state co—enrolls all trade—impacted workers in the WIOA Dislocated Worker program to ensure that all individuals receive the full range of assistance available to dislocated workers.

• The office of Adult Education will work with representatives from Office of Institutional Educational Programs (OIEP), the WV Department of Corrections(DOL) and other education stakeholders to identify best practices to support the requirements of Section 225 of Title II.

• OIEP is working closely with CTE, CTCS, DHHR and WVDE and other partners to align its Career Pathways and reentry initiatives with on—going efforts in the workforce and education systems. These partnerships can provide opportunities for offenders to enhance skills and earn post— secondary credentials.

• The MACC is an integrated data platform that links human service, workforce and wage record data to measure the outcomes of workforce development programs and identifies the supply of skilled workers in relation to employer demand.

• DRS continues to build new and strengthen existing partnerships with the Department of Corrections, regarding increasing and improving the agency's involvement in re—entry employment training to assist individuals with disabilities in the correctional system.

• WorkForce West Virginia will establish and participate in partnerships with other agencies and programs that are focused on combating veteran unemployment. WorkForce

West Virginia recognizes that the emerging needs of veterans and their families are unique. Eligible veterans are entitled to priority services. Public Law 107—288, Title 38, U.S. Code and State Legislation mandates that qualified veterans receive priority in all employment and training programs including: Referral to jobs and job training programs; Counseling, testing and job development assistance; Eligibility determination for tax credit programs. Co—enrollment of veterans in core partner services will be a priority.

• West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services strives to align its activities and services with other agencies, including WIOA partners. Because West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services provides services under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), many alignment activities occur on the individual consumer level. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services' Client Services Manual Section 2501.3 requires VR counselors to assess and utilize, if appropriate, any third party comparable benefits and services. Furthermore, the Client Services Manual Section 3502.13 allows West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services consumers to request the VR counselor to participate in the arrangement and coordination of services not included in the IPE if those services are available from third party resources without cost to West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services and the VR counselor determines that the services would be appropriate to assist the individual in securing employment. One example of this alignment occurs with West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services consumers that choose to receive four—year and/or community college training; consumers must utilize grants and other non—loan resources prior to West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services providing financial support.

• West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services is mandated not only to coordinate services and resources with comparable services and benefits providers, but also to collect and report these data (any involvement with a comparable services benefits provider in relation to 33 service categories) to the federal Rehabilitation Services Administration at the individual consumer level. The collection, monitoring, and evaluation of these data allow West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services to ensure coordination and alignment is taking place across the state.

Also, to ensure mandatory partners remain aligned and are actively involved in the progress of this plan, West Virginia has included the following statute in state code.

WV State Code: §5B—2B—9. Coordination between agencies providing workforce investment programs, local workforce Development Boards and the Executive Director of Workforce West Virginia

(a) To provide ongoing attention to addressing issues that will build and continually improve the overall workforce investment system, the Workforce Investment Interagency Collaborative Team is hereby created. The team shall be the single state interagency source for addressing issues or concerns related to building and maintaining the most effective and efficient implementation of the federal Workforce Investment Act and the overall workforce development system in West Virginia. The team shall focus on how best to collaborate between and among the state agencies directly involved in workforce investment activities and shall develop a strategic plan to that end. The team shall serve as a forum for the board to seek information or recommendations in furtherance of its responsibilities under this article. Workforce West Virginia is the entity which shall convene the team at least monthly and shall provide administrative and other services to the team as the team requires.

(b) The team shall consist of members from each agency subject to the reporting provisions of section five of this article. Each agency shall appoint two representatives to the team consisting of the chief official of the department or division and the official within that department or division who is directly responsible for overseeing the workforce investment program or activities at the state level. A designee may be selected to represent a member appointed to the team: Provided, that the designee has policy—making decision authority regarding workforce investment activities including program and fiscal issues. The team members have authority to make decisions on behalf of the agency at the level required for the team to address issues and advance system improvements.

(c) The team shall coordinate the development of a self—sufficiency standard study for the State of West Virginia. The self—sufficiency standard is to measure how much income is needed for a household of a given composition in a given place to adequately meet its basic needs without public or private assistance. Beginning on the first day of November, two thousand four, and every two years thereafter, this study is to be reported to the Speaker of the House of Delegates, the President of the Senate, the Workforce Development Board and the Legislative Oversight Commission on Workforce Investment for Economic Development.

(d) Beginning the first day of January, two thousand three, in order to lawfully continue any workforce investment activities, any agency subject to the reporting provisions of section five of this article shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Executive Director of Workforce West Virginia and any local workforce Development Board representing an area of this state in which the agency is engaged in workforce investment activities. To the extent permitted by federal law, the agreements are to maximize coordination of workforce investment activities and eliminate duplication of services on both state and local levels.

(e) No memorandum of understanding may be effective for more than one year without annual reaffirmation by the parties.

(f) Any state agency entering a memorandum of understanding shall deliver a copy thereof to both the West Virginia Workforce Development Board and the legislative oversight commission.

C. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS

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

Coordination of activities occurs at the state, regional, and local levels. The state—level Interagency Collaborative Team (ICT) meets monthly to share information and discuss past, present, and future activities among the partner agencies. At the regional level, WDB meetings are attended by core partner staff; these meetings are particularly beneficial to “front line” staff members. Staff receive cross—training to learn about other core programs

and share examples of integrated service provision for consumers co—enrolled in more than one core WIOA program.

The core partners are developing an IT system that will allow co—enrollment of individuals. This will allow case management services throughout the entire process and will also allow for follow up, performance and additional needs. The core partners will share common data elements through the IT system. All partners will have one goal and that is to ensure individuals have received needed training and obtain employment.

As previously described, the WIOA core partner programs collaborate in numerous ways to coordinate activities and provide comprehensive, high—quality services, including supportive services to One—Stop Center consumers. The WIOA partner agencies meet at the state, regional, and local level to share activities, concerns, and solutions related to the West Virginia WDS. These meetings and cross trainings result in coordinated service delivery. Service delivery is further enhanced at the consumer level through the use of the integrated IT system for co—enrolled individuals. The services that a consumer receives are based on consumer need and program eligibility requirements and resources. Though each agency may specialize in a specific area or serve a specific population (e.g., individuals with disabilities for VR or individuals not in high school for Adult Education), the combined efforts and shared (human and fiscal) resources greatly benefit consumers, including employers, of the West Virginia WDS.

While some services and consumers may overlap, each WIOA program has specific roles, target populations, responsibilities, and areas of expertise within the WDS. For example, WorkForce West Virginia maintains the largest collection of job listings in the state; West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services specializes in serving individuals, including high school students, with the most significant disabilities; and Adult Ed provides educational programs to individuals aged 16 years or older who are not required to be enrolled in the public school system. By coordinating activities at the state and local levels, a comprehensive service delivery system can be developed and strengthened to provide consumers with the highest quality services.

All partners attend mandatory monthly meetings established by state statute where the discussion and collaboration of efforts will transpire. Reports will be provided and successes will be shared.

D. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS

Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, any Combined State Plan partner program included in this plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs needs and to achieve the goals of industry or sector partners in the state. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

The state workforce development board is business—driven and provides much needed input into the direction of workforce programs. Falling directly in line are the local workforce development boards which are also business—driven but at the local level. The state board will implement a model to standardize the delivery of products and services to businesses. Regional business service teams will be developed to coordinate needs and

provide contacts to local employers. The State realizes the importance of capacity building that supports the service to provide timely solutions and connections to available resources to meet business needs. Collected information can be tracked and shared on the statewide data system to minimize duplication.

On the Job Training (OJT) providers throughout the state will also be contacting employers and advising them of the services provided through the workforce system.

WorkForce West Virginia is a one—stop center for workforce resources, including the state's largest online database of job seekers, assistance with worker training, and unemployment processing.

Employers can post job listings, search for qualified employees, analyze labor market information, and locate business services.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation will continue to provide leadership for accessibility standards, disability talent recruitment, and accessibility issues.

West Virginia Adult Education will work with the education system to support and develop career pathways identified by employers and the workforce system. This support will be provided by developing and implementing bridge and pre—bridge programs as part of the Moving Pathways Forward imitative. During program year 2013—2014 the West Virginia Adult Education Program applied for and was selected to take part in the multi—year Moving Pathways Forward Project. This project is funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE). West Virginia will be one of fourteen states to be provided with technical assistance in the development of state and local career pathways systems that will assist youth and adults to achieve success in postsecondary education training and employment in high—growth and high demand occupations.

As part of this initiative, Adult Education will be partnering with several community colleges and approved secondary Career and Technical Education programs to develop micro—credentials that demonstrate measurable skill gains and are part of a clearly defined career pathway for individuals with barriers to employment. Because the community colleges are Perkins postsecondary recipients, the model developed by these community colleges will serve as a model that can be replicated by all of the Perkins postsecondary recipients across the state.

In collaboration with WVDE Adult Education, providers of adult career and technical education (CTE) programs of study are working to align industry credentials to high—demand occupations in career pathways projects. Adult career and technical programs make appropriate credentials and micro— credentials available through end—of—program assessment.

Our goal is to strengthen West Virginia's business climate by supporting employers and helping job seekers gain employment, remain employed, and advance in their careers.

Career Technical Education (CTE) Program Advisory Councils and Clinical Sites

All WVDE CTE programs at each school must have an advisory council in compliance with the federal Perkins Act. The majority of members must represent business/industry to identify local labor market demand, program curriculum and certification needs, and guide

program improvements. Advisory employers also provided onsite clinical experiences for high school CTE students enrolled in health therapeutics and adult CTE students in Practical Nursing programs.

CTE Simulated Workplaces http://wvde.state.wv.us/simulated—workplace/partners.php

Business and industry representatives inspect Simulated Workplace classrooms to ensure alignment with the industry needs. These representatives evaluate the career technical education program facilities, safety, equipment, space, tools, supplies, technology, professional skills, customer service, and teaching materials using a scorecard. Results are communicated to the administrators and teachers. The business inspector scorecard is located on http://wvde.state.wv.us/simulated— workplace/biz—assist.php

Learn and Earn

With the learn and earn program, the community and technical colleges have a 50/50 partnership with employers where the students actually work on—site 50% of their time and spend the other 50% in a classroom setting.

Business Surveys

West Virginia plans to design and conduct business surveys in order to gather information on business needs. West Virginia aims to make the statewide business survey a regular exercise in order to ensure that service and workforce training is relevant and responsive to the needs of the business community.

Consumers of One—Stop Centers, including those with disabilities, frequently require additional training in order to meet employer needs and reach their employment goal. Often, this training is provided by community colleges and vocational/technical training schools located throughout the state. West Virginia's community and technical colleges have an excellent track record of training individuals to have the skills that employers need to fill high quality jobs.

Through its employer partnership programs, West Virginia's community and technical colleges can provide the training an individual needs while leveraging a company's training dollars to maximize worker productivity. West Virginia's community and technical colleges deliver training to hundreds of employers across the state. West Virginia's community and technical colleges can provide customized training, skill enhancements, certificate, and associate degree programs. A sample of programs (from http://www.wvctcs.org/ images/PDF Brochures/Workforce.pdf) can be found below.

Employer Partnership Programs Learn and Earn

Provides students in high—demand applied technology programs with paid cooperative (co—op) educational experiences:

• 50/50 employer & CTC matching contribution

• Co—op experience must pay no less than $10/hr.

• Employer gains a highly—qualified employee and a future skilled labor pool

• Students earn valuable on—the—job training and a living wage while attending school

Tech Scholars Program

• Provides scholarships to students who enroll in high—demand, applied technology programs

• 50/50 employer & CTC matching contribution

• Must lead to a Certificate of Applied Science (CAS) or Associate of Applied Science (AAS)

• Employer benefits by investing in a skilled workforce

• Students gain much—needed financial assistance while attending school

WV Advance Grant

• A rapid—response grant for CTCs to help employers meet an immediate training need.

• Training can include skills upgrades, customized training, or pre—employment training

HB 3009 Workforce Development Grant.

• A grant program to help CTCs deliver training to business and industry

• Company cash—match is required

• Business and CTC collaboration in training delivery

Programs like these bring together employers, job seekers, and WIOA partner agencies. By identifying the needs of employers and sharing resources to train individuals, the state as a whole benefits from the West Virginia WDS. Community colleges and technical schools have a unique ability to specialize programs across the state depending on the demands of the local economy, including the needs of employers and job seekers. For example, in 2015, Proctor and Gamble announced a large production facility to be built in West Virginia; the facility will provide up to 700 jobs.

As described, the West Virginia WDS benefits greatly from its partnership with community colleges and technical schools. This partnership has enhanced access to WDS services and allowed more individuals and employers to reach their goals.

E. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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

In West Virginia, our workforce development system begins with the secondary school system which includes career and technical schools through post—secondary education which include community colleges and the higher education system. All core programs work on a regular basis with all sectors of education—in particular, CTEs and CTCs. Our goals are to work even closer in the future and develop stronger relationships.

As employers and the workforce system develop career pathways, the core programs will work with the education system to support them. WorkForce West Virginia is already partnering with the CTE in their simulated workplace program. We wish to expand this program to include older youth in the near future.

The workforce development system and WV CTCS developed a significant collaboration through the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College ad Career Training grant. We continue to work closely on various other projects and grants. The core partners will continue to strengthen ties with the educational community.

The core partners understand the importance of having a recognized postsecondary degree from the perspectives of both employers and job seekers. The state has always strived for quality, career— based employment outcomes for its consumers, when appropriate. In this aim, the state has a long history of providing consumers with the necessary training that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential. In FY 2015, over $11 million in DRS funding, representing over half of all case services expenses, went toward training. Of this amount, the majority was for four—year college/university and junior/community college tuition. Core partners have a liaison with postsecondary institutions across the state including 44 colleges, universities, community and technical colleges. Furthermore, cross—training between agencies is routinely conducted at state meetings and conferences. HEPC is an example of an agency that cross—trains with the core partners. HEPC develops and oversees a public policy agenda for West Virginia's four—year colleges and universities.

West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (specific)

Since the enactment of WIOA, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services has begun to focus on providing services, particularly pre—employment transition services (PETS), to high school students with disabilities starting in the 10th grade. To accomplish this, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services assigned 44 counselors to work solely with high school students with disabilities. Pre—employment transition services are mandated under WIOA and include the following:

• Job exploration counseling

• Work—based learning experiences, which may include in—school or after school opportunities or experience outside the traditional school setting (including internships), that is provided in an integrated environment to the maximum extent possible

• Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institution of higher education

• Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living

• Instruction in self—advocacy, which may include peer mentoring

In addition to PETS, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services debuted the POWER (Positive Outcomes within Education and Rehabilitation) program in 2015. POWER is a job shadowing program that offers transitioning students, who may be having a difficult time choosing a career path, the opportunity to experience an occupation by spending time with a professional working in the students' vocational goal/career field of interest, including STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math). The POWER program allows the student the opportunity to experience an occupation prior to committing to training. It guides the student to take a serious, realistic look at the occupation, allowing the student to make a more informed choice.

Another West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services activity is the Student Transition to Employment Program (STEP). This program utilizes school personnel to facilitate a more

seamless transition from high school to post—secondary activities (employment or training) for students with disabilities. By allowing the student to continue working with an individual who has provided them with classroom instruction and/or transition services while in high school, they are working with people who are most familiar with their interests, skills, and barriers to employment. In addition, STEP will also include the use of science and math teachers to provide appropriate students with further career exploration opportunities in STEM fields. These teachers may also provide college preparation activities, such as ACT test preparation, and work—based experiences.

By engaging high school students earlier and providing them with activities such as PETS, STEP, and POWER, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services expects recipient students will have a better understanding of the labor market and the value of obtaining a postsecondary credential. Students with disabilities that are eligible for VR services may, in accordance with their IPE, receive assistance from West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services in obtaining postsecondary training.

In 2016, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services will partner with Community Access, Incorporated to implement a program to support the design and implementation of programming and outreach while addressing the new direction mandated by WIOA. Specifically, the program will address the five mandated PETS for high school students with disabilities through an expansion of the STEP program. The project will assist school districts by offering training and technical assistance in setting up community—based work experience programs for students with disabilities. The project will help level the playing field between resource—rich metropolitan areas and isolated rural settings that often have few services available. In addition, a strong statewide outreach to teachers, parents, students, and other VR stakeholders will be a component of the project. A concerted effort will be made to include historically under—served groups including students in the

foster care system, those returning from out—of—state placements, and those students on the Science Technology Engineering Math (STEM) track. The project has the following goals:

(1) To assist school districts in setting up community—based Work Exploration programs.

(2) To develop statewide parent training network utilizing the Parent Community Resource Centers.

(3) To develop a network of specialists to work with West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services, WorkForce West Virginia, and WVDOE staff.

(4) To develop a statewide cross—sector outreach program with a strong emphasis on traditionally underserved populations.

West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services also assists WVDOE with Graduation 20/20, a West Virginia initiative that uses a data driven intervention framework developed by the National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities (NDPC—SD) to address issues that have negatively impacted school completion. Graduation 20/20 utilizes the innovation configuration on evidence—based transition practices and predictors of post school success to guide professional learning which was published by the Collaboration for Effective Educator, Development,Accountability, and Reform (CEEDAR) Center. The program, using tools from NDPC—SD and CEEDAR, trains local school—based teams and

team leaders to diagnose the causes of dropout and develop site—specific improvement plans and strategies.

The three core partners will meet on a monthly basis to discuss all aspects of the system. Based on future directives from federal guidelines and procedures developed by the State Workforce Development Board, the other mandatory partners will enter into MOUs at the local level as to how they will coordinate and provide services to customers at the local level.

F. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS.

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

West Virginia's workforce development strategy is integrally tied to education, starting with the secondary school system, including CTE centers, and continuing through postsecondary education to include community colleges, and public and private colleges and universities. Adult Education as a core partner is fully engaged with all levels of education within the state.

In West Virginia, Secondary CTE is delivered through comprehensive high schools, county CTE centers, and multi—county CTE centers. Postsecondary CTE is delivered through the state's community and technical colleges. County CTE centers also provide postsecondary CTE instruction.

The core programs will work with the education system to support and develop career pathways identified by employers and the workforce system. The state will be partnering with several community colleges to develop micro—credentials that demonstrate measurable skill gains and are part of a clearly defined career pathway for individuals with barriers to employment. Because the community colleges are Perkins postsecondary recipients, the model developed by these community colleges will serve as a model that can be replicated by all of the Perkins postsecondary recipients across the state. In addition, many of the approved secondary CTE programs of study will offer badges to recognize incremental attainment of skills. Badges are earned when a student achieves a minimum score on the technical assessment. A digital badge is an electronic indicator of one's skills, performance, and achievement.

In collaboration with WVDE, providers of career and technical education (CTE) programs of study have worked to align industry credentials to high—demand occupations. Secondary career and technical centers make appropriate credentials and micro—credentials available through end—of— program assessment. There has also been significant collaboration between the state workforce development system and community colleges on the multiple Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grants received. The TAACCCT I grants have been used to develop curriculum and customize programs to re—train dislocated workers in the Advanced Manufacturing, Energy Distribution, Production and Conservation, and Healthcare Technology industries. Career coaches at each college aided students by arranging for wrap—around supportive services, as necessary. Adult Education partners at some of the colleges, provided academic support for students prior to and during enrollment in classes. The state will analyze the results of

each project and utilize best practices and lessons learned to help improve the broader workforce development system.

Another key area of collaboration and cooperation is the transition from the workforce development program to postsecondary education. Title II program managers, DRS counselors, SPOKES student coordinators and WIOA and Wagner—Peyser employment specialists are establishing relationships with educational staff in adult education programs to support the successful transition of their customers to postsecondary programs. The postsecondary programs include those offered by Perkins postsecondary recipients.

All West Virginians exiting basic education services, both through the traditional K—12 system and through adult basic education, will be prepared to participate successfully in postsecondary level instruction with no need for remediation. To support this vision, Title II adult basic education providers have implemented the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education. At the local level, many adult education providers have developed relationships with postsecondary education providers in the CTE centers and community colleges. Students who do not earn a high enough score on placement tests at the postsecondary institution are referred to a local adult basic education program for remedial work. After the student has demonstrated sufficient academic progress at the local adult education program, as determined by an approved standardized test, the student is referred back to the postsecondary institution. The state will build on best practices developed through these relationships. For example, in the most successful partnerships, both the adult education program and the postsecondary institution have points of contact for referrals. Also, the adult education and postsecondary programs are working together to identify key content areas for the adult education program to cover to support successful transition to the postsecondary program.

The state will strive to connect youth and adults seeking postsecondary education with available financial aid to include Pell grant programs. The state will also encourage those students without a high school diploma or recognized equivalent deemed eligible under ability—to—benefit for financial assistance to enroll in eligible career pathway programs. Contextualized TASC programming will also be used as a mechanism for encouraging students without a high school diploma or recognized equivalent to enroll in eligible career pathway programs.

Postsecondary career and technical education is a critical partner in providing integrated basic education and skills training for adults with basic skill deficiencies, and a proven skills—building strategy. Postsecondary career and technical education programs will work with adult basic education programs to establish integrated education and training programs throughout the state.

In serving individuals with disabilities, DRS will continue to work collaboratively with local community colleges, career and technical schools to explore the development of training programs that are implemented with universal design to train individuals with disabilities for competitive, integrated employment in jobs that meet local labor market demand. This will include working to replicate successful programs and to expand postsecondary education options for youth with disabilities. DRS will also work to develop and implement interagency agreements with community colleges and career and technical schools to fill unmet needs within the local workforce delivery system.

In serving veterans, DRS will continue to work closely with the Department of Education and student veteran organizations at colleges, universities, trade schools and other institutions of higher learning to create "veteran friendly" learning environments. The state will continue to support partners in education with focused outreach and coordination with community partners while supporting veterans and their family members to take full advantage of educational benefits that they have earned. This alignment of services will leverage these education and training platforms to focus on job skills that meet the needs of employers within the regions. Education will coordinate with partners to link employers to these educational institutions and programs to ensure that we graduate skilled applicants who have the greatest potential to move successfully into employment.

Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies

Through its Employer Partnership Programs, West Virginia's community and technical colleges provide the training that workers need while leveraging the company's training dollars to achieve maximize worker productivity. By the end of 2017, WV Community and Technical Colleges have partnerships with more than 700 employers statewide to deliver training and partner in educating students.

G. LEVERAGING RESOURCES TO INCREASE EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

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

West Virginia is leveraging investments to enhance access to workforce development programs through various initiatives. Some examples are below:

Career Technical Education plays a critical role in a state's economy. West Virginia is fortunate to have an adult career technical system that is currently producing high skilled students who will be the face of West Virginia's highly trained workforce. WV Adult Education is collaborating with CTE to address the issues of increasing successful postsecondary enrollment of adult students in CTE programs and improving persistence toward completion once successfully enrolled. This collaboration will include shared intake and assessment as well as dual enrollment in linked basic skills and occupational courses, integrated, contextualized instruction and wrap around services for students. These programs will combine basic skills and career—technical content, including general workforce readiness skills, academic and English language skills, and specific occupational knowledge and skills, supported by comprehensive student services along a well— defined career pathway.

A significant collaboration between the state workforce development system and community colleges exists in the delivery of multiple Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grants received. The TAACCCT I grants have been used to develop curriculum and customize programs to re—train dislocated workers in the Advanced Manufacturing, Energy Distribution, Production and Conservation, and Healthcare Technology industries. Career coaches at each college aided students by arranging for wrap—around supportive services, as necessary. Adult Education partners at some of the colleges, provided academic support for students prior to and during

enrollment in classes. The state will analyze the results of each project and utilize best practices and lessons learned to help improve the broader workforce development system.

WV Adult Education has a successful history of collaboration with the State's Department of Health and Human Resources. Through a cooperative relationship built on trust and commitment to serving economically disadvantaged West Virginians, the two State agencies work together to respond to the mandates of welfare reform. SPOKES, an academic and job preparation skills program (Strategic Planning in Occupational Knowledge for Employment and Success) was created by WVAdultEd under a contract between the WVDE, Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development and Department of Health and Human Resources, and in collaboration with some WDBs. The SPOKES program model was also designed to provide intense daily activities that would address academic and soft skills necessary for adults to pursue gainful employment. In addition, students may select certification training from a list of state—approved and industry recognized certifications as a part of this program.

In partnership with workforce education and adult education, Training delivered through WV Advanced Technology Grants at BridgeValley Community College is market—driven and focused on providing employers with a highly trained workforce and complementing the economic development efforts of the state. The intent is to provide training services to employers that have a positive economic outcome on West Virginia as determined by the West Virginia Development Office.

H. IMPROVING ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS

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

As discussed in the Strategic section of this plan, the state will use data and work with employers to identify the skills and competencies necessary to attain family—sustaining employment and will offer high quality training to individuals to obtain those skills. The state will also work closely with employers, Industry Partnerships and LWDBs to identify or develop the badges, micro— credentials, certifications and other credentials that adequately represent attainment of those skills.

The state will work to identify and align credentials to career pathways for high—demand and priority occupations. Adult Education is also exploring the use of micro—credentials, particularly for individuals with barriers to employment, as a means to allow for the attainment of skills in shorter segments and the receipt of an industry—recognized credential to demonstrate skill competency to potential employers. In addition, students enrolled in WVDE approved CTE programs will soon be able to earn badges. Badges are earned when a student achieves a minimum score on the technical assessment. A digital badge is an electronic indicator of one's skills, performance, and achievement.

In accordance with the federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006, West Virginia requires postsecondary institutions receiving Perkins funding, including the 9 community colleges, to articulate with secondary schools that offer WVDE—approved Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs of study.

These articulation agreements allow qualified students enrolled in an approved career and technical Program of Study to receive college credit toward a diploma, certificate or degree in a similar program at a postsecondary institution. These programs serve as a seamless pathway from secondary to postsecondary education, and ensure students transition from one level to another without delays or duplication of learning.

The state will promote the attainment of postsecondary credentials through a number of programs and initiatives. Examples include:

• All training providers will be required to describe the credential(s) to be earned. All Perkins postsecondary recipients report on credential, certificate or degree earned as part of their required accountability measures.

• Business and industry partners encourage/collaborate trainings that result in a postsecondary credential by requiring all proposals to identify credentials/certifications to be obtained and making credentials a required outcome measure.

• DRS will continue to analyze labor market demand and model service delivery systems to identify opportunities for industry—recognized certificates that lead to increased and improved employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

• Education programs, including secondary and postsecondary Perkins and adult basic education, will provide professional development opportunities to help providers understand and navigate the full credentialing spectrum and develop expertise in occupational counseling.

All postsecondary institutions with Perkins funding have advanced credit offerings aligned with at least one approved CTE program of study and offer additional advanced credit opportunities. Students can earn between two and 22 college credits for their secondary technical coursework, before high school graduation, as permitted in the specific CTE approved program of study and the Perkins IV Statewide Articulation Agreement.

Since the enactment of WIOA, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services has begun to focus on providing services, particularly pre—employment transition services (PETS), to high school students with disabilities starting in the 10th grade. To accomplish this, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services assigned 44 counselors to work solely with high school students with disabilities. Pre—employment transition services are mandated under WIOA and include the following:

• Job development counseling

• Work—based learning experiences, which may include in—school or after school opportunities or experience outside the traditional school setting (including internships), that is provided in an integrated environment to the maximum extent possible

• Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institution of higher education

• Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living

• Instruction in self—advocacy, which may include peer mentoring

In addition to PETS, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services debuted the POWER (Positive Outcomes within Education and Rehabilitation) program in 2015. POWER is a job shadowing program that offers transitioning students, who may be having a difficult time choosing a career path, the opportunity to experience an occupation by spending time with a professional working in the students' vocational goal/career field of interest, including STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math). The POWER program allows the student the opportunity to experience an occupation prior to committing to training. It guides the student to take a serious, realistic look at the occupation, allowing the student to make a more informed choice.

Another West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services activity is the Student Transition to Employment Program (STEP). This program utilizes school personnel to facilitate a more seamless transition from high school to post—secondary activities (employment or training) for students with disabilities. By allowing the student to continue working with an individual who has provided them with classroom instruction and/or transition services while in high school, they are working with people who are most familiar with their interests, skills, and barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities. In addition, STEP will also include the use of science and math teachers to provide appropriate students with further career exploration opportunities in STEM fields. These teachers may also provide college preparation activities, such as ACT test preparation, and work— based experiences.

By engaging high school students earlier and providing them with activities such as PETS, STEP, and POWER, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services expects recipient students will have a better understanding of the labor market and the value of obtaining a postsecondary credential. Students with disabilities that are eligible for VR services may, in accordance with their IPE, receive assistance from West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services in obtaining postsecondary training.

I. COORDINATING WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES.

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

Economic development strategies are primarily developed and implemented by the West Virginia Development Office. The Development Office works closely with WorkForce West Virginia, CTCs, CTEs, and Higher Education in evaluating labor market resources to present to current and potential business entities.

West Virginia has local economic and community development offices throughout the state to work in local areas. The workforce system works closely with these local entities in an effort to promote economic development.

The Secretary of Commerce oversees the Development Office and is also a member of the State Workforce Development Board, ensuring that workforce development strategies align with economic development efforts.

Additionally, the Secretary of Commerce, along with the Executive Director of WorkForce West Virginia serve on the Secretary's Workforce Planning Group

B. STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

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

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

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

The core partners will develop IT system that will allow co—enrollment of individuals under 3 core partners. This will allow case management services throughout the entire process and will also allow for follow up, performance and additional needs. The core partners will share common data elements with other core partners through IT system. All partners will have one goal and that is to ensure individuals have received needed training and obtain employment.

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

West Virginia has an integrated data collection and performance management system (MACC) that covers the following programs:

- WIOA Adult, Dislocated Workers, Youth
- National Dislocated Worker Grants
- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers
- Wagner—Peyser
- Trade Adjustment Assistance
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants
- West Virginia's Unemployment Compensation MIS interfaces with MACC.

All other partners have management information systems that are customi zed to meet the needs of their programs. WorkForce West Virginia, Rehabilitation Services, and Adult Education will each make the necessary changes to their systems to collect the required data elements.

Initially, common data elements will be shared among the partners through a regular file exchange; ultimately linkages will be put in place to allow partners to access the information in real time. Employment and wage data will be shared with partners to the extent allowed by the WRIS/WRIS2 agreement.

To ensure alignment and integration, all WIOA core programs have mutual memorandums of understanding that help facilitate an integrated service delivery system. Staff members of

each core partner will be cross—trained and knowledgeable about each core program in order to make appropriate customer referrals. The WIOA core partners will continue to maintain communication at the state and local levels on a regular basis. Common customer information and service provision data will be collected and stored in a data warehouse. This information will be shared among the partners in order to provide better and more efficient services to individuals enrolled in one or more programs and to employers served by the system.

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

2. THE STATE POLICIES THAT WILL SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE'S STRATEGIES (E.G., CO-ENROLLMENT POLICIES AND UNIVERSAL INTAKE PROCESSES WHERE APPROPRIATE). IN ADDITION, PROVIDE THE STATE'S GUIDELINES FOR STATE-ADMINISTERED ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO A ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM.

In compliance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA), the Governor has established a State Workforce Development Board to assist in the development of the Unified State Plan that will enhance the capacity and performance of the workforce development system (WDS), align and improve the workforce programs and investments, and promote economic growth. The West Virginia State Board assists the Governor in achieving the State's strategic and operational vision and goals as outlined in the Unified State Plan, including:

Strategic Functions

-Develop and align policies

Action Plan for Policy Development:

WorkForce West Virginia (WFWV) establishes policy guidance for the workforce system. Moving forward, WFWV plans to implement an 8 step process for policy development.

West Virginia's 8 Step Process for WIOA Policy Development:

1. Determine policy need

2. Meet with subject matter experts

3. Policy drafting

4. Review & comment period

5. Updates to draft

6. Final approval

7. Policy dissemination

8. Policy modification when applicable

-Develop and Implement state plans and performance measures

-Develop Career Pathway Strategies

-Develop & Expand strategies for Partnerships in in-demand sectors/occupations

System Alignment & Effective Operations

-Develop Policies and guidance on One-Stop partner roles and resource contributions

-Develop strategies for aligning technology and data systems

-Develop local area allocation formulas

-Develop a statewide LMI (Labor Market Information) System

Building System Capacity

-Develop strategies to support staff training and awareness

-Disseminate best practices

-Develop and continue improving the One-Stop delivery system

-Support effective local boards

The State of West Virginia has been pursuing policies of coordinated and integrated workforce development system since the enactment of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). The policies embedded in the WV State Code §5B-2B-9 for the implementation of WIA still remain valid in the implementation of WIOA.

To support the implementation of the State's strategies and to ensure mandatory partners remain aligned and are actively involved in the progress of this plan, West Virginia has included the following statute in state code:

WV State Code: §5B—2B—9. Coordination between agencies providing workforce investment programs, local workforce Development Boards and the Executive Director of Workforce West Virginia

(a) To provide ongoing attention to addressing issues that will build and continually improve the overall workforce investment system, the Workforce Investment Interagency Collaborative Team is hereby created. The team shall be the single state interagency source for addressing issues or concerns related to building and maintaining the most effective and efficient implementation of the federal Workforce Investment Act and the overall workforce development system in West Virginia. The team shall focus on how best to collaborate between and among the state agencies directly involved in workforce investment activities and shall develop a strategic plan to that end. The team shall serve as a forum for the board to seek information or recommendations in furtherance of its responsibilities under this article. Workforce West Virginia is the entity which shall convene the team at least monthly and shall provide administrative and other services to the team as the team requires.

(b) The team shall consist of members from each agency subject to the reporting provisions of section five of this article. Each agency shall appoint two representatives to the team consisting of the chief official of the department or division and the official within that department or division who is directly responsible for overseeing the workforce investment program or activities at the state level. A designee may be selected to represent a member appointed to the team: Provided, that the designee has policy—making decision authority regarding workforce investment activities including program and fiscal issues. The team

members have authority to make decisions on behalf of the agency at the level required for the team to address issues and advance system improvements.

(c) The team shall coordinate the development of a self—sufficiency standard study for the State of West Virginia. The self—sufficiency standard is to measure how much income is needed for a household of a given composition in a given place to adequately meet its basic needs without public or private assistance. Beginning on the first day of November, two thousand four, and every two years thereafter, this study is to be reported to the Speaker of the House of Delegates, the President of the Senate, the Workforce Development Board and the Legislative Oversight Commission on Workforce Investment for Economic Development.

(d) Beginning the first day of January, two thousand three, in order to lawfully continue any workforce investment activities, any agency subject to the reporting provisions of section five of this article shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Executive Director of Workforce West Virginia and any local workforce Development Board representing an area of this state in which the agency is engaged in workforce investment activities. To the extent permitted by federal law, the agreements are to maximize coordination of workforce investment activities and eliminate duplication of services on both state and local levels.

(e) No memorandum of understanding may be effective for more than one year without annual reaffirmation by the parties.

(f) Any state agency entering a memorandum of understanding shall deliver a copy thereof to both the West Virginia Workforce Development Board and the legislative oversight commission.

To solidify the commitment and collaborative efforts of the WIOA core and other participating state agencies at the state level, the WDS has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Interagency Collaborative Team (ICT). This MOU details the state-level WDS vision, goals, processes, and system-wide commitments from each agency of the ICT. In conjunction with the State Workforce Development Board, the ICT MOU delineates the State's processes for developing guidelines for the WDS, including guidelines for contributions, benchmarks, and equitable methods of infrastructure funding. The WDS is in the process of updating the ICT MOU, to embody State policies that will support the implementation of the State's strategies set forth in this WIOA Unified State Plan. The ICT MOU will serve to support the implementation of the State's goals of: 1) Workforce Development System Integration; 2) Customer-Driven Approach; 3) Career Pathways Development; and 4) Increase Opportunities for Youth.

WorkForce West Virginia also provides guidance to assist local boards, chief elected officials, and local one-stop partner programs in determining equitable and stable methods of funding infrastructure. As reported in the Fiscal Year 2015 Workforce Development System Report:

One-Stop Career Center Resource Sharing Methodologies

In 2003, the ICT identified a need to articulate common definitions for categorizing contributions by partners within One-Stop Career Centers in West Virginia. This was in response to the first draft of the "State of the One-Stop Report" released by the Governor's Workforce Investment Division. This helps guide the development of the operating budgets

provided by the WIBs. There are a number of methods that may be used to fund the shared costs of the One-Stop Center or system. These include:

-cash payments,

-in-kind goods and services,

-full-time equivalent staff positions, and

-third party in-kind contributions.

Each of these methods is outlined below. The final payment or resource sharing methodologies agreed to by the partners in the One-Stop may include any, all or any combination of methodologies. The availability of resources and their use in funding One-Stop operations is a local decision that must be made by the partners and based on local program needs.

Cash Payments

With cash payments, one entity is responsible for incurring and paying for all the shared costs. This same entity is also responsible for maintaining the documentation for the shared costs and notifying partners of their share of the costs as they are incurred. This may be done on a monthly or quarterly basis as determined by the partners. The entity incurring the costs would issue an invoice on this pre-determined basis to each participating partner. The partners would then pay the invoice as they would any cost. Documentation to support the cost would be the invoice and the supporting shared costs budget, cost allocation plan, and the actual costs as they are incurred. Using this methodology, the entity incurring the costs would be responsible for maintaining all supporting documentation and reconciling the actual costs to the budget. They would provide each partner with the reconciliation information.

In-Kind Goods and Services

Payment of shared costs through the provision of goods and services by each of the partner programs will likely be the most common method of payment. Using this payment method, the partners prepare the shared costs budget; allocate the costs using agreed-upon allocation methodologies, with resulting total shared costs attributable to each partner. Within the budget, the partners agree on how those costs will be funded. One partner may pay all the facilities costs, including rent, utilities and maintenance while another partner provides the telephone system to be used by all the partners, and a third partner provides additional core services such as eligibility determination for all participating partner programs. This flexibility in payment allows the partners to determine which payment method works best for their particular agency and takes into consideration the available resources of each program.

Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) (staff positions)

When the costs of staff functions for common services such as intake and eligibility determination, staffing the resource center, or core services such as case management or job development are included in the shared costs budget, it may be more equitable to pay for these costs through the use of FTE's. Staff of One-Stop may include state or local governmental employees, employees of non-profit organizations, for-profit commercial

entities, and educational institutions. Each of these entities will have different pay scales, pay levels, and fringe benefit costs. By using FTE's as a payment method, partner organizations need not address these differing pay scales or any privacy concerns.

In order to use FTE's as a payment method, all of the partner programs benefiting from the shared function must provide the necessary staff resources in the same proportion as their allocable share. Using this methodology, the partners would determine the total number of staff hours necessary to fully staff the function. The hours would be allocated using an agreed-upon allocation methodology, with a resulting number of hours attributable to each participating partner. The partners then provide the staff as needed in relation to their allocable share of the total hours.

Third Party In-Kind Contributions

Under certain circumstances, partners may provide third-party in-kind contributions as resources to pay for their fair share of the costs. In-kind contributions are defined in the cost sharing or matching provision of the Uniform Administrative Requirements codified in CFR 97.24 and 95.25 as donations of goods, services, or volunteer time from a third party. They are not a cost to the receiving organization. They may only be used as resources to pay for the partner agency's share of costs if their use is not prohibited by the agency's governing statute or regulations. Some programs participating in the One-Stop, such as the TANF program, do not allow the use of in-kind. The partner agency proposing to use in-kind contributions must determine the allowability of in-kind use. If allowable, the in-kind is then valued in accordance with the requirements of 29 CFR 97.24. or 95.25. It is the determined value of the contribution that would serve as the resource for payment of shared costs.

3. STATE PROGRAM AND STATE BOARD OVERVIEW

A. STATE AGENCY ORGANIZATION

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

WorkForce West Virginia is the state agency responsible for the administration and oversight of all of the WIOA programs under Title I and III. The West Virginia Department of Education & the Arts, through its Division of Rehabilitative Services (DRS), is the state agency responsible for the administration and oversight of WIOA programs under Title IV. Title II Adult Education is administered under West Virginia Department of Education.

All agencies work closely with the state workforce development board, referred to in West Virginia as the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB). The SWDB advises the Governor on workforce priorities and initiatives while also overseeing workforce activities managed regionally by Workforce Development Boards (WBD's). A few of the many responsibilities the SWDB is charged with includes: developing opportunities for West Virginians to gain employment and earn competitive wages, developing and implementing workforce solutions based on the input of representatives and local workforce development boards around the state, addressing West Virginia's workforce needs through efficient workforce training and development programs. The SWDB also works with DOE and DRS in

developing and implementing the federally mandated state plan under WIOA. As to the Workforce Development Boards, West Virginia has a total of seven (7) designated local areas with a WDB in each. WDBs are responsible for the oversight of funds and activities, delivering career assessment, job search, and education and training related services through organizations identified and established by the board.

The Executive Branch of West Virginia's State Government is headed by the State's elected Governor, who directly oversees over a dozen State Departments, Bureaus, Commissions, and other Boards and Councils. The implementation of WIOA in the State of West Virginia is carried out by three of those departments: The Department of Commerce, The Department of Education, and the Department of Education and the Arts.

The Department of Commerce consists of 10 agencies, including the Development Office; Division of Energy; Division of Forestry; Geological and Economic Survey; Division of Labor; Office of Miners' Health, Safety, and Training; Division of Natural Resources; Division of Tourism; Office of Economic Opportunity; and WorkForce WV. WorkForce WV provides workforce development services statewide, at 18 local offices, including 13 comprehensive career centers, distributed through 7 geographic regions.

The WV Department of Education consists of the State's Board of Education and six primary divisions; Education Support, Finance and Administration, School Effectiveness, Teaching and Learning, Technology, and Career Technical Education. The Division of Career Technical Education houses the Adult Education program.

The Department of Education and the Arts is comprised of six agencies, including the Division of Culture and History, WV Public Broadcasting, WV Center for Professional Development, WV Library Commission, Volunteer WV, and the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS). DRS provides services to individuals with disabilities statewide through 28 branch offices, distributed through 6 geographic districts.

See attached organizational chart.

B. STATE BOARD

Provide a description of the State Board, including—

The Board shall assist in implementing and overseeing a comprehensive state workforce system that prepares West Virginia citizens for employment opportunities offered by West Virginia businesses. The Board shall make recommendations regarding program implementation, operation, and modifications to all state agencies administering workforce investment programs. The Board shall also assist and encourage West Virginia's educational institutions and public assistance systems to improve their ability to prepare people for gainful employment.

The Governor appoints the members of the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) and designates one of the business representatives to serve as the Chairperson. The SWDB gives the Chairperson authority through the bylaws to create or dissolve committees and the taskforces in order to accomplish the state board functions of the SWDBl as required under section 101 (d) of WIOA. The general SWDB meetings are scheduled to occur every quarter. Significant decisions are made with the approval of a simple majority of a Board quorum. Status updates on any current initiatives are given, as appropriate, to full Board

during regular meetings and if action is required, the Board is able to act accordingly. Public notice of regular Board meetings will be provided to all members no less than seven days before the day of the meeting. All meetings of the Board will be publicly announced in advance and open and accessible to the general public.

All agencies work closely with the state workforce development board, referred to in West Virginia as the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB). The SWDB advises the Governor on workforce priorities and initiatives while also overseeing workforce activities managed regionally by Workforce Development Boards (WBD's). A few of the many responsibilities the SWDB is charged with includes: developing opportunities for West Virginians to gain employment and earn competitive wages, developing and implementing workforce solutions based on the input of representatives and local workforce development boards around the state, addressing West Virginia's workforce needs through efficient workforce training and development programs. The SWDB also works with DOE and DRS in developing and implementing the federally mandated state plan under WIOA. As to the Workforce Development Boards, West Virginia has a total of seven (7) designated local areas with a WDB in each. WDBs are responsible for the oversight of funds and activities, delivering career assessment, job search, and education and training related services through organizations identified and established by the board.

I. MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

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

West Virginia Workforce Development Board GOVERNOR APPONTED JULY 1, 2017

MEMBER NAME - STATUTORY REQUIREMENT - COMPANY

John Sorrenti - Chair - John Jay Consulting - 6.30.2018

Josh Arthur - Chase Bank - 6.30.2018

Ray Burke, Jr. - Better Foods, Inc. - 6.30.2019

Megan Harris - Chemours - 6.30.2019

Tom Provost - Kureha PGA - 6.30.2018

Paul Geoffrey Sawyers - Allevard Sogefi - 6.30.2019

Diane Strong -Treister, - Manpower - 6.30.2018

Vacant - 6.30.2020

Penny Brown - Broaddus Hospital - 6.30.2018

Stephanie Smith - NFK Spark Plug Manufacturing Inc - 6.30.2019

Natalie Oliverio - Bombardier Commercial Aircraft - 6.30.2018

Patrick Martin - Teays Valley Pediatric Dentistry - 6.30.2018

Steve Cox - Toyota Motor Manufacturing - 6.30.2020

Brian Ulery - Thomas Hospital - 6.30.2020

Vacant - 6.30.2020

Roy Hamilton - Farmers Bank Point Pleasant - 6.30.2019

Tim McLean - Walker Machinery - 6.30.2020

Guy Schiller, - Addivant - 6.30.2019

Todd Shell - Guyan International - 6.30.2020

Will Turani - Orrick Law Firm - 6.30.2019

Vacant - 6.30.2020

Josh Sword - AFL/CIO - 6.30.2018

Roy Smith - WV State Building Trades Council - 6.30.2019

Daniel J. Poling - Interntl. Union of Painters & Allied Trades D.C. 53 - 6.30.2020

Eunice Bellinger, Ph.D - BridgeValley CTC - 6.30.2018

Kim Tieman - Benedum Foundation - 6.30.2018

Reverend Matthew Watts - HOPE Community Development Corp - 6.30.2018

John Moses - Youth Services System, Inc. - 6.30.2019

Michelle Foster - Greater Kan. Valley Foundation - 6.30.2020

Logan Williams - Student - 6.30.2018

Matt Wender - Fayette County Commission - 6.30.2018

Randall (Randy) Rapp - Mayor of Vienna - 6.30.2020

Vacant - Bureau of Senior Services - 6.30.2020

Russell Fry - WorkForce West Virginia - 6.30.2020

Bill J. Crouch / or Designee - Dept. of Health & Human Resources - 6.30.2020

Kathy D'Antoni - Department of Education - 6.30.2020

MariJane Waldron - Div. of Rehab Services - 6.30.2020

Chandler Swope - State Senate

Paul Espinosa - House of Delegates

II. BOARD ACTIVITIES

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

The Governor appoints members of the West Virginia Workforce Development Board and designates the Chairperson. The State Board through its bylaws may establish working committees to assist the Governor and the full Board in carrying out the functions and responsibilities in Section 101(d) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). These working committees include, but will not be necessarily limited to, an Executive

Committee, advisory committees, and various standing committees for focused topic areas that advance the work of the Board and ensure adequate attention is given to priority issues.

The Board shall assist in implementing and overseeing a comprehensive state workforce system that prepares West Virginia citizens for employment opportunities offered by West Virginia businesses. The Board shall make recommendation regarding program implementation, operation, and modifications to all state agencies administering workforce investment programs. The Board shall also assist and encourage West Virginia's educational institutions and public assistance systems to improve their ability to prepare people for gainful employment.

The Board shall meet at least quarterly and as such other times as the Chairperson deems necessary. All meetings of the Board will be publicly announced in advance and open and accessible to the general public. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the Chairperson upon notice to the Board two working days prior to the meeting. Notice of each special meeting shall state the date, time, and location (within the State of West Virginia) of the meeting, and an agenda will be included stating the purpose of the meeting. Such special meetings will comply with the West Virginia Open Meetings law. At any special meeting of the Board, no business other than the stated agenda shall be transacted.

The state still needs to describe the activities that the state board will implement to carry out its functions under WIOA. Additional board activities shall include:

1. Will work in the development of and continuous improvement of the workforce system in West Virginia to include the removing barriers to employment, enhance existing strategies to support career pathways, provide outreach to employers to educate them on workforce services, enhance current sector partnerships to serve the needs of employer and job seekers.

2. Recommend improvements to the one-stop delivery system through the local workforce areas to support enhanced delivery of services to job seekers and employers.

3. Disseminate best practices related to effective operation of the one stop system and training programs that respond to real time labor market analysis to assist in placement into employment.

4. The review of statewide policies that affect the provision of services in the one-stop delivery system, roles of mandated partners and guidance for allocation of funds to support the system.

5. Recommend enhancements and technological improvements for better access to services and activities delivered in the one-stop system.

6. Recommend strategies for aligning technology and data systems among the mandated partner programs to improve the capacity to produce the desired results in reporting performance accountability measures.

7. Recommend enhancements to the statewide labor market information system under the Wagner Peyser Act.

8. Recommendations for other policies that promote unified initiatives to improve the workforce development system.

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

A. ASSESSMENT OF CORE PROGRAMS

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

Each of the core WIOA partners, including WorkForce WV, Adult Education, and the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services, will be assessed based on the performance accountability measures to assess the quality, effectiveness and improvements of the programs by local area or provider. Core programs will be assessed each year primarily through the State performance accountability measures described in section 116(b) of WIOA. The assessments will be conducted at the state, local, and regional levels, while taking into account local/regional planning goals, as appropriate. The WV workforce development system "data warehouse" ensures that the state will have the capability to conduct assessments at various levels across programs in addition to assessments of the system as a whole. Assessments will help the state maintain focus on service quality, progress towards its goals, identify promising practices, and pinpoint areas in need of improvement.

Each core program will be assessed on the following performance measures from section 116(b) of WIOA:

-Employment (second quarter after exit)

-Employment (fourth quarter after exit)

-Median earnings (second quarter after exit)

-Credential attainment rate

-Measureable skills gains

-Effectiveness in serving employers

Additional assessments may be conducted utilizing other measures, as appropriate.

B. ASSESSMENT OF ONE-STOP PROGRAM PARTNER PROGRAMS

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

The West Virginia one-stop delivery system partner programs include the following:

-Alien Labor Certification Program

-Work Opportunity Tax Credit

-Adult Basic Education

-Trade Adjustment Act

-Career and Technical Adult Education

-Higher Education Adult Part-time Student

-Workforce Development Initiative Grant

-WV Advance Grant and Technical Program Development Initiative

-WIOA Title I Adult

-WIOA Title I Youth (Older and Younger)

-WIOA Dislocated Worker

-Governor's Discretionary Fund

-Division of Rehabilitation Services

-Senior Community Service Employment Program

-Veterans Programs

-Labor Exchange (Wagner-Peyser)

-Community Services Block Grant

-Unemployment Compensation

-Governor's Guaranteed Workforce Program (Including Small Business Work Force Development)

-National Emergency Grants (Various)

Each year, WorkForce WV issues an assessment of the West Virginia workforce development system- the Workforce Development System Report. This serves as the primary assessment of one-stop partner program services in the state. This report includes the State of the One-Stop System, the Funding Stream Report, performance requirements, positive practices, and the Interagency Collaborative Team memorandum of understanding. This report is a summary document that gives a public account and assessment of the current operations, structures, activities, finances, and future direction of One-Stop Centers of West Virginia. The report is published annually, as required by the West Virginia Legislature, and reported to the Legislative Oversight Commission on Workforce Investment for Economic Development.

The purpose of the Funding Stream Report is to quantify the level of both fiscal and programmatic (service delivery) involvement of all the entities involved either directly or tangentially with workforce development in West Virginia. The data collected for the report is critical to conducting an assessment of the one-stop delivery system. With the original passage of House Bill 4083 in 2002, the West Virginia Legislature required this annual

report regarding the source, use and outcomes of all funds received for workforce development activities in the state.

Specifically, this reporting requirement includes:

-Source and amount of federal, state, and other funds received for workforce development activities;

-Purpose of each of the above funds;

-Services provided in each of the seven regional workforce development areas;

-The measure used to evaluate program performance (including current and baseline performance data) and any other information the council requests.

All of the publicly funded workforce development programs operating in the state are to include:

-Amount of federal funds expended by each program,

-Amount of state funds expended by each program,

-How the funds are spent,

-The resulting improvement in the workforce.

The purpose, beyond identifying sources and uses of funds, is to focus on the outcomes of workforce development. Holding agencies and programs accountable for results is vitally important. Getting the most value from the dollars invested, be it federal, state or independent grants, is critical to the success of West Virginia's workforce development system.

For each workforce development program or activity, the report includes the following:

-State Organization

-Funding Unit

-Operations Unit

-Program

-Program Type

-Program Purpose

-Target Population

-Service Level (number of individuals served)

-Evaluation Measurement (specific to each program)

-Outcome

-Service Locations

-Funds, by source

-Percentage of funds used for Workforce Development

Local and Regional Planning

Data are collected from the local one-stops within each region. The report also aggregates data by workforce development region and includes data from the previous two years for comparison and assessment purposes. A sample of the data includes:

-The number of individuals receiving services (over 100 different available services) in each region, by program

-Contributions of each partner agency and non-mandated partner programs at each one-stop and region

-Program performance for the most recent three years, including negotiated benchmarks and actual performance

System and Program Oversight

The Workforce Development System Report is provided to the Legislative Oversight Commission on Workforce Investment for Economic Development to assess the activities and outcomes of the WV workforce development system. The report allows the governor, legislators, agency and program administrators, and other stakeholders to assess performance and develop appropriate, data-driven planning goals. Due to the comprehensive data collection, activities are being reported at the local, regional, and state levels to facilitate administrators' ability to examine and comparer performances at various levels and across areas.

WorkForce West Virginia has overall responsibility for the process to collect the Funding Stream Report information and provide the WV Workforce Development Council the information needed to report to the legislature, Governor's Office and others. WorkForce West Virginia works with the Interagency Collaborative Team (ICT) as the central clearinghouse for identifying, collecting and reporting the information.

C. PREVIOUS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Beginning with the state plan modification in 2018 and for subsequent state plans and state plan modifications, provide the results of assessments of the effectiveness of the core programs and other one-stop partner programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the Unified or Combined State plan during the preceding 2-year period (i.e. the 2-year period of the plan modification cycle). Describe how the State is adapting its strategies based on these assessments.

An information system will be available to capture required performance information from the core programs.

D. EVALUATION

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

Selected research and improvement projects will be aligned to strategies in this plan and monitored by the core program planning workgroup. This workgroup will consist of members appointed by each of the core partner directors. To select projects, the core program partners will utilize the State WorkForce Development Board to recommend areas for analysis or improvements. These projects would be approved by the leadership of the core program partner agencies and coordinated with the Secretaries of the Departments of Labor and Education.

5. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

Describe the methods and factors the State will use in distributing funds under the core programs in accordance with the provisions authorizing such distributions.

A. FOR TITLE I PROGRAMS

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

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

Once the TEGL has been issued and WorkForce West Virginia has received the Notice of Obligation (NOO) from the Department of Labor (DOL) information is gathered from our Research, Information, and Analysis (RIA) to begin the allocation process. The data received from RIA breaks out the unemployment numbers and 'economically disadvantaged youths' by county and region.

Each region is guaranteed to receive no less than 90% of the average allocation percentage of the local area for the prior two years. Per the guidance in the TEGL and WIOA Regulations the remaining funds after the 'hold harmless' portion of the allocation has been calculated, the remaining funds are broken down by Unemployed, Excess, Unemployed, and Economically disadvantaged youth.

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

WorkForce West Virginia follows the same guidelines for allocating Adult funds as used in Youth funds except for 'economically disadvantaged adult' versus 'economically disadvantaged youth.' Each region is guaranteed to receive no less than 90% of the average allocation percentage of the local area for the prior two years.

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

The funds distributed for the Dislocated Worker (DLW) are based on different factors than utilized for Youth and Adult. The 'hold harmless' provision is not taken into account for the dollars distributed.

Each region is guaranteed to receive no less than 90% of the average allocation percentage of the local area for the prior two years.

The entirety of the DLW funds are distributed based on the categories and the percentages for each category as listed below:

1. Insured unemployment data 20.0%

2. Unemployment concentrations 20.0%

a. Annual average count of unemployed

b. Annual average unemployment rates

c. Index to state rates

3. Plant Closings and mass layoff data: 15.0%

a. Initial claims in MLS

b. Exhaustees involved in MLS

4. Declining industries data 5.0%

5. Farmer—rancher economic hardship data

a. Percentage of delinquent loans to the estimated number of farms. Base data provided by FHA and US Department of Commerce Census of Agriculture.

6. Long—term unemployment data: 39%

a. Last pays from UC 217 report

B. FOR TITLE II:

I. MULTI-YEAR GRANTS OR CONTRACTS

Describe how the eligible agency will award multi-year grants or contracts on a competitive basis to eligible providers in the State, including how eligible agencies will establish that eligible providers are organizations of demonstrated effectiveness.

Methods and Factors for Title II

During the 2016-17 fiscal year, the Office of Adult Education will conduct a competition for new Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), Corrections Education and Integrated English Literacy and Civics (IEL-CE) Education grants. These grants will be awarded for three years through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process; the first year being the grant award with two subsequent years to apply for a continuation of the grant. All eligible applicants will respond to the statewide RFP announcement and will be expected to address the thirteen considerations and seven requirements established in Section 231 (e) of WIOA.

Section 231 (e) CONSIDERATIONS. —In awarding grants or contracts under this section, the eligible agency shall consider—

1. the degree to which the eligible provider would be responsive to —

a. regional needs as identified in the local plan; and

b. serving individuals in the community who were identified in such 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;

2. the ability of the eligible provider to serve eligible individuals with disabilities, including eligible individuals with learning disabilities;

3. past effectiveness of the eligible provider in improving the literacy of eligible individuals, to meet State-adjusted performance levels, especially with respect to eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy;

4. 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;

5. whether the eligible provider's program—

a. is of sufficient intensity and quality, and based on the most rigorous research available so that participants achieve substantial learning gains; and

b. uses instructional practices that include the essential components of reading instruction;

6. whether the eligible provider's activities, including whether reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition instruction delivered by the eligible provider, are based on the best practices derived from the most rigorous research available and appropriate, including scientifically valid research and effective educational practice;

7. whether the eligible provider's activities effectively use technology services and delivery systems including distance;

8. 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 to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship;

9. 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 development, including through electronic means;

10. 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 postsecondary educational institutions, institutions of higher education, local workforce investment boards, one-stop centers, job training programs, and social service agencies, business, industry, labor organizations, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and intermediaries, for the development of career pathways;

11. whether the eligible provider's activities offer flexible schedules and coordination with Federal, State, and local support services (such as child care, 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;

12. 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; and

13. 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.

Section 232 of the act states that each eligible provider desiring a grant or contract from an eligible agency shall submit an application to the eligible agency containing such information and assurances as the eligible agency may require, including—

1. a description of how funds awarded under this title will be spent consistent with the requirements of this title;

2. a description of any cooperative arrangements the eligible provider has with other agencies, institutions, or organizations for the delivery of adult education and literacy activities;

3. a description of how the eligible provider will provide services in alignment with the local plan under section 108, including how such provider will promote concurrent enrollment in programs and activities under title I, as appropriate;

4. a description of how the eligible provider will meet the State adjusted levels of performance described in section 116(b)(3), including how such provider will collect data to report on such performance indicators;

5. a description of how the eligible provider will fulfill one-stop partner responsibilities as described in section 121(b)(1)(A), as appropriate;

6. a description of how the eligible provider will provide services in a manner that meets the needs of eligible individuals; and

7. information that addresses the considerations described under section 231(e), as applicable

The RFP is the mechanism through which the Office of Adult Education will identify, assess, and award multi-year grants to eligible providers throughout the state that have demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education activities to eligible individuals. An eligible individual is identified as an individual who has attained 16 years of age; who is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under state law; and who is basic skills deficient; does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and has not achieved an equivalent level of education; or is an English language learner.

Programs previously funded by the Office of Adult Education will be evaluated for their ability to meet designated state performance measures. Applicants not previously funded by Office of Adult Education will be required to provide data that demonstrate their past ability to achieve success in comparable measures. For both groups, these measures include effectiveness in helping students develop their academic skills, achieve high school equivalency, and transition into employment and/or postsecondary education and training.

Eligible providers submitting applications to the Office of Adult Education may include:

- a local education agency;
- a community-based or faith-based organization;
- a volunteer literacy organization;

• an institution of higher education;

• a public or private nonprofit agency;

• a library; • a public housing authority;

• a nonprofit institution with the ability to provide adult education and literacy services;

• a consortium or coalition of agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described above; and

• a partnership between an employer and an entity described above.

Local grants will be distributed based on the ability to meet the requirements of AEFLA Purposes outlined in WIOA:

• Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skill necessary for employment and economic self-sufficiency;

• Assist adults who are parents or family members become a full partner in the education development of their children;

• Promote transition from adult education to post-secondary education and training through career pathways;

• Assist immigrants and English language learners improve reading, writing, math, speaking and comprehending the English language and acquire understanding of American government, individual freedom, and responsibilities of citizenship.

As part of the application process, applicants will be required to submit applications to Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWDB) for review to ensure that the applications align with the local plan. The Office of Adult Education will consider the review and any recommendations made by the LWDBs when scoring the related sections of the applications.

Following is a draft timeline for the RFP process:

January 2017 — statewide announcement

February 2017 — release of application

March 2017 — technical assistance

April 2017 — applications due and local WIB reviews

May 2017- review committee meets

June 2017 — award notifications released

July 2017 — grants awards distributed

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 Office of Adult Education will ensure that the same grant announcement is made available to all eligible providers. An official memorandum from the Executive Director of Adult Education will be issued to all local county superintendents announcing WVDE's intention to run a new competition. This memo will be placed on the WVDE website. Notification of and a link to this memo will e-mailed by the Director of the Office of Adult Education to the chief executive officers of each community college in West Virginia; all community-based literacy organizations on the Literacy WV's mailing list; local LWIB chairs, agency heads of WorkForce WV system partners; and all other persons, agencies, and institutions that have expressed interest in receiving the memo. When the RFPs are ready for release, official Notice of Availability containing information about the availability of funds and the application process will be published as a legal in compliance with the WVDE Office of Communication's approved policies and procedures. The RFPs will be posted on the WVDE website for download.

Grants will be awarded based on a regional allocation structure in order to establish a network of providers throughout the state and ensure that services continue to be provided in areas of those most in need. The State will use a hybrid model to determine this allocation structure. This model will take into consideration regional LWID needs, economic and job outlooks, availability of post-secondary education and training partners, WIOA prioritized populations and previously funded and established programs.

Submissions from eligible applicants will be reviewed for completeness, adherence to grant guidelines, content development, and overall quality. A cross-departmental review committee will score each application and make funding recommendations to the Office of Adult Education. Final funding decisions will be made by the Office of Adult Education staff based on the review committee's recommendations.

C. TITLE IV VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

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

Not Applicable.

6. PROGRAM DATA

A. DATA ALIGNMENT AND INTEGRATION

Describe the plans of the lead State agencies with responsibility for the administration of the core programs, along with the State Board, to align and integrate available workforce and education data systems for the core programs, unemployment insurance programs, and education through postsecondary education, and to the extent possible, the Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan. The description of the State's plan for integrating data systems should include the State's goals for achieving integration and any progress to date.

I. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PLANS TO MAKE THE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR THE CORE PROGRAMS INTEROPERABLE TO MAXIMIZE THE EFFICIENT EXCHANGE OF COMMON DATA ELEMENTS TO SUPPORT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION.

The State board is fully committed to the goal of aligning technology and data systems across required one—stop partner programs. The board will continue to make this a priority at its quarterly meetings to ensure progress is being made toward the governor's vision for data alignment.

West Virginia has an integrated data collection and performance management system

(MACC) that covers the following programs:

• WIOA Adult, Dislocated Workers, Youth

• National Dislocated Worker Grants

• Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers

• Wagner—Peyser

• Trade Adjustment Assistance

• Jobs for Veterans State Grants

• West Virginia's Unemployment Compensation MIS interfaces with MACC.

All other partners have management information systems that are customized to meet the needs of their programs. WorkForce West Virginia, Rehabilitation Services, and Adult Education will each make the necessary changes to their systems to collect the required data elements.

Initially, common data elements will be shared among the partners through a regular file exchange; ultimately linkages will be put in place to allow partners to access the information in real time. Employment and wage data will be shared with partners to the extent allowed by the WRIS/WRIS2 agreement.

II. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S PLANS TO INTEGRATE DATA SYSTEMS TO FACILITATE STREAMLINED INTAKE AND SERVICE DELIVERY TO TRACK PARTICIPATION ACROSS ALL PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN.

The MACC is WorkForce West Virginia's management information system that covers all US DOL programs that we manage, except for the Unemployment Compensation systems where an interface allows for the immediate transfer of registration data from the UC benefits payment system to the MACC. Going forward, all partners will add interfaces to their information system that will allow the real time exchange of participant tracking information among all systems partners will meet monthly to build the interface. Once those interfaces are established, the system will allow case managers to streamline the intake process by eliminating the need to duplicate data that is already available in the partner systems. It will also allow the tracking of an individual's participation in all programs, including what services have been given or are scheduled to be given, individual development plans, outcomes, and other pertinent information.

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.

WorkForce West Virginia, Rehabilitation Services, and Adult Education have already come to a general agreement on aligning technologies and data systems. The West Virginia State Workforce Development Board will continue to work within the framework of the WIOA legislation and federal guidance to improve service delivery.

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

WorkForce West Virginia's MACC system has always been able to produce the required reports for DOL programs in the past and we do not anticipate any difficulty in complying with the section 116 reports. While the requirement to produce reports on Training Provider performance is new, the MACC system has been able to track that performance for WIA, and now WIOA, participants for years. The MACC system has limited fiscal information available, which could be the basis of a fiscal management system once the requirements are established.

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

The WIOA core partners in West Virginia, including WorkForce West Virginia, WV Division of Rehabilitation Services, and WV Adult Education will implement a practical and effective system to fulfill the data alignment and integration requirements of WIOA. Each program has a unique system of data collection that is tailored to meet its unique needs. To maximize the efficient exchange of data to support assessment and evaluation, the core partners have collaborated to begin the development and implementation of a system for data sharing. Data will be uploaded to a data warehouse operated by WorkForce West Virginia and/or an IT contractor, and retrieved by each partner as needed and updated where appropriate based on consumers' progress in the One—Stop Center system. This will allow all partners to track common consumer service delivery while minimizing duplication of service. This system operates as follows:

1. A data warehouse will be created to store mandated data collected/shared by the three partners. The three core partners are identifying data elements that represent common intake information in the One—Stop system.

2. Each consumer in the system on implementation will be assigned a unique participant identifier upon entering the system (Workforce West Virginia, Vocational Rehabilitation,

Adult Basic Ed). The date each consumer enters and exits each program is recorded. The unique participant identifier and program entry/exit dates will be used to identify common consumers across the core programs and provide access to the common data elements will be collected by other partners and stored in the One—Stop system.

3. To ensure effectiveness and efficiency in the One—Stop system, data collected by each program on new consumers are sent to the One—Stop data warehouse and are made available for each program to track service delivery of common consumers. This process will ensure that service delivery for each consumer can be tracked across all programs.

4. Data stored in the warehouse will be used to generate reports required under section 116, performance accountability system.

Alignment of each partner's system of data collection will improve service delivery to job seekers at the One—Stop, including individuals with barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities, by providing the three core partners with more information about how consumers are being assisted across programs in the One—Stop system in West Virginia. This information enables the core partners to have a greater understanding of how the needs of their consumers are being met across programs, to track their progress, and to minimize duplication of service. Alignment and integration of data across programs in a data sharing system supports a consumer—focused approach to service delivery that will generate quality employment outcomes for consumers in the One—Stop system.

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

B. ASSESSMENT OF PARTICIPANTS' POST-PROGRAM SUCCESS

Describe how lead State agencies will use the workforce development system to assess the progress of participants who are exiting from core programs in entering, persisting in, and completing postsecondary education, or entering or remaining in employment. States may choose to set additional indicators of performance.

To the extent possible, the State will use data matches with other state systems to track participants' entry and progress in post—secondary education or employment, for example using the WV Department of Education's P20 system. In cases where a data match is not possible or is inadequate, case managers will work with participants, training providers, and employers to gather the needed information. The state's technology committee will be instrumental in facilitating the creation of data matches.

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

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

WorkForce West Virginia is the state agency that houses the Unemployment Compensation programs in West Virginia and has access to Unemployment Compensation wage data. West Virginia is also a member of WRIS and plans to participate in WRIS2 once the state's laws have been amended to allow participation. Wage records will be shared when possible and aggregated performance data shared when the actual wages records cannot be shared.

D. PRIVACY SAFEGUARDS

Describe the privacy safeguards incorporated in the State's workforce development system, including safeguards required by section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and other applicable Federal laws.

Last Update: 09/23/15

SCOPE

WorkForce West Virginia is an agency within the West Virginia Department of Commerce. This Privacy Notice Summary is based on the West Virginia Department of Commerce Privacy Policy; however, it is specific to WorkForce West Virginia.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

• We need certain personal and non—personal information to assist you with your employment, unemployment and training needs.

• The Personally Identifiable Information (PII) we collect may include your name, address, social security number, date of birth and more.

USES OF INFORMATION

• By West Virginia law and the Privacy Act of 1974, we must collect certain PII to assist you. Without certain PII, we may not be able to determine the services for which you are eligible, such as Unemployment Insurance benefits.

• The information we collect may be combined with information obtained from other Executive Branch Departments' websites and services.

• We use personal information for purposes that relate to the reason you provide it. If information is used for another purpose, we will obtain your permission.

• For purposes matching the reason you provided, we may share your information with other state and federal agencies for the limited purpose of data processing or storage.

• In certain cases, we may share your information when required by state or federal law.

• Your information may be shared with others we have hired to assist us; however, all staff and contractors are bound by a West Virginia Executive Branch Confidentiality Agreement.

• We do not sell or rent your PII to third parties for marketing purposes.

• We may share non—personal, aggregated, or de—identified data for purposes related to improving our business practices.

YOUR RIGHTS AND CHOICES

• You have the right to review the personal information you provide us and to update or correct that information.

• If you have consented to an electronic exchange of information, you may cancel that consent by following the instructions in the email you receive.

• If you provide any information to any of our agency websites, you may choose to remove it at any time, except where such information is required by state or federal regulation.

SECURITY

• WorkForce West Virginia computer systems are constructed and maintained by WorkForce West Virginia agency staff, the West Virginia Office of Technology, and/or WorkForce West Virginia and state approved contractors.

• Regardless of the system or personnel responsible for it, multiple techniques and technologies are used to protect your PII. This means we use industry standards and several in—house safeguards to protect your information.

HOW TO CONTACT US

• For more information on our privacy requirements and practices, please call 800—252—5627 and your call will be directed to the WorkForce West Virginia Privacy Officer for response.

Sharing Your Information

By enrolling with WorkForce West Virginia, you agree that WorkForce West Virginia and its mandated partners may access and use all of the information contained within your application in order to best assist you in obtaining employment and in determining your eligibility for training and other services. These services may include testing, assessment, placement services and career counseling, and we may share test scores and job eligibility data with our partners to best serve you. Personal information such as race, ethnicity, sex and disability status is being requested for federal record keeping and reporting requirements and is kept confidential; however, it may be shared with the partners to determine your eligibility for specific programs.

WorkForce West Virginia Partner Agencies

• Adult Education and Literacy Services

• Vocational Rehabilitation Services

• Post—Secondary Carl Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Services

• Welfare—to—Work Funded Under Social Security Act

• Senior Community Service

• Veterans Workforce Programs

• Community Services Block Grant (Community Action)

• Housing & Urban Development (HUD) Employment & Training Programs

• Native American Programs

• Job Corps

• Migrant & Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) Services

• Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)

• Food Stamp Employment & Training

• Navigator Program

Civil Rights Statement — Equal Opportunity is the Law!

It is against the law for this recipient of Federal financial assistance to discriminate on the following basis:

• Against any individual in the United States, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief; and

• Against any beneficiary of programs under Title I of the WorkForce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), on the basis of citizenship/lawful residence/work status or participation in any WIA Title I—financially assisted program or activity.

The recipient must not discriminate in any of the following areas:

Deciding who will be admitted, or have access, to any WIOA Title I—funded program or activity: Providing opportunities in, or treating any person with regard to, such a program or activity; or making employment decisions in the administration of, or in connection with, such a program or activity. What to do if you believe you have experienced discrimination:

If you think that you have been subjected to discrimination under WIOA Title I—funded program or activity, you may file a complaint within 180 days from the date of the alleged violation with either the recipient: Equal Opportunity Officer, WorkForce West Virginia, 112 California Avenue, Charleston, WV 25305,304—558—1600; 304—558—1549 (TDD)

The Director, Civil Rights Center, (CRC), U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Room N— 4123, Washington, DC 20210, 202—693—6502; 202—693—6516/16 (TTY).

If you file a complaint with the recipient, you must wait either until the recipient issues a written Notice of Final Action, or until 90 days have passed (whichever is sooner), before filing with the Civil Rights Center (see address above). If the recipient does not give you a written Notice of Final Action within 90 days of the day on which you filed your complaint, you do not have to wait for the recipient to issue that Notice before filing a complaint with the CRC. However, you must file your CRC complaint within 30 days of the 90—day deadline (in other words, within 120 days after you filed your complaint with the recipient). If the recipient does give you a written Notice of Final Action on your complaint, but you are dissatisfied with the decision or resolution, you may file a complaint with CRC. You must file your CRC complaint within 30 days of the date on which you received the Notice of Final Action.

To apply for jobs you must be a United States citizen, a permanent resident alien, or be authorized to work in the United States.

WV DIVISION OF REHABILITATION

West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services staff are required to complete a confidentiality agreement. The agreement is utilized to ensure that all West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services staff with access to protected information or any other information deemed confidential, fully understand their obligations to limit their use of such information and to protect such information from disclosure. The agreement also details special attention items, as well as definitions of different types of information including personal health information (PHI), personally identifiable information (PII), sensitive personally identifiable information (SPII), and non—public personal information (NPII). The confidentiality agreement pertains to information in all forms, including electronic and paper.

WV ADULT EDUCATION

Handling Strictly Confidential Information

If a student discloses any of the following types of information (verbally or in writing), legally that information is to be considered strictly confidential and therefore "private":

• Disclosure of a diagnosed learning disability

• Disclosure of previous status as a "special education" student

• Disclosure of any other type of diagnosed physical or mental disability

• Disclosure of a diagnosed medical condition

• Disclosure of use of any prescription drugs

• Disclosure of history of drug/alcohol abuse and/or treatment

• Disclosure of status as HIV positive or of having the AIDS virus

• Official transcripts including TASC or GED® scores

Filing cabinets or drawers containing strictly confidential information must be labeled as "Confidential." They must remain locked, must not be accessible to students or support staff, and must have a log filed foremost in each locked drawer to indicate when confidential files are accessed by any instructional or administrative staff person. The log must indicate the date, the purpose for access, and the name of the person accessing information.

Strictly confidential information files should be maintained at the local program level for a period of not less than five years and must be shredded when discarded.

Strictly confidential information regarding a student cannot be discussed, nor can any record be shared without a written release of information.

Instructors need to sign the WVAdultEd Personnel Confidentiality Agreement. This should be maintained by the administrator in the personnel file.

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.

Priority of Service for Veterans is implemented by WorkForce West Virginia in accordance with Title 38 part III Ch. 42. 4215 via One Stop Career Centers located throughout the state, by using clear and concise guidelines, and by trained staff familiar with state guidelines. To ensure access to services for veterans and veterans with significant barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities, the state has established formal guidance regarding priority of service for veterans that all Wagner Peyser and Workforce West Virginia staff must follow. WIOA guidance notice 4—16 referencing Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act of 2014 section 3(63) (A), 38 U.S.C 4215, and 20 CFR 1010 provides this guidance.

Veterans and eligible persons obtain information concerning priority of service through WorkForce West Virginia websites, flyers posted in One Stop Career Centers, banners, and/or in person from WorkForce West Virginia staff in work groups, unemployment compensation groups, during the registration process, and during provision of services. WorkForce West Virginia provides staff information, training, and assistance regarding available employment programs, training opportunities, services, eligibility requirements, and veteran's priority.

WorkForce West Virginia provides veterans and covered person's priority of service under all state and federally funded employment and training programs. "Veterans priority of service" means that an otherwise eligible veteran or covered person shall be given priority over non—veterans for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services provided under that program, notwithstanding any other provision of the law. When services are limited due to available funding, priority of service should be applied. For example, if there are only sufficient funds to provide services to one individual and a veteran is in the pool, the veteran must receive priority.

To effectively and efficiently facilitate the provision services to eligible veterans and eligible persons, a Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist (DVOPS) is assigned to each of the seven proposed One—Stop Centers located in West Virginia. However, most local areas exceed the minimum of one DVOPS staff depending on criteria involving necessity and population.

The WorkForce West Virginia registration process is utilized to identify and determine veterans' eligibility. All WorkForce West Virginia staff, including managers, are trained on implementation of priority of service and integrating it into the service delivery process. Veterans' eligibility for priority of service is indicated within the database by symbols which indicate that an eligible veteran has been verified by staff or the veteran or eligible person has self—attested concerning eligibility status. These symbols serve to easily identify individuals that may be eligible for priority of service. Contact information and office locations are readily available on the WorkForce West Virginia website. Veterans seeking employment can receive information about programs, priority of service, and eligibility at any time during the assessment process, on the website, on banners, or posted on message boards in One—Stop Centers.

Implementation of Priority of Service is monitored by using quarterly manager's reports, regional manager/field supervisor's quarterly audits, and yearly audit performed by

Department of Labor— Veterans Employment and Training Services (DOL—VETS). The Manager's Quarterly Report provides response on the provision of Priority of Service from each WorkForce West Virginia Office in the state. These reports are sent to and reviewed by WorkForce West Virginia supervisors to include the State Veterans Coordinator and DOL—VETS. The audits review work orders, services to veterans, and notification of job orders to veterans prior to release to the public. This ensures that management receives information and that they are made aware of the operations and actions taken to provide veterans Priority of Service as written by law.

Wagner—Peyser staff are the veteran's and eligible person's first point of contact in the One—Stop Centers. At this point, veterans are assessed and entered into the service delivery system where veterans and eligible persons receive priority of service and veterans that have a Significant Barrier to Employment of (SBE) and are in need of intensive services are referred to DVOPS staff.

DVOPS staff continue the assessment process to determine the veterans' employment options, assist with the Veterans Employment Development Plan, and provides information to the veterans or eligible persons about a wide range of resources available.

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.

Section 188 of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act ensures nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for various categories of persons, including persons with disabilities, who apply for and participate in programs and activities operated by recipients of WIA Title I financial assistance. WorkForce West Virginia (WFWV) will use the "Promising Practices in Achieving Universal Access and Equal Opportunity: A Section 188 Disability Reference Guide" as a boilerplate in assuring compliance with Section 188 of WIOA. The Guide is designed to ensure meaningful participation of people with disabilities in programs and activities operated by recipients of financial assistance under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), including those that are part of the One—Stop Center Network.

The Guide outlines promising practices in the provision of universal access and equal opportunity to programs and activities under WIOA. WorkForce West Virginia will use the Guide to monitor its own compliance, and that of its recipients, with the aspects of Section 188 and its implementing regulations that pertain to persons with disabilities. Through the monitoring process, WorkForce West Virginia can identify the disability—related requirements imposed by Section 188 and 29 CFR Part 38, to ensure equal access to programs and services under WIOA for people with disabilities.

9. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS.

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners) will ensure that each one-stop center is able to meet the needs of English language learners, such as through established procedures, staff training, resources, and other materials.

The State will coordinate with One—Stop partners to meet the needs of the non—English speaking customers.

IV. COORDINATION WITH STATE PLAN PROGRAMS

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

The Interagency Collaborative Team (ICT) was established under the state Workforce Investment Act to ensure coordination between the agencies engaged in workforce development activities, the local workforce Development Boards and WorkForce West Virginia.

The ICT continues to operate as a state interagency source for addressing issues or concerns related to building and maintaining the most effective and efficient implementation of the federal Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act and the overall workforce development system in West Virginia. The team's focus is on how best to collaborate between and among the state agencies directly involved in workforce development activities. ICT serves as a forum for the WDBs to seek information or recommendations to fulfill their responsibilities. Workforce West Virginia convenes the team at least monthly and provides administrative and other services.

V. COMMON ASSURANCES (FOR ALL CORE PROGRAMS)

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include assurances that—

1. The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts; Yes

2. The State has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of State boards and local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes; Yes

3. The lead State agencies with optimal policy-making authority and responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified or Combined State Plan, and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served by such programs; Yes

4. (a) The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administrating the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public; (b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board; Yes

5. The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities; Yes

6. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with uniform administrative requirements in this Act, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA section 184(a)(3); Yes

7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable; Yes

8. The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program; Yes

9. The State will pay an appropriate share (as defined by the State board) of the costs of carrying out section 116, from funds made available through each of the core programs; Yes

10. The State has a One-Stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all One-Stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); Yes

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

12. Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor. Yes

VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

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

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

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

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

1. REGIONS AND LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS

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

Local Areas:

The State of West Virginia is comprised of seven local workforce development regions. While the attached map shows the geographic breakdown of the seven areas/regions, a brief description of each follows. (See Local Area/Region map following this information.)

Local Area/Region Map can be found at page 176
http://lmi.workforcewv.org/Unified_State_Plan_ICRUpdate3716pj.2.cover.pdf

Area/Region One: The Region One Workforce Development Board, headquartered in Beckley, administers workforce activities in an eleven—county region covering the southeastern portion of the State.

Area/Region Two: The Southwestern West Virginia Workforce Development Board, located in Huntington, governs a seven—county region in the southwestern portion of the State.

Area/Region Three: The Workforce Development Board of Kanawha County oversees activities in the State's only single—county workforce development region from its office in Charleston.

Area/Region Four: Nine counties are served by the Workforce Development Board Mid—Ohio Valley, which is located in Parkersburg.

Area/Region Five: The Northern Panhandle Workforce Development Board provides services in six counties and is based in Wheeling.

Area/Region Six: The Region Six Workforce Development Board, located in Fairmont, provides services in a thirteen—county region in the north—central portion of the State.

Area/Region Seven: Eight counties in the easternmost portion of West Virginia are served by the

Region Seven Workforce Development Board located in Moorefield.

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.

The state issued the following Guidance Notice regarding Designation/Re— Designation

WIOA Guidance Notice No. 01—15

Designation/Re—Designation

TO: WorkForce Development Boards

FROM: Russell Fry, Acting Executive Director WorkForce West Virginia

CATEGORY: WorkForce Innovation and Opportunity Act

SUBJECT: Designation/Re—Designation of Workforce Development Areas and the Appeals Process

SOURCE: Federal/State

DISTRIBUTION: Managers, Workforce Development Programs Staff, Workforce Region

Directors and Staff

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2015

I. REFERENCE(S):

Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, WIOA Section 106.

II. PURPOSE:

To provide guidance and process for the designation and re—designation of Workforce Development Areas in West Virginia along with the process for appealing designation decisions.

III. BACKGROUND:

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) mandates that the West Virginia Workforce Development Board (SWDB) shall assist the Governor in designation of Workforce Areas, as required in section 106, and that an appeals process is in place.

The Governor of the State shall designate local workforce development areas within the State:

(i) Through consultation with the State board; and (ii) After consultation with chief elected officials and after consideration of comments received through the public comment process as described in section 102(b)(2)(E)(iii)(II).

WIOA further states that the considerations should include the following:

(i) The extent to which the areas are consistent with the labor market areas in the State; (ii) The extent to which the areas are consistent with regional economic development areas in the State; and (iii) The extent to which the areas have available the Federal and non—Federal resources necessary to effectively administer activities under subtitle B and other applicable provisions of this Act, including whether the areas have the appropriate education and training providers, such as institutions of higher education and area career and technical education schools.

WIOA states that a unit of general local government (including a combination of such units) or grant recipient that requests, but is not granted designation of an area as a local area, may submit an appeal to the State board under an appeal process established in the State plan.

IV. DEFINITIONS:

PERFORMED SUCCESSFULLY — The term "performed successfully", used with respect to a local area, means the local area met or exceeded the adjusted levels of performance for primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) (or, if applicable, core indicators of performance described in section 136(b)(2)(A) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, or the Common Measures, as allowed by a USDOL approved waiver of the core indicators of performance, as in effect the day before the date of enactment of this Act) for each of the last 2 consecutive years for which data are available preceding the determination of performance under this paragraph.

SUSTAINED FISCAL INTEGRITY — The term "sustained fiscal integrity", used with respect to a local, means that the Secretary, or the State in place of the Secretary, has not made a formal determination, during either of the last 2 consecutive years preceding the determination regarding such integrity, that either the grant recipient or the administrative entity of the area misexpended funds provided under subtitle B (or, if applicable, title I of the workforce investment Act of 1998 as in effect prior to the effective date of such subtitle B) due to willful disregard of the requirements of the provision involved, gross negligence, or failure to comply with accepted standards of administration.

BUSINESS LEADER — A business member of the Local Workforce Development Board or representative of other business organization, such as a chamber of commerce.

COMMUNITY LEADER — An officer or director of an association, community, or civic organization whose focus or activities are related to the services provided by the one— stop delivery system.

V. DESIGNATION AND RE—DESIGNATION POLICY:

WIOA requires that existing federally recognized workforce areas are designated during the first two programs years, which is referred to as Initial Designation, and again after the first two program years, which is referred to as Subsequent Designation. Units of general local government that desire to become a new local workforce area should follow the New Area designation requirements in section B.

A. INITIAL WIOA DESIGNATION FOR EXISTING REGIONS: Existing workforce regions operating in accordance with the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 may request initial designation as a Local Workforce Development Area if they have performed successfully

B. WIOA DESIGNATION FOR NEW AREAS: Any unit of general local government may request designation as a Local Workforce Development Area under WIOA. New local area designations will only become effective on July 1 of the next program year. In order for designation to be approved for the start of the next program year, the following steps and timeline must be met.

1. A statement of intent to request designation must be submitted to the West Virginia SWDB no later than February 15th through email. The SWDB will work with the requesting area to determine the deadline for the full request. Submitted materials will be made available for public comment as a part of the review process. The full request for designation as Local Workforce Development Area ("local area") must include the following components and steps: Submit the request in writing to the Chairperson of the West Virginia Workforce Development Board through email to Angela.M.Fry@wv.gov. Receipt of the request must be documented by electronic return confirmation. If the requestor does not receive confirmation, it is their responsibility to contact WorkForce West Virginia to ensure that the notice has been received.

2. This request must clearly state the circumstances for the request of designation.

3. The request must also address and explain how the following criteria are met:

a. Consistency with natural labor market areas.

b. Consistency with regional economic development areas

c. Existence of education and training providers, such as institutions of higher education and career and technical education schools in the area.

d. Submission of a service delivery plan that includes a description of resources that would be available to the area to provide services.

e. Coordination of multiple resources within areas that are based on labor markets and natural travel patterns of local residents.

f. Local support of the implementation strategies to provide quality services to employers and individuals by county commissioners, municipal elected officials including mayors and/or city council members where appropriate, and business or community leaders within the area as demonstrated by letters of support or a vote of support by a city council or other applicable board.

g. Local ownership, exhibited by strong involvement of local elected officials and community leaders on the Local Workforce Development Board.

h. Local capacity to manage funds, provide oversight of programs, and provide for the proper stewardship of public funds

I. Evidence that the area, in the two program years for which data is available prior to the request, met or exceeded the adjusted levels of performance for primary indicators of performance or the Common Measures and was not subject to the sanctions process resulting from missing the same measure two years in a row, if applicable.

j. Assurance that during the two program years prior to the request, the U.S. Secretary of Labor, or the State in place of the Secretary, has not made a formal determination that the

grant recipient or administrative entity for the local area has misexpended funds due to willful disregard, gross negligence, or failure to comply with accepted standards of administration, if applicable.

4. The request must address how the proposed new area designation will impact those other workforce areas from which it is withdrawing. It should be understood by any unit of general local government or combination of such seeking designation, that the new area will only secure the formula allocated funds for each WIOA funding stream based on the formula factors as defined by WIOA. If the area in question becomes part of a consortium, the consortium will determine the distribution of WIOA funds with its region(s).

5. If opposition to the request is voiced by municipalities or counties within the area seeking designation, then the requesting entity will address their request at a public hearing. The requesting entity will have the opportunity to respond to the concerns and questions at the hearing, and all comments will be recorded and used to inform the SWDB's action on the request. If a hearing is necessary, it will be held within 45 days of receipt of the request. Time and place is to be determined by the SWDB Chair.

6. The Chair will take the request and comments from the public as well as from a public hearing, if applicable and make a recommendation to the full SWDB.

7. The SWDB will submit its recommendation to the Governors within five (5) business days of the State board vote.

8. The final decision rests with the Governor and shall be made prior to May 29th, four weeks prior to the beginning of the fiscal and program year (July 1st).

VI. APPEALS PROCESS POLICY:

An area or areas seeking to be designated or re—designated, as a Local Workforce Development Area, which has requested but has been denied its request for designation or re—designation as a Local Area, may appeal the decision to the West Virginia Workforce Development Board.

1. An appeal must be in writing and filed with the West Virginia Workforce Development Board within fourteen (14) days after notification of the decision. Submit the appeal to the Chairperson of the West Virginia Workforce Development Board by sending an email to Angela.M.Fry@wv.gov. 2. The appeal must contain a specific statement of the grounds upon which the appeal is sought.

3. The State board will have 60 days to review the appeal and make a recommendation to the Governor. The review will take into account the information in the original request and supplemental information provided in the appeal to determine if the criteria set in this policy has been met.

4. The final decision rests with the Governor.

5. If the appeal is connected to a request for initial or subsequent designation under section V. A. or section V. B. of this policy, and if the appeal does not result in designation, the entity may request review by the Secretary of Labor to determine if procedural rights were granted or if the minimum criteria of WIOA Section 106(b)(2) or Section 106(b)(3) were met. This second level of appeal must be sent within 14 days to: Assistant Secretary of

Employment and Training U.S. Department of Labor 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W. Washington, DC 20210

A copy of the appeal must be simultaneously provided to the: ETA Regional Administrators U.S. Department of Labor The Curtis Center, Suite 825 East 170 South Independence Mall West Philadelphia PA 19106—3315

In addition, a copy must be sent to WorkForce West Virginia at 112 California Avenue, Charleston, WV 25305.

6. If the final decision of any appeal reverses the prior decision, it will become effective July 1st of the following year.

Definition: Where the term "days" appears, it shall be defined as calendar days, not working days.

VII. IMPLEMENTATION DATE: Immediately upon receipt.

VIII. INQUIRIES: Please direct all inquiries to: WorkForce West Virginia

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

**Addressed in preceding question

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

State WIOA Policy 6-17 provides guidance on the MOU and Infrastructure Funding Agreement process. The policy also addresses the appeals process and is compliant with WIOA.

2. STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES

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

State policies or Guidance for the statewide workforce development system can be found at: http://workforcewv.org/public—information/guidance—notices—and—policies.html

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

Statewide Business Survey — West Virginia will use the increase in set—aside funding to conduct a statewide business survey, in conjunction with the state's workforce partners agencies, to gather information on the needs of business in the state. West Virginia aims to make the statewide business survey a regular exercise in order to ensure that service and workforce training is relevant and responsive to the needs of the business community.

Staff will analyze the need and research for training providers. They would also provide and maintain our eligible training provider list. Continuous improvement to the process will allow for an efficient system to track future performance. We will enhance the system to track results of participants by training type and provider, and also provide cross—matches to employment outcomes. This information will allow potential training participants to make informed decisions about the best type of training and the best training providers to choose based on the employment indicator of a good paying job.

The partners will incorporate IT staff and equipment from the Unified Plan Core Partners to provide a Unified system to allow the sharing of and entering information on all participants in the system. Training would be provided to the Local Areas and one—stop Partners in carrying out data alignment.

A portion of the MACC IT system is currently funded through WIOA and this is the primary system that West Virginia will use.

The partners will assist local areas in developing Regional Plans. This would incorporate the use of industry and sector partnerships across existing boundaries.

The partners will develop Team—Base Case management for the customers at our one—stops. West Virginia will be moving toward team—based customer service as we work to develop a one—stop certification process. Training for one—stop partners and new tools will be needed to ensure consistency across West Virginia. A high priority will be placed on staff training in serving individuals with barriers to employment. A Workforce Achievement type of certification will be developed to deliver a comprehensive training program for all staff at each level of the workforce system. It will support consistency and quality of service across the state.

We will continue to monitor and provide oversight of WIOA Adult, DW, Youth and Adult Education programs as required by WIOA. Technical assistance will be provided to local areas on a regular basis and specialized technical assistance to any areas who fail to meet performance accountability measures.

Statewide system building will be ongoing as we develop all the partnerships and data sharing in West Virginia. This will involve the development and improvement of IT systems, outreach through technology to areas without physical locations, enhancement of the mobile app so that case managers can use the app as a communication tool to provide employment guidance to their customers.

Expanding apprenticeship is another statewide goal for West Virginia to expand and extend apprenticeship and internship opportunities for current students as well as older unemployed and underemployed individuals.

West Virginia will also explore development of a program targeting those incarcerated youth serving their sentence in the state's juvenile correctional facilities. The goal would be to reduce juvenile recidivism. The same could be said for the state's incarcerated adult population to assist them back into the workforce.

WorkForce West Virginia coordinates with West Virginia Partnerships to Assure Student Success (WVPASS) as a state initiative of national and state partners that support West Virginia communities by providing them training, technical support and resources for youth

and community development. They provide in person career exploration related information to students and parents at high schools and/or technical centers throughout the state.

West Virginia conducts rapid response activities to dislocated workers primarily through employer outreach which is coordinated as a joint Rapid Response Team approach between the State Dislocated Worker Services Unit and the Local Workforce Development Board. Employers are identified and contacted through WARN notices and other notifications of mass lay—offs. Because no two layoffs are identical, the needs of employers and dislocated workers will differ, as will the type and scale of needed services, the impact on the economy, and the availability of job opportunities.

While Rapid Response must be consistent across all layoffs with respect to the quality, effectiveness, and timeliness of service delivery, the response must be customized and responsive to each specific event. Therefore, additional Rapid Response team partners are added at the state and local level for Rapid Response Informational Meetings depending upon the needs of the dislocated workers. For example, if a dislocation has occurred and impacted workers do not receive paychecks, etc. then a representative from the State DOL may participate in the meeting to take statements from the impacted workers, etc. for taking steps for resolution of the problem.

The most common Rapid Response activity is to provide information to dislocated workers in the form of group settings or Rapid Response Informational Meetings. These meetings are held on site at the employer location, One—Stops, union halls, community centers and other locations within the community. On—site Rapid Response meetings are generally held when there are larger groups of dislocated workers in order to take group Unemployment Claims and sign—up for One Stop services and One—Stop orientation sessions. Critical Dislocated Worker Questionnaires are distributed to the dislocated workers to determine their training and reemployment needs so that services can be coordinated at the local and state level in order to meet the needs of the dislocated workers. For instance, if several of the impacted workers identified they were interested in starting their own business then these individuals would be linked to the technical assistance that could be provided through Bureau of Commerce's Small Business Development Center.

Rapid Response provides a comprehensive array of services to offer transitional services in the form of community resource lists of available services and contact information and reemployment services available through the local On—Stops, such as job search and training opportunities, UI services to accelerate reemployment. Other Rapid Response activities may include Community Resource Fairs, Job Fairs, Training Provider Fairs, etc. that may be conducted in conjunction with Rapid Response Informational Meetings or separately. While most of the effort is usually expended in the early stages of a dislocation event or an impending dislocation, it is important to continue Rapid Response services until all worker and employer needs are met.

The State coordinates layoff aversion strategies through the direct and immediate efforts of the Governor's Office in connection with the Bureau of Commerce's WV Development Office Business and Industrial Development Representatives who mobilize concentrated efforts to salvage any at— risk companies or entities through incumbent worker training through the Governor's Guaranteed Workforce Program, etc. As companies often do advise the state they are experiencing any difficulties, there is timely sharing of any pertinent information of

any at—risk companies between the State Dislocated Worker Services Unit and the Business and Industry Development Representatives so the layoff aversion strategies can be quickly implemented. In the event the layoff aversion strategies have not been shared at all local and state levels because of the sensitivity and confidentiality of some of the processes involved in averting a layoff, the State Dislocated Worker Services Unit communicates directly with the Secretary of the Bureau of Commerce with a notification of a need for the provision of Rapid Response services for the majority of dislocations occurring anywhere in the state and receives clearance to proceed with Rapid Response services.

C. IN ADDITION, DESCRIBE THE STATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO PROVIDE RAPID RESPONSES IN CASES OF NATURAL DISASTERS INCLUDING COORDINATION WITH FEMA AND OTHER ENTITIES.

WorkForce West Virginia has specific procedures in place to provide Rapid Response services in case of a Natural Disaster as stated in Part 687 of the WIOA Public Law. The State immediately applies for a National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) for a disaster temporary work program for disaster clean-up activities which would be coordinated with FEMA and State Homeland Security and Office of Emergency Services. In addition to applying for NDWG, dislocated workers experiencing displacement due to a natural disaster, such as flooding, would be covered under the State's Rapid Response coordination of services and would be a call to address more than just a quick return to work. Therefore, a State Rapid Response Team in conjunction with local Rapid Response Team members and partners could be deployed to the disaster site to conduct Rapid Response Informational Meetings and related Rapid Response activities if necessary. Rapid Response would coordinate with FEMA, SBA and other relief organizations to make sure the affected workers have a full array of resources to assist them in recovering from a natural disaster. If a natural disaster occurred followed by a FEMA disaster declaration, the availability of the temporary work program would also be highlighted at Rapid Response meetings. If the magnitude of the disaster resulted in mass layoffs/plant closures, and there was not sufficient WIOA formula funding or Governor's Discretionary funding available at the state level, then the State would apply accordingly for a mass layoff NDWG. If the disaster led to a sizeable mass layoff NDWG being awarded to the State, the Governor's Office would take the lead in implementing a state emergency plan mobilizing a host of state and federal resources to, which include close coordination of the mass layoff NDWG with the efforts of FEMA and State Homeland Security and Office of Emergency Services as well as other State agencies.

Below are some issues that could be addressed by Rapid Response:

• Inability to travel to work due to loss of transportation, or disruption of Public transportation due to damaged roads.

• Injuries incurred in a natural disaster that will affect a worker's ability to perform certain job functions.

• Re-training in the event the damaged business does not recover or reopen.

• On-site activities including unemployment, job training, resume and job search assistance due to the inability to travel to a regional American Job Center.

• Replacement of work clothing lost in the disaster.

• Computer access to achieve job searches, resume writing, and other resources.

Partner Services as part of our response team might include:

• Job Services

• WV Dept. of Health and Human Resources

• WV Division of Rehabilitation

• Local WorkForce Development Boards

• Healthcare navigators for those who have lost their insurance due to loss of job.

• SBA, a FEMA Partner

• FEMA representative

• Veteran Representative Union representatives to assist those represented by a union.

Rapid Response will help to coordinate offerings that may be helpful to people dislocated not only from their jobs but also from their normal routine of life.

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.

The State's early intervention to worker groups on whose behalf a TAA petition has been filed is in conjunction with our WIOA Rapid Response activities. In most cases, by the time a TAA petition is filed. WIOA rapid response activities have already taken place. One we learn a TAA petition has been filed, we provide the additional information specific to Trade, for example ensuring workers are aware of particular deadlines, through TAA/TRA Benefit Rights Informational Meeting (BRIM) to explain all of the services available through TAA. Since the impacted workers have already received critical information at a previous Rapid Response meeting, the BRIM Meeting focuses only on TAA benefits and services.

B. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. WORK-BASED TRAINING MODELS

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

Transitional Jobs, On-the-Job Training and Incumbent Workers

The state of West Virginia will increase training opportunities to individuals via alternative training models such as Transitional Jobs and OJT. LWDBs are encouraged to leverage current and develop new local partnerships with community businesses and industry to support economic development in their areas.

Transitional Jobs is an employment strategy that seeks to overcome employment barriers and transition people with labor market barriers into work using wage-paid, short-term employment that combines real work, skill development and supportive services. Transitional Jobs program participants earn a paycheck, learn skills, may become eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit, and receive intensive mentoring and support.

The Transitional Jobs program should have at a minimum the following 3 components:

1. Paid work experience (i.e. 3 days per week)

2. Classroom training (i.e. soft skills, occupational skills, etc.)

3. Supportive services

Each local Workforce Development Board must submit a Transitional Jobs Plan to WorkForce West Virginia for approval. Collaborative partnerships will be an essential piece of a Transitional Jobs Plan and are highly encouraged.

LWDBs may allocate up to 10 percent of local Adult and Dislocated Worker funds to transitional jobs for individuals with barriers to employment.

OJT ensures high quality training for both the participant and the employer because both have a vested interest in the success of the program. The employer has the unique opportunity of training potential candidates the correct and most efficient way to perform tasks for their company, at a subsidized cost. The participant has the opportunity to receive direct training and experience that increases their current skill set. Participants also gain new skills to meet the requirements of a new occupation or industry and are better equipped to compete for available jobs. All OJT experiences are provided through contracts between local employers and the LWDB.

West Virginia also supports Incumbent Worker training. To qualify as an incumbent worker, the incumbent worker needs to be employed, meet the Fair Labor Standards Act requirements for an employer-employee relationship, and have an established employment history with the employer for 6 months or more. The training must satisfy the requirements in WIOA Section 134(d)(4) and §680.790 and increase the competitiveness of the employee or employer. An incumbent worker does not necessarily have to meet the eligibility requirements for career and training services for adults and dislocated workers under this Act.

LWDBs may reserve and expend up to 20 percent of their combined adult and dislocated worker formula allotments for incumbent worker training. States may use state Rapid Response funds [WIOA Section 134(a)(3)(A)(i)] for layoff aversion and WIOA Governor's discretionary funds for statewide incumbent worker training activities.

LWDBs must consider the following factors when determining the eligibility of employers to receive the WIOA share of funds to provide training to incumbent workers using either,

local Adult and/or Dislocated Worker formula funds or WIOA statewide discretionary funds provided by the Governor:

1. The characteristics of the incumbent workers to be trained, specifically the extent to which they historically represent individuals with barriers to employment as defined in WIOA Section 3(24), and how they would benefit from retention or advancement;

2. The quality of the training (e.g., industry-recognized credentials, advancement opportunities);

3. The number of participants the employer plans to train or retrain;

4. The wage and benefit levels of participants (before and after training);

5. The employer must not have laid off workers within 12 months and must have a commitment to retain or avert the layoffs of the incumbent worker(s) being trained;

6. The employer must not be delinquent in unemployment insurance or workers' compensation taxes, penalties, and/or interest.

7. LWDBs must document these factors in approving an incumbent worker training project with an employer.

Employers participating in incumbent worker training are required to pay the non-WIOA (non-federal) share of the cost of providing training to their incumbent workers. Employers will be reimbursed the WIOA (federal) share. The employer share is based on the size of the workforce (wages paid to the participant while in training can be included as part of that share) as follows:

- At least 10 percent of the cost for employers with 50 or fewer employees
- At least 25 percent of the cost for employers with 51 to 100 employees
- At least 50 percent of the cost for employers with more than 100 employees

2. REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

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

The state will incorporate Registered Apprenticeships into its strategies and services by requiring the WorkForce WV One Stop Centers to seek out and assist Registered Apprenticeship Programs with recruitment into their individual training programs. Recruitment will include posting and advertisement of Registered Apprenticeship statewide announcements, job orders, phone notifications of apprenticeship openings, veteran priority of service, pre-application testing, initial screening of eligibility requirements and referral. Referral not only includes referral to the job order but to our partners for orientation and eligibility determination for WIOA funding for training. Additional strategies and services will include making space available to the apprenticeship programs for onsite job fairs for recruitment, advertising space for apprenticeship marketing items, space for onsite interviews and assist, as needed, with testing applicants at offsite locations.

3. TRAINING PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURE

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

Registered Apprenticeship Programs will not be subject to the same application and performance information requirements as other providers because they go through a detailed application and vetting procedure. Because they do Quality Assurance Assessments, EEO Compliance Reviews and document Completion rates they will only have to make application to the State requesting to be added the State approved provider list.

Eligible individuals will be enrolled before they become an apprentice to meet the low income priority. Registered Apprenticeship Certificates will be recognized as a post-secondary credential, portable and stackable; not inconsistent with a college degree and the certificate supports credential attainment rate if individual completes while enrolled or a year post-exit.

WIOA Policy No. 01-15 Change 1

WorkForce West Virginia

TO: Workforce Development Boards/Training Providers/Interested Members of the Public/Representatives of Business and Labor Organizations

FROM: WorkForce West Virginia

DATE: July 26, 2016

SUBJECT: Eligible Training Provider List

EFFECTIVE DATE: August 1, 2016

I. REFERENCE(S):

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, Section 122. TEGL WIOA NO. 41-14

II. PURPOSE

To establish policy for the statewide Eligible Training Provider List.

III. BACKGROUND:

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) section 122 requires the Governor and State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) to establish eligibility criteria and procedures and publish a list of training providers who meet the established criteria. The Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) is to be made available to State and local boards, as well as WIOA participants and members of the public. WIOA also requires that a list of Registered Apprenticeship programs be included on the state's ETPL although these programs are not subject to the requirements that other training providers must meet.

Eligible training providers are entities eligible to receive WIOA funds for adult and dislocated worker participants who enroll in training. Potential providers include:

A. institutions of higher education that provide a program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential;

B. entities that carry out programs registered under the National Apprenticeship Act of August 15, 1937 (refer to ETPL exemptions on page 5); and

C. other public or private providers of a program of training services, which may include joint labor-management organizations, and eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities under Title II of WIOA if such activities are provided in combination with occupational skills training.

IV. PROCEDURE:

Training Provider Eligibility Procedures

Initial Application and Eligibility Requirements

Training providers not currently on the ETPL who choose to apply for the ETPL will need to complete items 2(a) through 2(g) below. Current providers of training who wish to add a new program of study to the ETPL must complete items 2(d) through 2(f) below.

1. Submit a completed Providers of Training Services Initial Application for processing to WorkForce West Virginia (WFWV) at the following link: https://public.workforcewv.org/ServiceProvider/ServiceProviderEnrollment.asp?

2. Training Providers must provide the following:

a. Provider name, contact information, and Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN).

b. Evidence of Provider accreditation and/or licensure with appropriate state or other governing entity.

c. Student grievance and refund policy and procedure.

d. Information pertaining to program including, CIP, performance, cost, partnership with business, and alignment of training with in-demand occupations.

e. Evidence of Program accreditation and/or licensure with appropriate state or other governing entity.

f. The provider agrees they will begin to gather student data and will submit student data by September 30th for the previous academic year defined as July 1 through June 30 (i.e. On September 30, 2016, data will be due for students who completed by June 30, 2015).

g. Must provide all assurances, including but not limited to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

3. Upon receipt of completed application and program data, WFWV shall attempt to make an initial determination of statewide eligibility within 15 business days. Training providers will be contacted via email if the completed application and/or program data requires clarification.

4. The Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) will then have 10 business days to review and make comments to the state prior to the official determination of eligibility and placement on the ETPL.

5. Upon successful initial eligibility determination by WFWV, the training program will be added to the ETPL. Training providers may check their provider/program status at: https://public.workforcewv.org/ForgotPassword.asp?

6. New providers will be continually added to the ETPL as they become eligible. Initial eligibility remains in effect for a maximum of one year. (All continuing eligibility applications must be received by September 30).

Transitional Eligible Training Provider List July 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015

Training providers who were on the ETPL as of the date WIOA was enacted, July 21, 2014, will remain on the ETPL until December 31, 2015. In order to remain on the ETPL after December 31, 2015, transitional training providers must apply for renewal following the renewal application and continuing eligibility requirements described below by September 30, 2015.

Renewal Application and Continuing Eligibility Requirements

Training providers, who currently have programs listed on the ETPL and want to have their programs remain on the ETPL, must follow the procedures for continuing eligibility determination as follows:

Training providers must apply for renewal by September 30th. The eligibility period will span the respective following two calendar years (January 1—December 31).

1. Submit a completed Providers of Training Services Renewal Application for processing to WFWV via https://public.workforcewv.org/ForgotPassword.asp?

Application must include:

a. updated provider information;

b. updated information on each program pertaining to alignment of training with in-demand occupations; and

c. updated program data.

2. Submit student data as referenced in WIOA sections 116 and 122 for calculation of State Performance Information by September 30th for the previous academic year defined as July 1 through June 30 (i.e. on September 30, 2016, data will be due for students who completed by June 30, 2015). This data will be included on the ETPL for the upcoming calendar year (CY).

3. Upon receipt of completed application and student data, WFWV will make a determination of continuing statewide eligibility based on completeness of submitted information.

4. The Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) will then have 10 business days to review and make comments to the state prior to the official determination of continuing eligibility and placement on the ETPL.

5. The statewide ETPL will be published at: https://public.workforcewv.org/JobSeeker/TrainingCourseSearch.asp by December 15th for the upcoming calendar year.

6. Continued eligibility will be reviewed by the state biennially.

7. Minimum levels of training provider performance may be considered as a criterion for continued eligibility beginning 2018.

Removal from ETPL and Appeals

A training provider and/or its program may be denied inclusion in or removed from the state ETPL for the following reasons (documented proof that these conditions exist must be provided):

1. The initial and/or renewal application was not completed, was not completed by established due date, or was missing required information;

2. Performance data was not submitted or was not submitted by established due date;

3. The training provider intentionally supplied inaccurate information (This exclusion or removal will remain in effect for a minimum of two years);

4. The training provider substantially violated any requirement under WIOA, state or local laws and policy; or

5. The training provider loses its license or accreditation of its accrediting body.

6. Upon setting minimum levels of performance, a provider or program that fails to meet such levels will be removed.

If WFWV denies eligibility for listing of a provider's program on the ETPL, they must inform the provider in writing and include the reason(s) for the denial and complete information on the appeal process within 14 calendar days of the decision. WIOA students currently enrolled in such a program will be allowed to complete the program. If a training provider chooses to appeal, a training program that is subject to removal shall remain on the State ETPL until the appeal is concluded.

A provider choosing to appeal a decision must submit a written appeal to WFWV within 30 calendar days of the issuance of the denial notice. The written appeal must include:

• a statement of the desire to appeal;

• specification of the program in question; and

• specifically and in detail the grounds and the reasons upon which it is claimed that the denial was erroneous.

WFWV will not consider any factual or legal grounds for relief that are not set forth in the appeal. WFWV will determine whether a hearing for the purpose of fact-finding is necessary and will issue a decision not later than 30 calendar days from either the date an in-person hearing is held, or the date the appeal request is received by WFWV.

Programs that have been removed from or denied listing on the ETPL may be reinstated after one year (two years if removal was due to willful submission of inaccurate information) by applying through the initial application process.

ETPL Exceptions

Registered Apprenticeships

Registered Apprenticeship (RA) programs are exempt from performance and reporting-related requirements in order to enable these evidence-based programs to be placed on the statewide ETPL with minimal burden. These programs have already gone through a rigorous assessment as part of the registration process with the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Apprenticeship (DOLETA/OA). Inclusion of Registered Apprenticeship programs on the state ETPL enhances participants' awareness of the programs and provides local workforce systems with a mechanism to support this valuable training model. Registered Apprenticeship is a proven approach for employers to build a pipeline of highly-skilled workers, promoting employee retention and increasing productivity. All Registered Apprenticeship openings listed on the ETPL will automatically be considered as a statewide demand occupation for as long as the opening(s) remain unfilled. This will allow ITAs in RA to support participants and more directly connect those programs to one-stop centers. On-the-job training, internships, and paid or unpaid work experience, or transitional employment are not required to be listed on the ETPL.

Note that Registered Apprenticeship programs, if openings for new apprentices exist in the local area, should automatically be considered in-demand training. LWDB staff should contact WorkForce West Virginia for assistance with specific Registered Apprenticeship program inquiries.

On-the-Job Training, Customized Training, Incumbent Worker Training, and Other Training Exceptions

Providers of on-the-job training, customized training, incumbent worker training, internships, and paid or unpaid work experience opportunities, or transitional employment are exempt and therefore not required to submit performance data or undergo a state review during the initial or continuing eligibility determination process. Instead, Section 122(h)(2) tasks the "one-stop operator in a local area shall collect such performance information from providers … and use the information to determine whether the providers meet such performance criteria as the Governor may require. The one-stop operator shall disseminate information identifying such providers that meet the criteria as eligible providers, and the performance information, through the one-stop delivery system." One-stop operators in a local area should complete reviews of these types of providers to ensure continued use of their services provides participants with quality relevant training opportunities.

Youth Workforce Investment Activities

Youth workforce investment activities are exempt and therefore not required to submit performance data or undergo a state review during the initial or subsequent eligibility determination process. They do not have to submit applications for either initial or renewal phases.

4. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR THE PRIORITY FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS, OTHER LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS, AND INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF WIOA SEC. 134(C)(3)(E), WHICH APPLIES TO INDIVIDUALIZED

CAREER SERVICES AND TRAINING SERVICES FUNDED BY THE ADULT FORMULA PROGRAM.

WIOA Policy No. 2-16

WorkForce West Virginia

TO: Workforce Development Boards

FROM: WorkForce West Virginia

DATE: September 22, 2015

SUBJECT: Priority of Service Policy for Adult Title I Funding

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 20, 2016

I. REFERENCE(S):

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) Sections 3 and 134; Proposed 20 CFR §680.150, §680.600, §680.610, and §680.650; 38 U.S.C. 101 and 4213 and 4215; and 20 CFR 1010; and 20 CFR §683.230.

II. PURPOSE:

To establish policy regarding priority of service for veterans, recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient served with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult funds.

III. BACKGROUND:

Priority for individualized career services and training services funded with Title I Adult funds must be given to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals who are basic skills deficient. States and local areas must establish criteria by which the one-stop operator will apply the priority under WIOA section 134(c)(3)(E).

Veterans, under WIOA section 3(63)(A) and 38 U.S.C. 101 receive priority of service in all Department of Labor funded training programs under 38 U.S.C. 4215 and described in 20 CFR 1010. A veteran must still meet each program's eligibility criteria to receive services under the respective employment and training program. For income-based eligibility determinations, amounts paid while on active duty or paid by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for vocation rehabilitation, disability payments, or related VA-funded programs are not to be considered as income in accordance with 38 U.S.C. 4213 and 20 CFR §683.230 .

IV. Action:

Priority of Service will be as follows:

• First Priority: Veterans and eligible spouses (covered persons) who are low-income or recipients of public assistance or who are basic skills deficient.

• Second Priority: Individuals (non-covered persons) who are low-income or recipients of public assistance or individuals who are basic skills deficient.

• Third Priority: Veterans and eligible spouses who are not low-income and are not recipients of public assistance or basic skills deficient.

• Fourth Priority: Individuals who do not meet the above priorities.

Definitions:

Low-income — An individual who:

a. Receives, or is a member of a family that receives cash benefits under a federal, state or local income based public assistance program;

b. Received an income, or is a member of a family that received a total family income, for the 6-month period prior to application for the program involved (exclusive of unemployment compensation, child support payments, payments described in subparagraph (A), and old-age and survivors insurance benefits received under Section 202 of the Social Security Act that, in relation to family size, does not exceed the higher of- i. The poverty line for an equivalent period; or

ii. 70% of the lower living standard income level, for an equivalent period;

c. Is a member of a household that receives (or has been determined within the 6-month period prior to application for the program involved to eligible to receive) food stamps pursuant to the Food Stamp Act of 1977;

d. Qualifies as a homeless individual, as defined in subsection (a) and (c) of Section 103 of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act.

e. Is a foster child on behalf of whom State or local government payments are made; or

f. In cases permitted by regulations promulgated by the Secretary of Labor, is an individual with a disability whose own income meets the requirements of the program, but who is a member of a family whose income does not meet such requirements.

Basic Skills Deficient — An individual unable to compute or solve problems, read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

For WIOA purposes, the State further defines Basic Skills Deficient as an individual who:

• Lacks a high school diploma or high school equivalency and is not enrolled in secondary education.

• Enrolled in a Title II Adult Education/Literacy program.

• Reading and/or Math assessment at an 8.9 or below grade level. (Regions using WorkKeys assessment will be WorkKeys level at or below 4).

• Determined to be Limited English Skills proficient through staff-documented observations.

• Other objective criteria determined to be appropriate by the local area and documented in its required policy.

"On-site monitoring will determine if each WDB Region is in compliance with Federal regulations, as well as all State and Local policies."

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

West Virginia recognizes that WIOA allows up to 100% of funds between programs with prior approval from the Governor. The state will ensure that any transfer of funds between WIOA programs complies with the WIOA law. LWDBs will also be required to record and document the use and application of local funds in accordance with instructions set forth in the grantee- subgrantee agreement. The state will develop and issue the guidance notice by October 31, 2016.

C. YOUTH PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

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

1. IDENTIFY THE STATE-DEVELOPED CRITERIA TO BE USED BY LOCAL BOARDS IN AWARDING GRANTS OR CONTRACTS FOR YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES AND DESCRIBE HOW THE LOCAL BOARDS WILL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE ABILITY OF THE PROVIDERS TO MEET PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES BASED ON PRIMARY INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE FOR THE YOUTH PROGRAM AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 116(B)(2)(A)(II) OF WIOA IN AWARDING SUCH GRANTS OR CONTRACTS.*

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

The local WDBs follow the State's procurement policies when awarding grants for workforce investment activities. The following clause is included in the Workforce grant agreement:

Sub-granting:

The Grantee shall not enter into a subgrant agreement for any of the work performed under this Grant Agreement without obtaining the prior written approval of Workforce WV. If sub-grant agreements are approved, they shall contain, at a minimum, sections of this Grant Agreement pertaining to Indemnity, Conflicts of Interest, Lobbying, Nondiscrimination, Audit Requirements, Public Notice and any other State and/or Federal requirements. Sub-grantee program performance accountability measures are assessed by program staff.

Examples of how local boards will take into consideration the ability of the providers to meet performance accountability are listed below-

• Utilize a Request for Proposal (RFP) process for youth services. When the rating committee reviews the RFP, performance is one of the key factors in scoring.

• RFP's specifically address DOL required performance measures as a requirement for any proposals that are submitted and/or accepted.

• Reference checks are completed on all proposals received, including DOL performance in other contracts operated by the proposing organization

• During the course of the year, if a performance measure is not met, the contractor will be part of any corrective action plans developed.

• Setting real time outcome goals for proposers to meet. Meeting the real time outcome goals would be financially tied to contract renewal for the option year(s). Real time outcome goals could be:

• Provider will be required to hold 2 recruitment events targeting Out-of-School youth during the program year.

• Provider should enroll a minimum of 80% of their youth (80% Out-of-School and 80% In-School) in a work experience activity during the program year.

• Provider will be in contact with every active youth during the program year at a minimum of 2 times a month, with one contact being in person. The other contact may be by phone or social media. The contacts will be documented in the youth files and in the MACC as case notes for verification at scheduled file review visits by WDB staff.

• The criteria for an award(s) of funding is based on: past performance, cost effectiveness, demonstrated overall program effectiveness, youth group(s) targeted for services, placement and retention efforts in offered education or employment programs, ability of the subcontractor(s) to meet and/or exceed performance goals and ability to meet administrative and fiscal grant responsibilities, to name a few.

• Subcontractor(s) are made aware of performance measures for the region and the importance of meeting/exceeding them via a contractual agreement. Specific language about meeting and/or exceeding performance measures is included in contractual agreements signed with subcontractor(s). Performance-based contracts are used for all subcontractor(s). Identified performance measures serve as benchmarks in the contractual agreement and are used for measuring progress.

• Subcontractor(s) are monitored no less than five (5) times per program year to review and evaluate the delivery of program curriculum, program performance, etc. and address any issues that arise. A corrective action plan, along with technical assistance, is provided to the subcontractor(s) should program performance not be met.

• Programs for in-school and out-of-school youth will focus on measureable skill gains.

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.

Implement new WIOA regulations regarding youth;

• Recognizing the new priority on OSY, the State will identify models and effective practices, including for recruitment, flexible enrollment (e.g. self—attestation, co— enrollment, career pathways and retention) to help local area staff successfully meet the needs of those individuals.

• The State will work with the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education, and also with local boards, to ensure that statistical models and negotiated performance levels are established

and calibrated so that they accurately reflect the profiles of out—of—school youth being served within the State and in each local area.

Continue serving youth as a priority within the workforce development system;

• The State will support the development of transitional jobs, social enterprises and other work experience strategies to help OSY with limited work histories to develop the skills needed for workplace success.

• The State will encourage the co—enrollment of high—risk OSY, ages 18 to 24, as both WIOA Adult and WIOA Youth participants to allow for the leveraging of funds and provision of necessary services. Where appropriate, co—enrollment in Title II adult basic education services, EARN, TANF and other partner programs will also be encouraged. The State will offer technical assistance and effective—practice sessions to ensure the co—enrollment of OSY in WIOA Adult and WIOA Youth programs and to promote their co— enrollment in partner programs. The State will also continue to encourage the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for 18 to 24 year old youth, potentially combined with, either sequentially or concurrently, work—based learning opportunities. TANF, SNAP and other partner programs will refer clients for ITAs, as appropriate.

• The State will expand opportunities for youth to acquire post—secondary skills and

credentials needed for high wage jobs through increased access to career and technical education programs and work—based learning experiences. The Departments of Education and the Community Technical College System will work cooperatively to explore and develop appropriate connections between WIOA youth activities and Perkins postsecondary and state—funded programming.

• The Department of Education will support the transformation and modernization of career and technical education (CTE) and align CTE with the career pathways recognized by the State.

• The State will support LWDB collaboration with YouthBuild, JobCorps, and AmeriCorps sites and will encourage inclusion of those partnerships in local plans. Offer youth a clear path to success.

• To ensure that OSY have access to career pathways, the State will work with local boards to identify on—ramps, access points, and supports which enable participants to enter and successfully complete training and enter employment.

• The WV Division of Rehabilitation Services (WVDRS) has re—aligned its resources to increase and improve services to youth with disabilities, especially high school students with disabilities. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services has memorandums of understanding with all 55 county boards of education and has a vocational rehabilitation counselor assigned to each high school in the state. These counselors provide pre—employment transition services to students with disabilities to ensure students, and their parents, and school personnel are aware of available services, training, education, and employment options. Through the Positive Outcomes Within Education and Rehabilitation (POWER) program, students with disabilities have opportunities for job shadowing experiences. Through the Student Transition to Employment Program (STEP), students may receive services from teachers outside of the classroom, including job coaching and job

placement. Youth may also continue to receive services from West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services after exiting high school. This often includes additional training and education required to achieve their chosen employment goal.

• The core agencies blend resources to provide more effective and efficient services to youth. This includes cross referrals and co—enrollment of consumers in addition to joint projects and activities at the state and regional level. In 2016, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services will be initiating a project, in conjunction with the other core partners, to assist school districts in setting up community—based work exploration programs. The project also includes a statewide cross—sector outreach component to market the services available to youth, parents, job seekers, and employers in West Virginia.

• The State will use the Office of Apprenticeship to promote apprenticeship and pre—apprenticeship opportunities to youth.

3. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THAT ALL 14 PROGRAM ELEMENTS DESCRIBED IN WIOA SECTION 129(C)(2) ARE MADE AVAILABLE AND EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENTED, INCLUDING QUALITY PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS UNDER THE WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM ELEMENT.*

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

The State will contract with each of the WDBs to ensure that each of the 14 program elements are administered in their local area.

State Monitors will utilize the State MIS to determine the availability and provision of the 14 program elements prior to the annual on-site reviews. Supporting evidence will be obtained to ensure that the WDB has complied with the requirements of WIOA section 129 (c) (2). The WDB will be notified of any deficiency and a corrective action plan will be required. The 14 program elements, listed below, will be added to the statement of work that is included in the grant agreement WDB's are required to sign-

PROGRAM ELEMENTS.—In order to support the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, entry into postsecondary education, and career readiness for participants, programs shall provide elements consisting of—

(A) tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized postsecondary credential;

(B) alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate;

(C) paid and unpaid work experiences that have as a component academic and occupational education, which may include—

(i) summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year;

(ii) pre-apprenticeship programs;

(iii) internships and job shadowing; and

(iv) on-the-job training opportunities;

(D) occupational skill training, which shall include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that are aligned with in demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area involved, if the local board determines that the programs meet the quality criteria described in section 123;

(E) education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;

(F) leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors, as appropriate;

(G) supportive services;

(H) adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months;

(I) followup services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate;

(J) comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate;

(K) financial literacy education;

(L) entrepreneurial skills training;

(M) services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services; and

(N) activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.

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.

An individual must meet the following criteria in order to be identified as a youth who needs additional assistance:

1. Must be between the ages of 14 and 24, and

2. Require additional assistance to complete an educational program or secure and hold employment, and

3. Meet one or more of the following conditions:

a. Youth at risk of dropping out of school. Students at risk for dropping out display certain easily identifiable characteristics, some of which are demographic and some of which are related to their performance in school.

Factors associated with dropping out of high school:

• Comes from low-income family lack of credits earned

• Poor attendance

• Members of racial or ethnic minority group

• Poor grades (especially in core courses)

• Older than the average student in their grade

• Pregnant/Parenting

• Substance Abuse

• Youth offender

b. Immigrant Youth.

c. Youth with limited English proficiency.

d. Youth deficient in basic skills. Basic skills deficient means the individual computes or solves problems, reads, writes, or speaks English at or below the eighth grade level or is unable to compute or solve problems, read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function of the job, in the individual's family, or in society. In addition, states, and grantees have the option of establishing their own definition, which must include the above language. In cases where states or grantees establish such a definition, that definition will be used for basic skills determination.

e. Youth who resides in areas with high rates of poverty, crime and/or unemployment.

f. Youth who has serious barriers to employment, including but not necessarily limited to, stated current or past substance abuse, truancy, absence of positive adult role models, and diagnosed emotional disorders.

By expanding the definition of "youth who needs additional assistance" WDBs will be able to serve at—risk youth in a more equitable manner. The following is a list of acceptable source documents required to support an eligibility staff person/case manager identifying a youth as needing additional assistance (clearly identifying which condition the youth met):

1. Individual Service Strategy (ISS).

2. Case Note.

3. WIA intake of registration form.

4. State MIS.

5. Self—Attestation

Services for Youth (Rehabilitation Specific)

With the enactment of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), special emphasis has been placed on services to youth, defined as individuals aged 24 years or younger. The WIOA core partners, comprised of WorkForce West Virginia, Adult Education, and the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (WVDRS) have long served this population. However, the new legislation requires a substantial re—allocation of funds to meet the new service provision expectations. Specifically, Workforce is now required to use 75 percent of its local area youth funds to be allocated to workforce investment activities for out—of—school youth and 20 percent of its local area youth funds to be allocated for work experiences. Additionally, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services is now required to reserve at least 15 percent of its budget for the provision of pre—employment transition services (PETS) to students with disabilities while they are in high school. With these requirements in mind, it can be said that the youth to be served fall into two separate groups, in—school and out—of—school, and that these two groups are served primarily by different WIOA core partners, though any individual served by the Workforce Development System (WDS) might be served by all three WIOA core partners, perhaps simultaneously. Out—of—school youth are primarily served by WorkForce West Virginia and Adult Education, while in—school youth are primarily served by the State's education system (a non—WIOA partner) and West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services, for those eligible students with disabilities. Adult Education is prohibited from providing direct services to in—school youth.

In—School Youth

Primary responsibility for services to in—school youth falls, in a general sense, to West Virginia's education system. The primary workforce development need of all in—school youth is a quality, high school—level education, provided by the teachers in the public and private school systems. Because of this need's precedence, the role of WorkForce West Virginia regarding in—school youth is diminished. Among the WIOA core partners, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services plays the largest role in the development of in—school youth, albeit only for students with disabilities. Students seeking employment who do not qualify for vocational rehabilitation (e.g., not disabled, does not meet Order of Selection requirements) are referred from West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services to WorkForce West Virginia as needed. WorkForce West Virginia distributes funding to each of the State's local Workforce Development Boards, which are allowed to spend up to 25 percent of their youth funds on workforce investment activities for in—school youth.

West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services has had a long standing partnership with West Virginia's education system, at both the State and local level. As such, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services has cooperative agreements with the State Education Agency and each of the 55 Local Education Agencies in West Virginia. These cooperative agreements between West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services and the Education Agencies, assure that each student with a disability in the state who needs special education, vocational education, and/or vocational rehabilitation services is identified and that the appropriate services, are made available to the individual.

West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services offices are located in some of the state's largest schools. Counselors visit every high school in the state to initiate rehabilitation services needed for transition from school to work. This allows the counselor to develop a

collaborative relationship and assist the student in identifying goals, services, and service providers related to employment options prior to transition. A greater emphasis is now being placed for counselors to do outreach with these students and their parents/guardians during their sophomore year (rather than their junior year, as was formerly practiced) in order to maximize the counseling opportunities.

Since the enactment of WIOA, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services has begun to focus on providing services, particularly PETS, to high school students with disabilities starting in the 10th grade. To accomplish this, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services assigned 44 counselors to work solely with high school students with disabilities, including students enrolled at the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and Blind. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services' school counselors specialize in providing PETS to students with disabilities. Of these 44 PETS counselors, 43 work solely with high school students and have no other assignments. Expected benefits include increased counselor presence in schools, increased Individualized Educational Program (IEP) meeting attendance, increased provision of PETS, and an increase in outreach and awareness of vocational rehabilitation (VR) services to high school students with disabilities. Counselors will also stay in contact with educators to discuss and attempt to resolve educational difficulties as they arise.

Pre—employment transition services are mandated under WIOA and include the following:

• Job exploration counseling

• Work—based learning experiences, which may include in—school or after school opportunities or experience outside the traditional school setting (including internships), that is provided in an integrated environment to the maximum extent possible

• Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institution of higher education

• Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living

• Instruction in self—advocacy, which may include peer mentoring

The 2015 West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) indicated that job exploration counseling was the most frequently reported pre— employment transition service need. In accordance with this, and per the requirements of WIOA, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services has recently restructured its field services unit, creating a subdivision of counselors that focus solely on providing services, including PETS, to students with disabilities. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services counselors in high schools will provide Pre—employment Transition Services to students with disabilities, especially job exploration counseling, in order to give students with disabilities and their parents/guardians a better understanding of labor market conditions, current and emerging career opportunities, and he necessary education and training requirements related to those opportunities. This information, provided to West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services by WorkForce West Virginia, affords students with disabilities the greatest opportunity for an informed decision regarding work and their potential careers.

In addition to PETS, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services debuted the Positive Outcomes within Education and Rehabilitation (POWER) program in 2015. POWER is a job shadowing program that offers transitioning students, who may be having a difficult time choosing a career path, the opportunity to experience an occupation by spending time with a professional working in the students' vocational goal/career field of interest, including science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). The POWER program allows the student the opportunity to experience an occupation prior to committing to training. It guides the student to take a serious, realistic look at the occupation, allowing the student to make a more informed choice.

Another West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services activity is the Student Transition to Employment Program (STEP). This program utilizes school personnel to facilitate a more seamless transition from high school to post—secondary activities (employment or training) for students with disabilities. By allowing the student to continue working with an individual who has provided them with classroom instruction and/or transition services while in high school, they are working with people who are most familiar with their interests, skills, and barriers to employment. In addition, STEP will also include the use of science and math teachers to provide appropriate students with further career exploration opportunities in STEM fields. These teachers may also provide college preparation activities, such as ACT test preparation, and work—based experiences.

By engaging high school students earlier and providing them with activities such as PETS, POWER, and STEP, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services expects recipient students will have a better understanding of the labor market and the value of obtaining a postsecondary credential. Students with disabilities that are eligible for VR services may, in accordance with their IPE, receive assistance from West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services in obtaining postsecondary training.

PETS rehabilitation counselors are also invited to participate in IEP meetings. During these meetings the counselor describes West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services policies, and procedures as appropriate. The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services counselor determines the student's eligibility and order of selection category utilizing information generated from the school, the student, and West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services. Prior to or shortly after the student's IEP transition meeting occurs, Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) development begins so both the student and counselor have an idea of what rehabilitation services will be necessary to meet the student's vocational goal. Therefore, if the student needs additional training or assessment prior to vocational goal determination, this information is already collected so that planned rehabilitation services may begin. IPE development and approval for students with disabilities, including those able to be served if West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services is on an order of selection, will begin as early as appropriate during the transition process, but before the student determined to be eligible leaves the school setting.

Out—of—School Youth

All of the WIOA core partners are able to serve out—of—school youth who qualify for services. Adult Education works exclusively with out—of—school populations, many of whom are ages 24 and under. The core partners work, in tandem, on many workforce development activities. The partners all have memorandums of understanding at the state

and regional levels and also collaborate on specific projects at local levels. For example, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services and

Adult Education are collaborating with a university to assist adult education students in transitioning to post—secondary education through a curriculum that teaches time management, a basic math refresher, and any other identified needs for individuals with disabilities returning to post—secondary education. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services, WorkForce West Virginia, and Adult Education also collaborate in workforce development region 2 as part of WIOA One—Stop Management Partner meetings with local development groups to better identify and facilitate needed services for the local area. In West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services Districts 4 and 6, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services has partnered with Adult Education to increase

efforts to reach potential VR consumers being served by Adult Education and the Strategic Planning in Occupational Knowledge for Employment and Success (SPOKES) program. SPOKES was created by WV Adult Education under a contract between the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDOE) Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development and the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR), and in collaboration with the Workforce Development Boards (WDBs).

West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services consumers who were served as students with disabilities receive continued VR services under the guidance of a West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services "Transition" counselor, upon graduation from high school. These transition counselors are responsible for the delivery of services to individuals with disabilities until those individuals' cases are closed, regardless of the individuals' ages at the time of closure. Frequently, these continued services include higher education. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services understands the importance of having a recognized postsecondary degree from the perspectives of both employers and job seekers. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services has always strived for quality, career—based employment outcomes for its consumers, when appropriate. In this aim, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services has a long history of providing its consumers with the necessary training that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential. In FY 2015, over $11 million, representing over half of all case services expenses went toward training. Of this amount, the majority was for four—year college/university and junior/community college tuition. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services also has a liaison with postsecondary institutions across the state including 44 colleges, universities, community and technical colleges.

For youth with disabilities who do not graduate from high school, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services will also work closely with Adult Ed, referring consumers as needed, to ensure that these individuals have an adequate opportunity to obtain a completed high school level education. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services will also provide assistance as needed to VR consumers in Adult Education programs to ensure that these consumers have the means to progress through and complete these programs if doing so requires the circumnavigation of functional limitations based on the consumers' disabilities.

West Virginia's adult basic education programs address the needs of adult learners as they strengthen local communities and businesses. Adults who lack the skills and knowledge to fully participate in, contribute to, and benefit from West Virginia's postsecondary education system and economy are eligible to access adult education services in a variety of settings

across the state. Core services are offered at all locations to adult learners who meet the federal eligibility requirements for enrollment. These learners:

Have attained 16 years of age;

• Are not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under state law;

• Lack sufficient mastery of basic educational skills to function effectively in society; Do not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or have not achieved an equivalent level of education; and/or

• Are unable to speak, read, or write the English language.

Beginning in July 2015 under WIOA, adult education and literacy activities were expanded to include 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, and integrated education and training.

Comprehensive interventions are designed to address skill and knowledge deficits across the levels defined in Title II of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. Building on policies and initiatives created through this comprehensive

system of advising, coordination, and support, providers leverage success using innovative processes. These processes unify and inform the delivery of Adult Basic Education (ABE) courses, English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction, and high school credential programs. Following are examples of research—based innovative practices that support the implementation and scaling of college and career pathways that accelerate student completion and foster economic growth.

1. FastTrack Programs — Increasing Transitions from Levels 1, 2 and 3

Funded providers will use key elements of research based programs, e.g. contextualization, team teaching, and enhanced students services to increase the speed at which students' master basic and ESL skills at federal levels 1, 2, and 3.

These condensed courses feature managed intake and managed enrollment and are typically a six to twelve week accelerated program. FastTrack options include, but are not limited to:

Basic Skills FastTrack:

• Programs focused on either English/Language Arts, Mathematics and Numeracy, Science or Writing in Response to Text Career Cluster FastTrack:

• Programs focused on career immersion and career clusters

• Partnerships with Career and Technical Centers

• Partnership efforts between community colleges and community—based organizations and local WDBs

• Workplace projects that partner providers, employers and WDBs

ESL FastTrack:

• Flipped classroom models for ESL

FastTrack students acquire the skills needed to transition to basic skills education classes at federal levels 4—6 and/or Professional/Technical or Academic pathways.

2. Professional/Technical Transitions— Moving Students from Levels 4, 5, and 6 to Postsecondary Success in Professional/Technical Programs

Students who function primarily at federal levels 4 — 6 can be served in Professional/Technical Transition programs that result in recognized certificates leading to progression along a defined educational and career pathway. It is our hope to make these programs available at every West Virginia community and technical college, and to encourage partnerships with local community based organizations and as part of the education services at state correctional facilities.

• Programs focused on career immersion and career clusters

• Partnerships with Career and Technical Centers

• Partnership efforts between community colleges and community—based organizations and local WDBs

• Workplace projects that partner providers, employers and WDBs

• Flipped classroom models for ESL

3. Developmental and Academic Transition Programs — Moving Students from Levels 4, 5, and 6 to Postsecondary Success in Academic Programs

Developmental and Academic Transition programs will employ the same strategies as professional technical transition programs. They will apply these strategies to credit—bearing classes along 2—year degree pathways and ensure accelerated student progress through higher levels of adult education and precollege education and transition into 2—year degree programs.

Expanding Options for High School Credentials — Certificates and Diplomas

In light of changes to options for acquiring high school credentials made by the federal government and the growing importance of these certificates and high school diplomas, West Virginia has expanded the options available to adults. Our goal is to ensure that adult learners acquire the necessary credentials by gaining the knowledge and skills demanded in the workforce and required for postsecondary success. Toward that end, West Virginia will continue to award state certificates linked to the recognized high school equivalency state exam (TASC).

Welfare Reform Initiative

ABE has a successful history of collaboration with the State's human services agency. Through a cooperative relationship built on trust and commitment to serving economically disadvantaged West Virginians, the two State agencies work together to respond to the mandates of welfare reform.

SPOKES

In 2003, an academic and job preparation skills program entitled SPOKES (Strategic Planning in Occupational Knowledge for Employment and Success) was created by WVABE under a contract between the WVDOE Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development and Department of Health and Human Resources, and in collaboration with some WDBs.

The SPOKES program model was also designed to provide intense daily activities that would address academic and soft skills necessary for adults to pursue gainful employment. Although the program is designed for participants functioning at or above the 4th grade level (FFL 3 and above), there is

some flexibility about including participants who score at lower levels. This 4 to 10 week program allows WV WORKS participants to be referred to the program and receive services at the start of each work week. Referrals can be made for the start—up of any week.

The SPOKES program consists of:

• Assessment

• A six—week repeating cycle of modules related to the following components:

o Employability Skills

o Job Readiness

o Work Process Skills

o Technology Skills,——which may include Internet and Computing Core Certification (IC3) ® work

o Workplace Academic Skills

• Vocational Training starting Week 5 that may include the following:

o Customer Service Part 1

o Customer Service Part 2

o Microsoft® Office Specialist (MOS)

o Internet and Computing Core Certification (IC3)

o Work—based Academic Skills (if applicable in region)

• An additional 2—4 week job readiness component, which includes intense jobsearch. SPOKES participants prepare to take the WorkKeys® assessment. A variety of certificates may be earned by participants who complete the program. Participants officially referred to and enrolled in SPOKES classes must have an identified need for instruction and/or enhancement in one or more of the module areas that prevents them from getting employment or advancing in a job. Individualized, computer—aided, small/whole group, and work— based/site instructional techniques are utilized within the program delivery of services.

In addition to having a certified full—time WVABE SPOKES instructor, and in some cases a part time WVABE SPOKES instructor, the SPOKES program may have access to a career development consultant (CDC) and share a blended classroom with an ABE instructor.

Programs are encouraged to pilot and implement additional evidence and research—based strategies for college and career pathways that meet the goals of this plan.

Pursuant to WIOA, WorkForce West Virginia is required to allocate 75% of its local area youth funds to out—of—school youth. These funds are used to carry out programs that provide the following elements:

a. tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence—based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;

b. alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate;

c. paid and unpaid work experiences, including summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year; pre—apprenticeship programs; internships and job shadowing; and on—the—job training opportunities;

d. occupational skill training;

e. education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;

f. leadership development opportunities;

g. supportive services;

h. adult mentoring;

i. follow—up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate;

j. comprehensive guidance and counseling;

k. financial literacy education;

l. entrepreneurial skills training;

m. services that provide labor market and employment information about in—demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area; and

n. activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.

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.

WV State Law does not define not attending or attending school.

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

Basic Skills Deficient — An individual unable to compute or solve problems, read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society. For WIOA purposes, the State further defines Basic Skills Deficient as an individual who:

• Lacks a high school diploma or high school equivalency and is not enrolled in secondary education. • Enrolled in a Title II Adult Education/Literacy program.

• Reading and/or Math assessment at an 8.9 or below grade level.

• Determined to be Limited English Skills proficient through staff—documented observations.

• Other objective criteria determined to be appropriate by the local area and documented in its required policy.

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).)

Not Applicable

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

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

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

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

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

E. WAIVER REQUESTS (OPTIONAL)

States wanting to request waivers as part of their title I-B Operational Plan must include a waiver plan that includes the following information for each waiver requested:

1. IDENTIFIES THE STATUTORY OR REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR WHICH A WAIVER IS REQUESTED AND THE GOALS THAT THE STATE OR LOCAL AREA, AS APPROPRIATE, INTENDS TO ACHIEVE AS A RESULT OF THE WAIVER AND HOW THOSE GOALS RELATE TO THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

2. DESCRIBES THE ACTIONS THAT THE STATE OR LOCAL AREA, AS APPROPRIATE, HAS UNDERTAKEN TO REMOVE STATE OR LOCAL STATUTORY OR REGULATORY BARRIERS;

3. DESCRIBES THE GOALS OF THE WAIVER AND THE EXPECTED PROGRAMMATIC OUTCOMES IF THE REQUEST IS GRANTED;

4. DESCRIBES HOW THE WAIVER WILL ALIGN WITH THE DEPARTMENT'S POLICY PRIORITIES, SUCH AS:

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:

F. MONITOR THE PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE WAIVER;
G. PROVIDE NOTICE TO ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER;
H. PROVIDE ANY LOCAL BOARD AFFECTED BY THE WAIVER AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON THE REQUEST;
I. ENSURE MEANINGFUL PUBLIC COMMENT, INCLUDING COMMENT BY BUSINESS AND ORGANIZED LABOR, ON THE WAIVER.
J. 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;

At this time West Virginia will not be requesting waivers.

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

1. The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients and basic skills deficient; Yes

2. The State has implemented a policy to ensure local areas have a process in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist; Yes

3. The state established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members. Yes

4. The State established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2). Yes

5. Where an alternative entity takes the place of a State Board, the State has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under WIOA section 101(e) and the legal requirements for membership. Yes

6. The State established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the State Workforce Development Board help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the State consults with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the State in determining the distributions. Yes

7. The State will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7). Yes

8. The State distributes adult and youth funds received under WIOA equitably throughout the State, and no local area suffers significant shifts in funding from year-to-year during the period covered by this plan. Yes

9. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I. Yes

10. The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report. Yes

11. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance under section WIOA 184(a)(3); Yes

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

All program-specific requirements provided for the WIOA core programs in this section must be addressed for either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

A. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROFESSIONAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT.

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

WorkForce West Virginia will work with the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) to establish a structure to upgrade the Workforce Development System staff skills so jobseekers and employers are provided a high quality service. WorkForce West Virginia will propose the use of a book developed by a Local Area in West Virginia focused on Employment and Sector Partnering to establish a certificate system that must be completed by all Employment Service staff. The use and development of the book will be accomplished through staff input and guidance from the WDC. This tool would strengthen staff knowledge of Employment Services and partner services which would allow for a well trained staff to assist the customer in obtaining the proper services needed for employment. This development would also give ES staff insight into industry and business in their Local Area and surrounding Local Areas.

WorkForce West Virginia will continue to use established professional development activities in order to meet goals, develop staff skills, and ensure a competent Employment Service staff. In addition, we will enhance training curricula that incorporates policies, processes, and input from Wagner—Peyser, UI, and /or core partner agency staff. Experts in the fields of UI, WIOA, Employment Service and core partner staff will recommend related topics. WorkForce West Virginia will continue to train employees on the pertinent skills needed in the AJC through peer and management direction.

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

As training needs are identified, WorkForce West Virginia will develop curriculum and conduct instructional sessions. Self—paced UI process training tutorials are available via the intranet. These tutorials will be enhanced to incorporate the identification of eligibility issues and appropriate referral for UI adjudication. Training will also be available locally across partner agencies to ensure system cross—training objectives are met. Core partners will be utilizing the same management information system and trained to identify then record UI adjudication issues for further review by UI staff.

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.

WorkForce West Virginia's UI and ES staff are fully cross trained to assist individuals access a full range of services. The State maintains a UI presence in each Center to ensure that customers meet the eligibility requirements during the initial application process and to offer support throughout the entire claim cycle. Eligibility information and claimant rights and responsibilities is also available on the website in a mobile friendly environment. Claimants are provided an opportunity to gather information and apply timely for benefits in remote itinerant sites staffed by well trained staff.

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

West Virginia claimants are profiled at the time the initial claim is filed to determine the level of assistance and support necessary to return to work. New and additional claims are taken online, and the information is reviewed for UI eligibility. Courtesy calls are attempted for each new claim filed where center services are reviewed, labor market information is examined, and labor exchange (ES) services are required. Every claimant is advised of the requirement to be able, available, and actively seeking full time work for each week UI is claimed and must attest to the number of job contacts made during the week claimed. They are advised they must apply and accept suitable work, based on their work experience, training and claim duration. UI eligibility requirements and the consequences for failing to meet them are reviewed during benefit rights section and are available for further review on line or through handout materials by visiting a local office or itinerant site.

In addition, those selected to participate in UI Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) will receive all of the mandatory program components to include the creation of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) and additional services such as job search workshops, job search assistance or referrals to other partner programs. The RESEA workshop is designed to motivate and encourage those likely to exhaust benefits by exploring previous work experience, accomplishments and unique skill sets and how to effectively use while job searching. During the workshop individuals identify strengths and

skill sets, set short and long term goals, begin developing a job search plan, and effectively network both in person and using social media.

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;

WorkForce West Virginia's UI and ES staff are fully cross trained to assist individuals access a full range of services. Concentrated, individualized and group services including reemployment assessment, continuing eligibility and job placement are provided to claimants identified as either most or least likely to exhaust benefits. Regionalized claimant—centered labor market information is available through handouts or via workforcewv.org.

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

WorkForce West Virginia applies an early—intervention approach to delivering services to unemployment compensation recipients. Claimants are dual enrolled from day one for Wagner— Peyser reemployment services and provided an orientation to all available One—Stop services. Courtesy calls are made to claimants who file online where detailed information is conveyed about available partner services and WIOA training eligibility and available opportunities. Common data is uploaded daily from the UI mainframe to the ES registration system.

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

The State administers the unemployment insurance work test as required. Claimants who fail to participate or report to suitable opportunities are held ineligible until issues are resolved. The UI management information system identifies potential eligibility issues by the claimant's responses to weekly certification questions and by assessing the data entered by staff during eligibility assessments. Any job referral made is reconciled either by claimant or the employer or both. The management information system (MACC) generates a follow—up form to the employer every 10 days. When returned, the results are populated to the UI system and a stop placed on payments of claimants who failed to report.

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

WorkForce West Virginia ES/UI staff will coach and direct claimants to educational opportunities if training is advisable to the desired employment outcome. Income test information will be provided to assist the customer apply for available financial aid. Cost and performance data, when available, will be available for review so customers will be able

to make informed decisions on schooling. Joint partner staff training sessions will provide information and resource tools for staff to guide their referrals.

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

1. ASSESSMENT OF NEED

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

West Virginia continues to have 95% or more of all farms located within the state designated as small family farms. In 20 14 there were approximately 22,100 family—owned and operated farms totaling 3.62 acres with an average of 164 acres per farm. As a result of farm activities around the state, more than $560 million worth of crops and livestock were produced. Various state agencies are joining forces to teach citizens to utilize more of the state's available land, to grow and sustain crops, to feed families and increase production for specialty crops that will lead to an increase in local and state revenue. There has been a noticeable increase in farm—to—school related programs, local community gardening projects, enhanced collaboration between colleges/universities and community groups such as volunteer organizations, churches, etc.

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.

1) Identifying the top five labor—intensive crops, the months of heavy activity, and the geographic area of prime activity;

The top five (5) labor—intensive crops, the months of heavy activity, and the geographic area of prime activity are listed below:

Apples— August through October is the heaviest activity period in orchards located in Jefferson, Berkeley and Morgan Counties

• In 2013, NASS USDA government Statistics listed West Virginia ranked 9th in the nation for apple production

Peaches— July through August is the heaviest activity period in orchards located in Jefferson, Berkeley and Morgan Counties

• In 2013, the NASS USDA government Statistics indicated the state held a national ranking of 12th place for the production of peaches

Note: Some of the larger orchards are planting berries which have increased activity during Mid— May through September and these farms are located in Jefferson, Berkeley and Morgan Counties.

Hay and other hay products— May through September is the heaviest activity period with locations in Jackson, Greenbrier, Preston, Hampshire and Mason Counties

Corn for grain— April through October is the heaviest activity period on farms located in Jefferson, Mason, Hardy, Preston, Pendleton, Wood, Randolph, Berkeley and Monroe Counties.

Soybeans—April through October is the heaviest activity period on farms located in Mason, Jefferson, Hardy and Berkeley Counties

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 The Migrant and Seasonal farmworker (MSFW) population has changed over the years but their numbers of have stabilized. There are fewer families making the journey up the migrant trail from Florida through the Carolinas, Georgia, etc., before stopping in West Virginia (WV) to work. In the Eastern Panhandle once harvesting activities associated with the fruit and berry season decreases these migratory workers have already secured work or they will seek assistance from the MSFW Outreach staff to help them find work in another state north of WV. When farm workers arrive they may need assistance with food until they receive their first paycheck. Additionally, some workers do not wish to stay in employer provided dwellings; they may request help with finding temporary suitable and affordable housing. There are local resources available which are offered to them.

During the farm workers' registration/orientation process the full array of services which a MSFW may choose to utilize are explained to him/her, as well as written materials regarding community services are distributed to everyone.

As previously reported, the majority of the WV farms are family farms and family members and friends generally, are able to complete required tasks related to farming activities. However, the medium to large farm owners depend upon securing local workers as well as foreign workers to ensure they have sufficient labor to meet their respective needs. In 2014 WV agricultural employers received certification for (37) H2—A workers and the state ranked 37th out of 50 states for

certification of H2—A workers. Upon reviewing the state's last four (4) years of foreign labor certification data, the number of H2—A agricultural employers in the state has more than doubled with a corresponding increase in foreign laborers working in the fields and orchards.

The agricultural employers in this state are experiencing serious problems locating, hiring and keeping local agricultural workers who are willing, able and available for work. The work is labor intensive and many farms are located in rural areas some distance away from public transportation. Many U. S. workers in WV have refused these farm jobs and informed employers they cannot work for the following reasons.

Agricultural jobs are not acceptable because—

a) the physically demanding work requires a worker to be outside in extreme temperatures

b) the pay is too low

c) they do not have transportation to the job site

d) they do not have a valid driver's license

Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFWs)

Farmworkers are unique because they have chosen to perform labor intensive work to help put food on the family table for themselves and others. Today, with the big corporate farms dominating specific food markets; independent farmers cannot compete with big farms in automation,

marketing and distribution. Therefore, family farm owners generally pay minimum wage which may not be a "livable" wage for a person responsible for meeting the needs of his/her family members.

And in West Virginia farmworkers must have reliable transportation and a valid driver's license to travel to the farms that are primarily located in the rural hills and hollows around this state. These obstacles exist and make farm work less attractive to them.

3) Identifying any economic, natural, or other factors that are affecting agriculture in the State or any projected factors that will affect agriculture in the State. In WV a new phenomenon has gained momentum from schools to community centers and churches. Tunnel farms are popping up everywhere. Tunnel farming, aquaculture and indoor tier farming are extending the vegetable crop season. These innovative alternative farm methods have a positive impact on agriculture because the harvest season is extended; the plants remain outdoors, generally grow larger than field plants, have a higher yield and produce better quality of fruits and vegetables with less disease and insect damage.

Additionally, the number of farms in the state continues to decrease. As farmers mature and they are not able to continue farming the land, the art of family farming seems to diminish. More families are electing to sell their land for economic development projects. Other factors impacting agriculture in the state are climate change and extreme weather conditions. For example, in 2013 the weather conditions were great for the fruit trees and vines in the Eastern Panhandle orchards.

During 2014, a cold harsh winter and extra spring rains ruined the fruit hanging on the trees and vines.

But the weather conditions were near perfect in 2015 and the Eastern Panhandle had fruit trees and vines bud early in the season yielding enormous bushels of fruit. In the future, weather conditions will continue to be a major factor influencing agriculture in this state.

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.

The MSFWs in WV may be classified into two (2) groups. Group "A" farmworkers who live and work in the state and enjoy performing farm work part of the year. They usually work part—time or seasonal on a farm that is located within daily commuting distance of their home. Group "B" farmworkers migrate into West Virginia, traveling to and through the state working on farms until the harvest time ends. These farmworkers follow the migrant stream from Florida to states north of WV. They have permanent homes in various states but choose to move from state to state to perform farm work. Many of the MSFWs who travel to the Eastern Panhandle have long established working relationships with orchard operators. There appears to be an unspoken gentlemen's agreement between the workers and employer predicated on "see you same time next year". These farmworkers, family members and friends have a history of migrating from state to state harvesting crops. Most of these workers are males between the ages of twenty and sixty—nine years of age. A quick review of the MSFWs served between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2015 revealed that 97% of the 1,189 workers fell into this age range. And a few of the workers operate under the direction of a farm labor contractor who brings his select group of workers to an employer.

During the peak seasons in the Eastern Panhandle region apple harvesting requires about 250 MSFWs, 200 workers are needed for peach harvesting activities and approximately 40 to 50 workers for harvesting berries and other fruit and small vegetables. During Program Year 2014, the MSFW Outreach Specialists in the Eastern Panhandle projected to contact 600 MSFWs and actually contacted 763 workers at their worksites. Also, partner agencies annually contact at least 200 MSFWs in the field or at the labor camps. Additionally, there are other areas of the state where MSFWs may be utilized for farm work but their work activity is not a matter of public record. There could be approximately 50 up to 200 MSFWs working in various locations around the state working on seasonal jobs.

2. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

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

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

The state will train outreach workers in each AJC office area to be able to go to agricultural employers, MSFWs living areas and places where they meet such as at local community events to provide printed materials to farmworkers in a language they understand. These materials will contain the full array of services such as employment, training, education, unemployment/benefits and support services. Our plan is to train each local employment office manager and at least one (1) other staff person to serve as outreach staff over the next four year period. Additionally, the WV SMA will collaborate with the Virginia SMA in developing expanded contacts to MSFWs. The development and distribution of a

comprehensive MSFW Handbook occurred in July 2017 with the Field Management Team. Subsequent conference calls with front line staff followed in September.

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.

Technical assistance is provided to outreach workers which may 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 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. Additionally, this information is shared among the MSFW Partnership group which meets quarterly and involves agencies that offer services to this special population. The MSFW Partners' include representatives form the following organizations—NFJP—Telamon Corporation, Job Corps, Community Colleges and Higher Education, Catholic Social Services, Shenandoah Valley Health Services, Occupational Health and Safety Agency, Department of Health and Human Resources and the State Workforce Agency.

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.

Technical assistance and training is available for SWA merit staff at all AJCs for professional development activities to ensure they are able to provide high quality services to both jobseekers and employers. Such training will include information regarding the availability of core programs including the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program and training on identification of UI eligibility issues.

Administrative staff will assign an individual to assist in developing and training the MSFW Outreach staff to explain UI services/benefits and the process for MSFWs to access the system Training will be provided to help outreach workers identify potential UI issues for which the MSFW may be eligible for assistance/benefits. A printed brochure will be developed to outline the UI program and easy access steps for obtaining assistance.

D. PROVIDING STATE MERIT STAFF OUTREACH WORKERS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES TO ENSURE THEY ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS.

The state will utilize the continuous training's and seminars offered by the National Monitor Advocate and the Regional Monitor Advocate to enhance the train-the-trainer services that is offered to the statewide employment service workers including outreach staff. The plan is

to ensure that that all staff understand the necessity for providing all customers, including the MSFWs with the full array of quality services. In order to comply with this requirement employment service workers, outreach workers and management staff shall view the MSFW services as a continuation of services of that must be provided such as job referrals, training, education, supportive services, labor market information, complaint services and UI. In the train-the —trainer format the local office manager shall be responsible for training local office staff. WV's continuous education/training plan for train-the-trainer will include but is not limited to the following topics:

* Identifying, locating and serving MSFWs-------August 2016

* Unemployment service--- September — November 2016

* Complaint System(s) and Apparent Violations----December 2016 - February 2017

* Impact of WIOA on services to MSFWs----------March 2017- May 2017

* Collaboration and coordination working with community partners---June 2017- August 2017

* Labor market information and finding transferable/marketable skills--- September-November 2017

* Identifying and documenting employment related issues----December 2017-February 2018

New training topics will be introduced each quarter with follow-up test(s) on information previously presented. This will permit individuals to check their understanding and retention of the subject matter as well as a serve as a refresher session for everyone. Additional training topics will be inserted on the training agenda as they are identified. Please note the training schedule presented may be amended should an urgent topic arise which needs to be addressed.

Plan Goal: To provide continuous education and training related services for MSFWs

Objective: Increase the awareness, capacity and skills of workers serving this special population

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

The state staff will continue to coordinate with our community partners on housing inspections, field checks, field visits and some community events. State staff will continue to exchange printed materials which are written in various languages spoken by the MSFWs (Spanish and Haitian) who we all serve. Staff will explore ways to ensure that MSFWs are personally contacted or that they receive employment services information/materials through staff of our partner agencies.

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

Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

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

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

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

In the field MSFW Outreach staff utilize the following strategies to provide services via personal contact and/or translators to communicate with workers. At the One—Stop and in the field staff use written materials such as brochures and facts sheets printed in the language familiar to the workers in order to inform MSFWs about the core, intensive, training and career services available to them at no charge. Outreach workers have laptop computers and cellphones to complete orientation and registration as well as aid them in meeting the customer's needs for supportive services, counseling and job development. Additionally, there are computers which contain Spanish language registration instructions. Should any MSFW require or request career and training services which are available under WIOA Title I to enhance their skill level or to transfer into another career. Services would have to be adapted to meet the needs of that specific customer by outsourcing a staff person to assist him in the field or provide transportation into the One—Stop Center for assistance.

Agricultural employers are given written information about the full array of services available to them through the local One—Stop and they are encouraged to visit the facility. Each year local One— Stop staff and Outreach workers are encouraged to add new agricultural employers to their visitation list. The SMA attends annual conferences sponsored by the college and universities agricultural departments, and agricultural associations to promote SWA services. The SMA, MSFW

Outreach staff and local office staff attend local state fairs and special community events such as the Apple Harvest, Peach, Blackberry and Strawberry Festivals, etc.to inform the agricultural employers about the full range of employment and training services offered at the local One—Stop. Each year the agricultural associations, employers and public/private agencies involved with agriculture are invited to provide information for inclusion in the state Agricultural Outreach Plan. And if they submit comments the information is shared with Department of Labor.

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

All printed materials relative to the program include information on how to obtain materials and include contact information for staff assistance to file Employment Service complaints.

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

Representatives of the AJC routinely make site visits to discuss a full array of services available to the employer. Information on services, program changes, and topics of interest are shared in a variety of means (visits, electronic, etc.)

The SWA has joined with other MSFW service providers including NFJP grantees and other service providers. In 2015 we started to meet on a quarterly schedule; it is our intent to expand our group. Agricultural employers will be encouraged to participate as we move forward.

4. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. COLLABORATION

Describe any collaborative agreements the state workforce agency (SWA) has with other MSFW service providers including NFJP grantees and other service providers. Describe how the SWA intends to build upon/increase collaboration with existing partners and in establishing new partners over the next four years (including any approximate timelines for establishing agreements or building upon existing agreements).

The state will continue to collaborate with our NFJP grantees and other service providers. The MSFWs' Partner Agency group will continue to meet quarterly and work toward joint community event planning and to increase our outreach capacity via the partners. The state will continue to collaborate with the NFJP grantees and the local WIBS. The state will exchange information with these groups as well as to seek inclusion in the establishment of the local WIB and NFJP MOU. The state will work toward identifying the two (2) NFJP grantees and their respective directors who are operating components of this program in WV and work with them to streamline and coordinate services in a seamless manner.

Goal: Develop an inclusive partner agency group to serve the MSFWs and their families.

Objective: Identify community partners to enhance our total service delivery system.

Plan: To increase participating agencies and receive training from our new partners, annually; these coordination efforts that will grow our assistance network for services to this special population.

New agencies to be added to the partners group:

2016- Virginia NFJP

2017- Dept. of Agriculture; and Wage and Hour

2018 — Environmental Protection Agency

**Other agencies to be identified and added

B. REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT.

In developing the AOP, the SWA must solicit information and suggestions from NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. In addition, at least 45 calendar days before submitting its final AOP, the SWA must provide a proposed plan to NFJP grantees, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other organizations expressing an interest and allow at least 30 days for review and comment. The SWA must: 1) Consider any

comments received in formulating its final proposed AOP; 2) Inform all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore; and 3) Transmit the comments and recommendations received and its responses with the submission of the AOP. The AOP must include a statement confirming NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations have been given an opportunity to comment on the AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.

The SWA solicits information and suggestions from NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. These entities will be contacted via email and invited to review and comment on the AOP which will be posted on the state Workforce WV webpage. The list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments will be included in the final AOP.

In developing the AOP, the state follows the prescribed guidelines for submitting the plan. The SWA will continue to contact the NFJP grantees, agricultural employers, MSFW groups, agricultural employer organizations and other interested groups. The AOP will be published at least 45 calendar days, before the final submission date. The plan will be posted on the agency website for at least thirty days (30) for review and comments. All parties will be contacted and invited to submit data to be considered for inclusion in the AOP. All commenting parties will be contacted in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reason. Generally, there have not been any comments received; however, in the future should comments be received the information will be included. Once the plan is posted all interested parties will be notified via email that the AOP is ready for review and comment.

C. DATA ASSESSMENT.

Review the previous four years Wagner-Peyser data reports on performance. Note whether the State has been meeting its goals to provide MSFWs quantitatively proportionate services as compared to non-MSFWs. If it has not met these goals, explain why the State believes such goals were not met and how the State intends to improve its provision of services in order to meet such goals.

A review of the previous four years Wagner—Peyser data reports on performance reveal that the State has been consistent in meeting five of five Equity Ratio Indicators. However, meeting the Minimum Service Level Indicators has been a struggle but generally the state meets five out of seven indicators. During the last two years the MSFW Outreach staff was able to convince agricultural employers of the need to collect this data and work with their payroll staff to capture wages paid $.50 above minimum wage to MSFWs. Now we are meeting that indicator of "Placed $.50 above minimum wage." The final indicator the state has not been able to meet is "Placed in long term non—agricultural placement". Although outreach staff continue to offer services related to training and career options, the men traveling through WV have not been interested in training or career services.

D. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The plan must include an explanation of what was achieved based on the previous AOP, what was not achieved and an explanation as to why the State believes the goals were not achieved, and how the State intends to remedy the gaps of achievement in the coming year.

The State believes the goal which has not been achieved of placing MSFWs into long term non— agricultural employment may be attainable with assistance from our partners. Through joining with other agencies that serve MSFWs, we are hopeful that someone may help the workers understand the opportunities available to them for free training and career planning.

E. STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE

The plan must contain a statement confirming the State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved the AOP.

The State Monitor Advocate drafted this plan and has requested comments from other partner agencies that serve MSFWs, agricultural employers, and other entities associated with agriculture in the state.

WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

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

2. The State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111 (State agency staffing requirements) if the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers; Yes

3. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and Yes

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

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAMS

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the following as it pertains to Adult Education and Literacy programs under title II, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

A. ALIGNING OF CONTENT STANDARDS

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

Initially, the West Viriginia Department of Education (WVDE) adopted the Common core State Standards (CCSS) and alighned its K-12 Next Generation Content Standards and Objectives (NxtGen CSO's) to the CCSS. With the release of the national College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) for Adult Education in 2013, WV Adult Education adopted the CCRS for Adult Educatoin and launced rollout of the standards in 2014.

Teaching to the standards was the basis for the professional development designed to guide teachers in the process of using the standards to create curriculum and lessons. Instructors attended professional development where they created fully articulated lesson plans, designed classroom activities integrating research-based instructional practices, created engaging student-centered assignments that incorporated new technologies, and created assessments, all explicitly designed to transfer the content of the standards to students.

In 2016, under pressure from the West Virginia state legislature to repeal the use of CCSS, the WVDE replaced the Common Core-based NxtGen CSOs with the West Virginia College and Career Readiness (WVCCR) Standards. On July 1, 2016, the West Virginia Board of Education implemented WVCCR English Language Arts and Mathematics standards - developed through the collaborative efforts of West Virginia teachers, parents, and business and community stakeholders-that address the learning needs of West Virginia's students. WVAdultEd has continued to use the CCRS for Adult Education and is still able to align with these new K-12 standards. The shift in WVDE policies and changes to the standards will force WVAdultEd to update and change our training on the standards and how they are aligned.

With WIOA's focus on career pathways, the focus will shift to training staff in how to contextualize instruction while continuing to use the CCRS for Adult Education. It is expected that during FY2018, the alignment of our instructional content with WV K-12 state standards will be revisted.

B. LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Describe how the State will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA, fund each eligible provider to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following adult education and literacy activities identified in section 203 of WIOA, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of these local activities.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES (SECTION 203 OF WIOA)

- Adult education;
- Literacy;
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities;
- Family literacy activities;
- English language acquisition activities;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- Workforce preparation activities; or
- Integrated education and training that—

1. Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

West Virginia's adult education and literacy programs assist adults in becoming literate and obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency, assists adults who are parents in obtaining the educational skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children, and assists adults in completing a secondary school education.

Adult education and literacy programs provide direct and comprehensive services to enrolled adult students.

According to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Title II, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, adult education services are to be targeted for:

- adults who are 16 years of age or older;
- adults who are not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law; and who...
- are basic skills deficient
- do not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and have not achieved an equivalent level of education or
- are English language learners.

West Virginia law mandates that students must attend school until age 17, unless they have a specific waiver. Certain counties have additional rules. All young adult students under age 18 must present official documentation of withdrawal from school or documentation of an exemption.

Only adults who meet the eligibility criteria above may enroll in the West Virginia Adult Education (WVAdultEd) program.

Eligibility of Students Currently Enrolled in Post-Secondary Educaton or Job-Training Programs.

Students who are enrolled in post-secondary education or job training programs (e.g., colleges, apprenticeship programs, vocational/technical schools, etc.) may be co-enrolled in WVAdultEd programs. In addition, the instruction provided by WVAdultEd in reading, writing, math, or English language acquisition must be designed to help students meet the requirements for enrollment in nonremedial, for-credit courses in postsecondary educational institutions. WVAdultEd programs must not serve foreign students studying in the United States on F-1 (Student) Visas.

Eligibility of Foreign Students who are English Language Learns

Federal adult education legislation does not specify the need to prove legal status of ELLs as a condition for enrollment in adult education classes. Thus, it is not necessary for foreigners to present passports, visas, work permits, or Social Security cards to prove legal status in order to enroll. However, foreign **students (with F-1 Visas) enrolled in universities or**

private English language institues may not simultaneously enroll in publicly funded adult educatoin programs. ELLs in this country **as nannies or au pairs** on a **-1 Exchange Visitor Visa** are required to participate in college level academic classes, not in adult education or literacy classes; therefore, they **should not be admitted. Camp Counselors, Physicians and Teachers who are her on a J-1 Exchange Visa** are required to have sufficient English in order to come; they should not be admitted to WVAdultEd programs.

English language learners (ELLs) who have completed post-secondary education in another country, but lack English language skills MAY enroll in WVAdultEd programs as long as they do not have an F-1 (or J-1 Visa in certain categories).

Eligibility of Adults with Disabilities

The WVAdultEd program requires that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and services without regard to:

- race
- color
- religion
- national origin
- sex
- age
- marital status
- disability
- or sexual orientation

It does not discriminate in admission to its programs, services, or activities, in access to them; in treatment of individuals with disabilities; or in any aspect of their operations. Individuals with documented disabilities may request reasonable accommodations for assessment and instruction.

The Office of Adult Education expects to award grants on a three-year cycle with an annual continuation grant submitted. Each year's renewal will be based on evidence of success in provision of the contracted services and subject to the availability of funds. The Office of Adult Education will use the following process to distribute funds to approved applicants: 1. shall use not less than 82.5 percent of the grant funds to award grants and contracts under Section 231 and to carry out Section 225, Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals, of which not more than 10 percent of such amount shall be available to carry out Section 225; 2. shall use not more than 12.5 percent of the grant funds to carry out State leadership activities under Section 223; and 3. shall use not more than 5 percent of the grant funds, for administrative expenses of the eligible agency.

In accordance with federal regulations, eligible providers may receive adult education funding for the delivery of any of the following adult education and literacy activities: • Adult education; • Literacy; • Workplace adult education and literacy activities; • 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. As part of the application process, the Office of Adult Education will collect basic information from the eligible provider (e.g., location, service area, scope of the program, demographics served, demonstrated need, data collection, and fiscal management procedures). Additionally, each applicant will be required to submit a proposed budget and program design information. Applicants will be expected to respond to Office of Adult Education priorities and the Title II considerations for funding Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) programs. The requirements to be considered include:

1. Needs Assessment: The degree to which the provider is responsive to (A) regional needs as identified in the local plan under section 108; and (B) serving individuals in the community who are identified in such plan as most in need of adult education and literacy activities, including individuals who have low levels of literacy skills and who are English language learners.

2. Individuals with Disabilities: The degree to which the provider is able to serve eligible individuals with disabilities, including eligible individuals with learning disabilities.

3. Past Effectiveness: The degree to which the provider demonstrates past effectiveness in improving the literacy of eligible individuals, to meet state-adjusted levels of performance for the primary indicators of performance described in section 116, especially with respect to eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy.

4. Alignment with One-Stop Partners: The degree to which the eligible provider is responsive to, and demonstrates alignment between, proposed activities and services and the strategy and goals of the local plan under section 108, as well as the activities and services of the One-Stop partners.

5. Intensity, Quality, and Instructional Practices: The degree to which the eligible provider's program is of sufficient intensity and quality, and based on the most rigorous research available so that participants achieve substantial learning gains; and uses instructional practices that include the essential components of reading instruction.

6. Research-Based Educational Practices: The degree to which the eligible provider's activities, including reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition instruction, are based on the best practices derived from the most rigorous research available and appropriate, including scientifically valid research and effective educational practice.

7. Effective Use of Technology: The degree to which 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.

8. Integrated Education and Training: The degree to which the eligible provider's activities offer learning in context, including through integrated education and training, so that an individual acquires the skills needed to transition to and complete postsecondary education and training programs, obtain and advance in employment leading to economic self-sufficiency, and to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

9. Qualified Staff: The degree to which the eligible provider's activities are delivered by well- trained instructors, counselors, and administrators who meet minimum qualifications established by the state, where applicable, and who have access to high quality professional development, including through electronic means.

10. Partnerships and Development of Career Pathways: The degree to which the eligible provider's activities coordinate with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community, postsecondary educational institutions, institutions of higher education, Local Boards, One-Stop centers, job training programs, and social service agencies, business, industry, labor organizations, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and intermediaries, for the development of career pathways.

11. Flexible Schedules and Coordination with Support Services: The degree to which the eligible provider's activities offer flexible schedules and coordination with federal, state, and local support services (such as child care, transportation, mental health services, and career planning) that are necessary to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs.

12. Data Collection: The degree to which the eligible provider maintains a high-quality information management system that has the capacity to report measurable participant outcomes (consistent with section 116) and to monitor program performance.

13. English Language Acquisition and Civics Education: The degree to which the eligible provider has a demonstrated need for additional English language acquisition programs and civics education programs.

1. Scope: Previously funded programs will be required to provide data demonstrating they have met previously proposed state targets for the required percent of students making a measureable academic gain. Programs must also provide data demonstrating successful transition to post-secondary education or employment by students. For programs not previously funded, programs with data demonstrating student learning gain and successful transition to post-secondary education or employment, especially for individuals with low-levels of literacy, will be given preference. Both measureable skill gain data and transition data must be disaggregated to demonstrate a history of success with students who have low levels of literacy, disabilities (including learning disabilities), or are English language learners. Programs will need to clearly articulate how their instructional delivery model will be aligned to the needs of one-stop, postsecondary, and employer partners. This alignment at a minimum must include the ability to offer flexible scheduling so that adult education services coordinate with the students' wrap-around support services and logistic needs. The delivery model must be of sufficient intensity and duration so that the students' will exit with the necessary skills to attain their career goal. Existing programs will base intensity and duration of service on demonstrated past effectiveness (student skill gain and transition outcomes) and the latest research on the effectiveness of time and intensity. It will be critical for each program to validate their commitment to an instructional delivery model that can support high school equivalency attainment, as well as preparation for entrance into postsecondary, a training program, or employment for adults with, or without, a high school diploma. This support must lead to preparation for a career pathway for all students, including the low-skilled and under employed, who are most in need of increasing their knowledge and skills for the next career step. All eligible programs will

assess the need for providing an English language acquisition and civics education program in their area, and provide services when there is a demonstrated need.

2. Content: Eligible programs will verify that adult education activities are conducted by licensed (or having relevant adult education experience) instructional staff and confirm that all staff will participate in high quality professional development offered by the state professional development unit. Professional development activities will include face-to-face and distance education, so all staff will be able to participate in a variety of delivery venues. Programs must ensure they will follow all Sate assessment policies and publisher guidelines for administering and scoring assessments and that they will comply with State recommendations for curriculum that supports high school equivalency attainment, measureable skill gains, and career pathways. Instruction in all content areas (reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition) will be delivered by staff who are knowledgeable of the essential components of reading instruction, or who will participate in State leadership activities focused on the essential components of reading. Programs must use scientific, effective research-based instructional delivery models for students in all content areas. Programs will articulate how distance learning, and other modes of technology, will be integrated into instruction to support digital literacy attainment and meet students' specific learning needs. The overarching goal of instruction for all students will be a successful transition to employment, postsecondary, or training according to their chosen career pathway. This will require instruction be contextualized, and student pathways guided by labor market needs and data from collaborative partnerships (education, one-stop partners, and employer). The array of program activities that support the individual students' career pathway must be based on each student's Educatrion and Career Plan (ECP). Eligible programs will describe how they will assist all students in setting up their ECP through a series of lessons in the College Foundation of West Virginia's website at www.CFWV.com or alternative career exploration resource. Programs will detail how teachers will be assisting students in aligning their skills and interests with a career choice and helping them to create long-and-short term goals to enter their career pathway. Each program will share their protocol for linking student career pathways to academic lessons that are relevant and supportive of students' career goal. Programs will confirm that they are providing learning activities that are contextualized, so students acquire the knowledge and skills needed for transition to their individual career pathway. Programs will ensure that the teaching staff offer a variety of instructional strategies that engage students and promote student persistence and retention; this should include whole group instruction, peer tutoring, and individualized instruction along with distance learning. The variety of instructional strategies will integrate academics, career counseling, and soft skills to bolster the students' ability to gain employment, go to college, or enter a training program that could include an apprenticeship. Integrated education and training programs will align with the needs of the local labor market The occupational training provided as part of an integrated education and training program will be connected to realistic, existing employment opportunities in the local area that connect to a career pathway for the participants.

3. Organization: Programs must make available documented evidence that they have the capacity to support the staff training and data entry into the State MIS necessary to report measureable participant outcomes and monitor program performance. The State MIS system will collect all data elements that will be required for the WIOA Annual Statewide

Performance Report. Primary indicators of performance that will be reported include: participants in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit, participants in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit, median earnings from unsubsidized employment the second quarter after exit, the percentage of students who obtain a postsecondary credential or a high school equivalency diploma, the percentage of students who participate in an education or training program, and percent achieving a measureable skill gain. This will require coordination of effort among the core partners and accurate and comprehensive data entry by providers. In order to facilitate this process, funded programs must ensure they will; collect and provide participant social security numbers to enable a data-match (to the best of their ability); input data accurately and within prescribed timelines; and adhere to all state policies and guidelines regarding data privacy. Programs must provide evidence of activities with other education institutions, local workforce partners, and agencies that support student career pathways. The National Career Clusters® Framework provides a vital structure for organizing and delivering quality CTE programs through learning and comprehensive programs of study. In total, there are 16 Career Clusters in the National Career Clusters Framework, representing more than 79 Career Pathways to help students navigate their way to greater success in college and career. This Framework is the basis for the Career Pathways Programs established at WV Career and Technical Centers and articulated with WV Community College and University Systems. This Framework will be the common career planner used in adult education programs in order to share student career pathway information across agencies. The common career planning tool will be a resource in every Adult Education program. Beyond assisting students for attainment of a measureable skill gain, achieving a high school equivalency or postsecondary credential, or entering a career pathway, eligible programs must demonstrate that they have established cross-agency partnerships to help students navigate system challenges (completing applications, writing resumes, scheduling campus visits, etc.) that can be barriers to success. Programs must be willing to cooperate with agency partners to provide the wrap-around services common clients will require. Through ongoing labor market analysis all programs will have an awareness of regional labor market needs to provide teachers with a working knowledge of regional career opportunities. Programs must be able to disclose their methodology for ensuring that employer and labor market needs are driving their instructional practice. Allocations for programs will be awarded by a funding formula that recognizes the components of an effective Adult Education program (WIOA Statewide Performance Report). Effective programs will be those that deliver instructional activities that support student transition to specific occupations or career clusters.

SPECIAL RULE

Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

C. CORRECTIONS EDUCATION AND OTHER EDUCATION OF INSTITUTIONALIZED INDIVIDUALS

Describe how the State will establish and operate programs under section 225 of WIOA for corrections education and education of other institutionalized individuals, including how it will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II, subtitle C, any of the following academic programs for:

- Adult education and literacy activities;
- Special education, as determined by the eligible agency;
- Secondary school credit;
- Integrated education and training;
- Career pathways;
- Concurrent enrollment;
- Peer tutoring; and
- Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

Criminal Offenders in Correctional Institutions The West Virginia Office of Adult Education will ensure that the same grant announcement, application process and review process is made available to all eligible providers, including correctional education and education programs providing services to institutionalized participants. These measures will ensure that West Virginia Office of Adult Education meets requirements to provide (1) all eligible providers with direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants or contracts under this section; and (2) the same grant or contract announcement process and application process will be used for all eligible providers in the State. See Title II Competitive Grant Process , Distribution of Funds under Funding for Core Partners in the Operational section of the plan for additional detail. 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. The West Virginia Department of Education Office of Adult Education will use no more than 10 percent of the 82.5 percent of the state grant that must be allotted to local programs for activities under Section 225. West Virginia adult education and family literacy sub-grant recipients use funds, as allowable, to provide educational programs for criminal offenders in correctional institutions and other institutionalized individuals. The Adult Education office will give priority to programs serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program. Local activities include adult basic education, workplace adult education and literacy activities, family literacy activities, and/or English language acquisition. In FY17, Corrections Education partners will also offer co-enrollment in CTE programs, where available. It is anticipated that these programs will take place, at a minimum, in State Prisons and Regional Jails

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.

The West Virginia Office of Adult Education will ensure that the same grant announcement, application process and review process is made available to all eligible providers, including English Literacy and Civics Education programs. These measures will ensure that West Virginia Office of Adult Education meets requirements to provide (1) all eligible providers with direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants or contracts under this section; and (2) the same grant or contract announcement process and application process will be used for all eligible providers in the State. See Title II Competitive Grant Process under Funding for Core Partners and Distribution of Funds in the Operational section of plan for additional detail.

The West Virginia Office of Adult Education will make funds available under Section 211(a)(2)(b) for the delivery of IEL/Civics and will hold a competition for funds under Section 243 of WIOA for IEL/Civics as described in Title II Distribution of Funds in the Operational section of the plan. Through a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP), the West Virginia Office of Adult Education will award grants on a three-year basis to IEL/Civics programs. Applicants will be expected to address the thirteen considerations and seven requirements established in Title II. IEL/Civics applications may be submitted by regional AEFLA programs and/or by any of the other eligible providers as defined in Section 203.

Programs applying for IEL/Civics funds under Section 243 will be required to provide IEL/Civics instruction that includes integrated education and training activities. Applicants will be required to provide extensive data to demonstrate the need and potential for success of IEL/Civics activities in conjunction with integrated education and training in the proposed service area. Such data will include, but not be limited to, immigration trends, demographics of the English language learners in the area where the program will be provided, and employment and labor market statistics for the area. In addition, applicants will be asked to provide evidence that they have developed, or will be able to develop in a timely fashion, partnerships that support the purpose of the program. Applicants will be required to provide assurances that the occupational training included as part of the program will be provided by qualified providers. Funding under this title will be awarded based upon the criteria for evaluation of programs applications contained in Section 231 (e) of WIOA.

Programs funded under this title will focus on the following goals: • Educational services for English Language Learners, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enables them 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. These services shall include instruction in literacy and English acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation. • Workforce training that will enable students to begin or continue careers in their chosen fields, including preparation for post-secondary education. A high

priority will be to provide English skills so that individuals with degrees and credentials in their native countries will qualify for employment in the fields for which they have been trained. The desired outcome from workforce training under this title will be unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

All students in the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Programs, as well as students from all other Title II funded programs may be (1) co-enrolled in other workforce development system programs or (2) receive services concurrently from several partners.

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.

Each program that receives funding under this section shall be designed to: • Prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency, and • Integrate with the local work force development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

The West Virginia Office of Adult Education will consider whether an eligible provider has demonstrated the need for these types of services through its use of data sources that may include tables from the U.S. Census Bureau, reports from the Office of Immigration Services, and documentation of prior participation in these types of services, or other data. The West Virginia Office of Adult Education will award grants for a three-year period with yearly grant contracts. Renewal of the grant for the continuation years will be based on evidence of success and subject to the availability of funds. Historically, these programs have been centered in the northern tier of the state where these populations exist. However, all regions will be encouraged to apply and will be considered for funding during the open competition.

Funds awarded under Section 243 of WIOA will be used to support the IEL/Civics activities, adult literacy and education activities, and workplace preparation activities of the programs. Applicants will be encouraged to identify alternative funding opportunities to cover the costs of the occupational training portion of the integrated education and training program; however, use of Section 243 funds for such training will be allowable.

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.

Leadership Activities: The primary goal of West Virginia Adult Education's use of state leadership funds is to support a system of professional development and technical assistance to ensure a high-quality adult basic education system that aligns with the goals of the state, regional and local workforce development plans to meet the needs of workers and employers in the state. The system emphasizes program improvement based on data and high-quality research-based technical assistance and professional development opportunities that promote such program improvement.

West Virginia Adult Education intends to fund one or more activities that provide technical assistance and support to Title II programs to be effective partners in the workforce development system. Such work will focus on the required activities: 1) align adult literacy activities with other core programs and with one-stop partners, as appropriate, to implement strategies in the state plan; 2) participation in the development of career pathways that provide access to employment and training for individuals in adult education programs; 3) understanding and fulfilling Title II's role as a one-stop partner to provide access to employment, education and training services. These activities will also support permissible activities such as developing content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways; and promoting linkages with employers to promote workplace adult education and literacy activities and integration of adult education and literacy activities into occupational training.

West Virginia Adult Education intends to fund one or more activities to support the use of technology. West Virginia Adult Education will continue to support the use of technology to disseminate information about models and promising practices for instruction, staff development and program improvement; instructional and programmatic practices based on rigorous and scientifically valid research; and other information relevant to high-quality adult education and literacy services. West Virginia Adult Education will also fund a project to provide technical assistance to eligible providers on the use of technology to improve system efficiencies and provide staff training, as well as on the integration of technology into instruction to promote learning and digital literacy.

West Virginia Adult Education intends to fund several activities that, together, comprise a high quality professional development system that identifies and provides training in the following: instruction areas such as reading, writing, speaking, mathematics and English language acquisition; use of data for program monitoring and evaluation for continuous program improvement; contextualized instruction; and development of lesson plans, resources and curricula that align with established Career Pathways/Career Clusters at the CTE and Community College levels.

West Virginia Adult Education will ensure that procurement of both required and permissible state leadership activities is in compliance with state procurement policy. West Virginia Adult Education anticipates using a combination of contractual tools, including both grants and purchase of services.

Examples of specific strategies regarding required leadership activities are outlined in the following sections. This list of examples is not all inclusive.

(A) The alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other core programs and one- stop partners, including eligible providers, to implement the strategy identified in the unified State plan under section 102 or the combined State plan under section 103, including the development of career pathways to provide access to employment and training services for individuals in adult education and literacy activities.

Alignment with Other Core Partners

West Virginia will align Adult Education and Literacy activities with other core programs and one-stop partners, to implement strategies of the Unified Plan, including development of Career Pathways. All funded providers will be required to detail the process that will be used to collaborate with all stakeholders and align Adult Basic Education programming in

their 2016-2017 extension plan with all partners named in the unified state plan. Eligible providers will provide services in alignment with local plans detailing how they will promote concurrent enrollment with Title I programs and activities in order to meet the state adjusted levels of performance and collect data to report on performance indicators. In addition, all providers will describe how they will fulfill one-stop responsibilities in their region. As members of local Workforce Development Boards, local providers will participate in ongoing plan development and implementation of WIOA.

Another strategy for alignment will be the coordination of cross-training across core partner programs to enhance opportunities for professional growth and development. This will include topics such as common intake procedures, motivational interviewing, and cross-training and professional development.

Participate in the Development of Career Pathways

The West Virginia Department of Education administers Title II of WIOA as well as activities funded through the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006.

West Virginia Adult Education's response to the WIOA requirement to increase the number of low-skill adults' transitioning into postsecondary education and training has been to focus on participation in a career pathway system and, within this system of career pathways programs, Bridge programs.

Career pathway programs are a "series of connected education and training programs and support services that enable individuals to secure employment within a specific industry or occupational sector, and to advance over time to successively higher levels of education and employment within that sector" (Jenkins 2006,6). Career pathways often include "stackable" credentials and accelerated courses offered at flexible times that support student entry and exit along the pathway.

Bridge programs, one of the first steps in a career pathway for low-skill adults, support the transistion from adult education to the next step in an occupational pathway. By connecting adult education programs to community college occupational programs, bridge programs seek to increase the rates at which low-skill adults move into college-level occupational programs, persist in these programs, and obtain postsecondary credentials in industries offering family-sustaining wages and career advancement.

In practice, Bridge programs help adult students identify career and education goals and develop the skills, content knowledge, and learning strategies they need to enter and succeed in postsecondary education and employment. They combine basic skill instruction in reading, math, writing, and English language, including preparation for the TASC test, with occupational content, employment skills, and college success strategies. Some Bridge programs also offer college credit and certificates, which may be the first step toward a college degree. State and local labor market information is used to develop Bridge programs focused on occupations or industry sectors with a high demand for employees. These programs are designed to prepare indivisuals for productive futures while programs are designed to prepare individuals for productive futures while meeting the State's need for well-trained and industry-certified technical workers.

West Virginia acknowledges the vital contribution of career and technical education to students and the State through the recognition of industry credentialing in its diploma

requirements, and through the use of career pathways as an integral part of the Education and Career Plan (ECP).

Adult Education is partnering very closely with CTE to create Bridge Programs to the CTE adult programs offered in many of the centers. In addition, Adult Education collaborate closely with the Community College System of West Virginia in establishing a clear pathway for adult students.Adult Education is partnering very closely with CTE to create Bridge Programs to the CTE adult programs offerened in many of the CTE Centers. In addition, Adult Education collaborates closly with the Community College System of West Virginia in establishing a clear pathway for adult students.

(B) Establish or operate high quality professional development programs to improve instruction.

The goal of a good professional development program is to support and continuously improve high performing literacy and basic skills adult education programs. WV Adult Education continues to design, implement, and operate a large-scale, statewide professional development project for all AEFLA-funded programs in order to improve program outcomes.

The professional development team will carry out this vision by using state leadership funds to plan, coordinate, and continue implementation of the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) for all eligible providers in the state. The professional development team will provide support in the form of in-depth training for the implementation of standards-based instruction both in English language arts and mathematics. State leadership funds will be used to hold conferences and institutes to ensure ongoing professional development in standards-based instruction and other Office of Adult Education priority areas.

The professional development team will improve instruction by using state leadership funds to design, develop, and facilitate, investigate and offer access to online courses in the areas of competency-based reading instruction; writing; numeracy; basic and multilevel ESOL classes; and courses in ABE instruction, ASE instruction, and ESOL instruction via LINCS (Literacy Information and Communication System) and other existing courses.

Other priorities for this funding cycle include facilitating the implementation of models for integrated education and training and continuing to grow the bridge and career pathways program models. Additionally, some funds will be used for the permissible activity of the development and implementation of a system to assist in the transition from adult education to post-secondary education and training, including linkages with postsecondary educational institutions or institutions of higher education, is another priority. The development and piloting of strategies for improving teacher quality and retention are critical to the long-term success of adult education, and best practices in these areas are provided through WV Adult Education Professional Development. The development and implementation of programs and services to meet the needs of adult learners with learning disabilities or English language learners, which may include new and promising assessment tools and strategies based on scientifically valid research, are included in the professional development activities provided to grant recipients.

(C) The provision of technical assistance to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities receiving funds under this title including (i) the development and dissemination of instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous or scientifically valid

research available and appropriate, in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition programs, distance education, and staff training; (ii) the role of eligible providers as a one-stop partner to provide access to employment, education, and training services; (iii) assistance in the use of technology, including for staff training, to eligible providers, especially the use of technology to improve system efficiencies.

Technical Assistance

West Virginia Adult Education will provide technical assistance to eligible providers by developing a repository of best practices, curricula and research. State leadership funds are used to develop and maintain the WVAdultEd Web site for the purpose of disseminating instructional and programmatic practices to eligible providers and other interested parties in need of adult education resources. The WVAdultEd disseminates resources in the form of publications, CCRS, distance education, digital media, and topical links to career pathways information, program management, high school equivalency, ESOL, numeracy, and learning disabilities. On-site professional development is available to all AEFLA funded programs upon request.

The Office of Adult Education's vision to align more closely with the core partners and the work force development system is another priority under WIOA. The professional development group will use state leadership funds under this unified state plan to provide training, education, and guidance to eligible providers in its role as a one-stop partner.

West Virginia Adult Education has a cadre of Technology Integration Specialist (TIS) that provides training and support to staff on technology integration, the new West Virginia Learning Skills and Technology Tools Content Standards and Objectives (Policy 2520.14), educator technology standards and various statewide technology resources as well as county/school software applications. These individuals also assist in the implementation of the programmatic technology plans. The major function of the TIS is planning and facilitating teaching and learning. They lead in the programs use of instructional technology to enhance learning; model the integration of technology in all curriculum areas; assess learning and information needs of students and staff; collaborate with teachers and other instructional staff to develop curriculum materials and specific lesson plans that integrate technology; and plan and work collaboratively with teachers and other staff. (D) The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of, and the improvement in, adult education and literacy activities and the dissemination of information about models and proven or promising practices within the State.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Office of Adult Education plans to use state leadership funding to support monitoring and evaluation activities, which include not only evaluating the quality of and improvement in local adult education activities but also the dissemination of information about models and proven or promising adult education practices within the state.

Nationally, all adult education programs under WIOA Title II--the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) are to be monitored to ensure compliance with the National Reporting Standards (NRS), as well as state standards. In West Virginia, this is done in two ways: with Data Quality Audits and with On-Site Monitoring Visits. One hundred percent of AEFLA funded WVAdultEd programs will be monitored annually through the use of Desktop Monitoring. Approximately twenty percent of all programs will be monitored annually via

on-site visits. All programs will be monitored within a six-year cycle. The programs identified for on- site monitoring are selected using a summative rubric that utilizes and applies performance data across a broad range of performance metrics. Other factors include new instrucational staffing, as well as time since the last on-site monitoring by the WVDE.

The Data Quality Audits ensure that local programs are administering file checks and reviewing program data for the purpose of technical assistance and improved program performance outcomes. The Data Quality Audit (DQA) also ensures the accuracy of data input, the data integrity, and that processes are followed according to NRS and State Policy. It also allows the program an opportunity to analyze data and check their progress. The second method is with On-Site Monitoring Visits. Programs that do not meet AEFLA and/or state performance measures, or that fall in the bottom 20% on the summative rubric are subject to an on-site monitoring visit, utilizing the revised monitoring instrument (also per OCTAE requirements).

These visits are conducted to observe administration of assessments, goal setting, advisement and orientation processes, and to document that the programs are in compliance with NRS and State Policy. A copy of West Virginia's On-Site Monitoring Review is located at https://wvde.state.wv.us/abe/file-cabinet/AE%20Monitoring%20Instrument%207-9-15.pdf

Scheduling of the on-site monitoring visit will be determined in coordination with the Regional Adult Education Coordinator (RAEC), the State monitoring coordinator, and the local program. Local priorities (e.g. staffing, weather, graduations, etc.) will be considered when scheduling on-site visitations. Prior to the monitoring visits, a monitoring review questionnaire(s) must be answered and submitted to the State monitoring coordinator a minimum of two weeks prior to the date of the visit. Within 45 days of the monitoring visit, the local program will receive a monitoring report. Where indicated by Findings and Required Actions from the monitoring visit, a Corrective Action Plan (Cap), will be compiled by the State monitoring team and responded to within 45 days by thye Grantee. A template for the CAP is posted at https://wvde.state.wv.us/abe/filecabinet/AE%20Monitoring%20Instrument%207-9-15.pdf

Technical assistance will be available for all low-performing programs, but continued failure to meet minimum state performance measures may result in decreased funding or program cancellation. Any Grantee or Regional Adult Ed. Coordinator (RAEC) may request an on-site visitation for purposes of program improvement or technical assistance.

Desk Monitoring findings and results will determine additional course of action, including: 1. For those grantees with no significant findings, no further monitoring will take place in the current year. However, as with all grantees, desk monitoring will occur on an annual basis, regardless of compliance (or non-compliance). 2. For grantees with minor compliance issues based on the desk review, a Data Quality Audit by the Regional Coordinator may be conducted via desk and/or on-site. 3. Targeted on-site monitoring visit to address specific non-compliant areas 4. Full on-site monitoring visit in the current or subsequent program year to address major compliance issues found in the desk review and/or Data Quality Audit.

A typical monitoring visit will include the following: a) Interview the local Administrator/Director, discussing areas of concern, including NRS performance, staffing, budget, and grantee expenditures to date. b) Discuss Desk Monitoring Report, Data Quality Audit, NRS Tables, Class Summary Reports, and other forms previously submitted. c) Interview instructional staff d) Review pertinent student and class files e) Financial Reports f) Closing interviews with all staff to review findings with Administrator and teachers, review additional comments, commendations, and recommendations; answer questions from local staff; and offer technical assistance from a Mentor or content specialist.

Upon receipt of the final report, the Grantee will: 1. Respond in writing to all findings contained within the Final Report. 2. Formulate a Corrective Action Plan utilizing the approved WVDE template 3. Request with a Mentor, or subject specialist (if needed).

Assessment and Accountability Assessment and accountability is a key component for tracking the progress and success of the students as well as the performance of local agencies to determine if they meet the goals and objectives of the WIOA. Adult Education collects and provides accountability data to the state. The electronic data system provides the required elements through the series of student progress assessments, as well as collection of demographic and goal attainment data. Sites participating in the federal data collection efforts receive agency-specific data results and are given technical assistance on analyzing the data for local reporting and program planning purposes.

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

Permissible Activities

(A) The support of State or regional networks of literacy resource centers.

As previously noted, the Office of Adult Education will fund the WVAdultEd Professional Development group to carry out most state leadership activities. However, other state leadership funds will be used by the Office of Adult Education to carry out required and permissible activities that are not performed by the professional development team. (B) The development and implementation of technology applications, translation technology, or distance education, including professional development to support the use of instructional technology.

The Office of Adult Education funds two full-time technology staff responsible for implementing technology applications and Web development. All training is aligned to the CCRS and models integration of technology into instruction.

(C) Developing and disseminating curricula, including curricula incorporating the essential components of reading instruction as such components relate to adults.

The Office of Adult Education will use funds to develop and disseminate CCRS curriculum frameworks contextualized in subject areas including science and social studies. An IEL/Civics curriculum framework will be disseminated once complete.

(D) Developing content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways.

The development of multilevel, bridge and integrated education and training in West Virginia is part of the Career Pathways Initiative and will continue to be a priority focus in the alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other core programs and one-stop partners, providing adults access to employment and training services. The Pathways and Workforce levels, incorporate best practice elements derived from other successful implementations and research.

(E) The provision of assistance to eligible providers in developing and implementing programs that achieve the objectives of this title and in measuring the progress of those programs in achieving such objectives, including meeting the State adjusted levels of performance described in section 116(b)(3).

The Office of Adult Education will use state leadership funds to provide technical assistance and training in the form of data summits, regional trainings, regional program manager meetings, and conference and institute sessions and workshops to assist eligible providers to measure progress in meeting state adjusted levels of performance.

(F) The development and implementation of a system to assist in the transition from adult education to postsecondary education, including linkages with postsecondary educational institutions or institutions of higher education.

The Office of Adult Education's vision is to expand and enhance the career pathways program that extends across the core partners and the entire work force system in West Virginia. To accomplish this vision, the professional development team will be funded to provide technical assistance, training, and the dissemination of resources to implement career pathways programs to further the purpose of WIOA in transitioning adult learners to postsecondary education, training, employment, and to link with institutions of higher education.

(G) Integration of literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training, including promoting linkages with employers.

The professional development team provides resources, training, and professional development to eligible providers for integrating literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training, and linkages with employers.

(H) Activities to promote workplace adult education and literacy activities.

Eligible providers are encouraged to promote workplace adult education and literacy activities and may request the professional development team to assist in this activity.

(I) Identifying curriculum frameworks and aligning rigorous content standards that— (i) specify what adult learners should know and be able to do in the areas of reading and language arts, mathematics, and English language acquisition; and (ii) take into consideration the following: (I) State adopted academic standards. (II) The current adult skills and literacy assessments used in the State or outlying area. (III) The primary indicators of performance described in section 116. (IV) Standards and academic requirements for enrollment in non-remedial, for-credit courses in postsecondary educational institutions or institutions of higher education supported by the State or outlying area. (V) Where appropriate, the content of occupational and industry skill standards widely used by business and industry in the State or outlying area.

(J) Developing and piloting of strategies for improving teacher quality and retention.

The professional development team employs peer trainers who work with teachers to provide support to new staff. Evaluations of these training opportunities are reviewed and used to update the training to meet the needs of instructors. Office of Adult Education partners with an agency to provide teachers with low cost college credit opportunities to maintain their accrediation status.

(K) The development and implementation of programs and services to meet the needs of adult learners with learning disabilities or English language learners, which may include new and promising assessment tools and strategies that are based on scientifically valid research, where appropriate, and identify the needs and capture the gains of such students at the lowest achievement levels.

The professional development team provides training for instructors of adults with learning disabilities and is modeled after the Literacy Information Communication System (LINCS) Learning to Achieve Program.

(L) Outreach to instructors, students, and employers.

The Office of Adult Education uses state leadership funds to design, develop, and maintain the WVAdultEd Web site. The Web site is used as a tool for broad dissemination of adult education resources. The Office of Adult Education also provides outreach via a Hotline for students seeking information about high school equivalency or for the public seeking information about adult education services in their local area.

(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.

Assessing Quality

The Office of Adult Education assesses the quality of providers through quarterly and annual evaluations. A major focus of these evaluations is to measure the effectiveness of state and local providers in attaining the core indicator performance levels negotiated with OCTAE. These evaluations also measure continued progress and improvement of the goals and objectives of the considerations in Section 231(e).

The Office of Adult Education reviews (1) strategies, processes, and barriers to attaining the performance levels; and (2) quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate the progress and improvement of the programs.

The evaluations (1) collect local provider and student performance measures, (2) determine the level of student improvement, (3) identify program quality, and (4) determine the extent to which populations identified are served.

Results of the evaluations provide (1) relevant information about the effectiveness of adult education programs, (2) characteristics of the learners participating in the literacy programs, (3) analyses of learner gains and identification of emerging needs, and (4) the impact of local providers in meeting their identified performance standards.

Pursuant to Section 212 of the AEFLA, each agency must provide student progress measures obtained from all students who have attended at least 12 hours of instruction in

programs receiving sections 225, 231 and 243 federal supplemental funds. Documented progress of student performance measures must include at a minimum: • literacy skill level improvements in reading, writing, and speaking the English language, problem solving, numeracy, and other literacy skills; • placement in, retention in, or transition into postsecondary education, training, unsubsidized employment, or career advancement; and • a secondary school diploma or its equivalent.

All agencies are required to maintain individual student records for all students who have attended 12 hours of instruction. Each record must contain (1) student identification and demographic information; (2) attendance rates; (3) years of schooling and placement level at program entry; (4) initial learning goals; (5) specified pre- and post-testing student information; (6) entry and update records; and (7) other specified information necessary.

Assessing the Quality of Professional Development

An underlying principle of the framework for evaluating professional development is that while professional development's most immediate impact must be on instructors, changes in programs (e.g., instructional practices, processes, student assessment, and learner supports) must also occur for there to be an effect on learner outcomes. While assessing professional development's impact on instructors can be accomplished in a fairly straightforward manner, efforts to relate professional development, first on programs and then on learner outcomes, are much more complicated tasks.

West Virginia Office of Adult Education adheres to the State Policy 5310 and evalutes all instructors.

. • Data Quality Audits are conducted that give information about program performance. These results are used to develop or revise professional development offerings.

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.

Framework for Program Assessment

An emphasis will be placed on high-demand, job driven skills attainment. The state will emphasize "demand-driven skills-attainment" in program planning. The state will give great weight to WIOA performance measures related to skills attainment, program completion, and credential attainment.

The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of, and improvement in, adult education and literacy activities and the dissemination of information about models and proven or promising practices within the State. Current efforts in West Virginia include: 1.) Desk monitoring by WVAdultEd to identify coding issues, system reporting and program outcomes; and 2.) Bi-annual Data for Program Improvement projects by each provider with the results being shared at various venues, e.g. State staff meetings, committee meetings, trainings etc.

WV Adult Education also conducts program monitoring visits for approximately 20% of the programs. In addition regular fiscal reviews are done for all funded programs. The

establishment or operation of professional development programs to improve the quality of instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under Section 231 (b). These programs include contextualization of instruction, student self-efficacy, English language and numeracy fluency, and reading comprehension. Instruction must be provided by qualified, faculty, staff, trained volunteers or personnel of approved providers. All leadership activities are aligned to the Office of Adult Education's State plan, Strategic Issues, and Goals. WV Adult Education has an extensive range of opportunities for program development for all Adult Education funded programs to improve the quality of instruction.

WV Adult Education strives to focus professional development on skills instructors require to address student's needs and challenges to help students learn and raise achievements. The quality of professional development provided will be assessed by reviewing various data reports and the student achievement reports available in the Adult Education Management Information System. Teacher team learning (mentors) will be provided so best practices may be developed and shared. Student outcomes, achievements, successes, and measurable skill gains will be monitored for each class by regional Adult Education staff. All professional development training sessions, online courses, conferences and academies are evaluated at the end of each session. Presenters and training teams review the evaluations and adjust training materials to improve the sessions. Trainees are asked what topics need further attention and that information is added to upcoming training sessions. WV Adult Education conducts statewide needs assessment to determine professional development areas of need and/or improvement. Teachers are asked to select a professional development goal each year as part of the teacher evaluation process.

Every year, the West Virginia Adult Education Association (WVAEA) sponsors a state-wide conference. Faculty and staff present creative and innovative research-based practices that they have implemented in their programs.

Several online courses (Schoology) offer instructors new to Adult Education the grounding to understand the system and to build their instruction based on current practices.

WV Adult Education built and maintains a database to track participation in all trainings, meetings, and other activities.

WV Adult Education provides technical assistance, including staff training, to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities to enable the eligible providers to improve the quality of such activities:

WVAdultEd provides all funded providers options for online learning to enhance technology skills. Funded providers are eligible to apply for grants that support local staff participation in mandatory leadership trainings, request funds to support participation in other state and national trainings, and to create innovative program improvement projects that increase student progression by providing opportunities for students to move further and faster through the continuum of basics skills and college and career readiness pathways; improve transition by offering opportunities for students to progress into college level training and be prepared to attain adequate levels of skills and knowledge; engage communities through outreach efforts to stakeholders and potential students to increase participation in and support for adult basic education, and support innovations that present opportunities for students to move further and faster along their educational pathway. WV Adult Education is an active partner in LINCS and staff participate in Regional Partner meetings. On an ongoing

basis, staff monitor and participate in LINCS Community forums. Monitoring and evaluation of quality and improvement in adult education and literacy activities: WV Adult Education staff conduct on-site reviews of approximately 20% of funded programs to identify strengths and/or weaknesses and to provide technical assistance appropriate to increase program effectiveness and program compliance with federal and state requirements. WV Adult Education staff are available for targeted technical assistance. This assistance may be requested by a provider in the form of training, a site visit, or other type of support. The assistance may also be initiated by WVAdultEd staff based on a review of data or other factors.

In support of federal requirements, leadership funds promote high data quality, professional development on NRS Data Monitoring, the West Virginia Adult Education Management Information System (AEMIS) and standardized assessment testing tools. Funds also support ongoing program improvement assistance that improve service to students by increasing student progression, transition, retention, etc. These include training on NRS, AEMIS, and use of assessment toools.

The Adult Education team has developed and disseminated curricula incorporating phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, and fluency and reading comprehension.

CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that

1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan. Yes

2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program. Yes

3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan. Yes

4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law. Yes

5. A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan. Yes

6. The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan. Yes

7. The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan. Yes

8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program. Yes

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of

any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that: If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

Applicant's Organization **West Virginia Department of Education**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Steven L. Paine, Ed.D**

Title of Authorized Representative: **State Superintendent of Schools**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable) (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html). If applicable, please print, sign, and email to OCTAE_MAT@ed.gov

ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

1. The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding supplement and not supplant provisions). Yes

2. The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA. Yes

3. The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not "eligible individuals" within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA. Yes

4. The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities; Yes

5. The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to (1) prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency and (2) integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program; and Yes

6. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program. Yes

7. The eligible agency agrees that in expending funds made available under title II of WIOA, the eligible agency will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303). Yes

SECTION 427 OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA)

In the text box below, describe the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs provide the information to meet the requirements of Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), consistent with the instructions posted at https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/gepa427.doc.

West Virginia's Adult Education programs provide equal access to services without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability or sexual orientation. It does not discriminate in admission to its programs, services or activities; in access to them; in treatment of individuals with disabilities; or any aspect of their operations.

Upon employment, instructors are provided face-to-face professional development pre-service sessions related to discrimination and disability accommodations. They also are responsible for assignments in Schoology geared toward these topics.

All students are required to follow a *Code of Conduct* and *Dress Code* which explains the expectations regarding appropriate behavior, attendance, progress, and dress code. This provides a starting point for a stable safe environment for all students. No violence or abuse of any kind is tolerated within the program classroom.

Materials available for students with disabilities include Braille TABE, Large Print TABE, Audio TABE, Large Print CASAS and a talking calculator. Materials available for ELL students include Spanish TRA, Spanish TABE, Spanish OPT and French OPT.

West Virginia Adult Education is prepared to provide an interpreter for those students who are hearing impaired. This is through a partnership with the WV Division of Rehabilitation Services. Interpreters are contracted on an as needed basis.

Distance Education opportunities for ELL students as well as literacy level students includes Burlington English software. This online courseware can be accessed outside of an adult education classroom as an additional learning resource.

West Virginia Adult Education is in partnership with Literacy West Virginia who provides training, resources and technical assistance to local adult literacy programs through a regional system. Literacy WV offers program models, methods and materials for reaching adults and teaching learners to read, write, speak, understand and progress in their literacy development. Training opportunities are free, or at little cost, to programs. Available trainings are Literacy Tutor Trainings, ESOL Tutor Trainings, Ruby Payne's "A Framework for Understanding Poverty," Train the Trainer, Special Learning Needs, and CASAS.

Recruitment of students into programs includes PSAs to local television, radio and newspaper outlets. This insures that students with limited reading skills can hear about the program.

The public has access to the West Virginia Department of Education's website which has recently been reconstructed to become ADA compliant.

All class locations are considered diverse learning centers. All students are connected by interest and need rather than limited by gender, age, race, sexual orientation or culture.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan* must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA:

_____

* Sec. 102(b)(D)(iii) of WIOA

A. INPUT OF STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

All agencies, except for those that are independent consumer-controlled commissions, must describe the following:

1. INPUT PROVIDED BY THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, INCLUDING INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL'S REPORT, THE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION, AND OTHER COUNCIL REPORTS THAT MAY HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED AS PART OF THE COUNCIL'S FUNCTIONS;

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) received input from the West Virginia State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) members and chairman regarding the Unified State Plan to be submitted by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act partners in 2018. The input and the agency responses are reported below.

Observation 1

The agency strives to educate the general public regarding the WV DRS office locations to ensure knowledge and the continuum of agency services and programs. The agency utilizes newspaper articles, statewide magazine advertisements, community events, social media and public broadcasting as a means to assure awareness of the available services within WV DRS in all areas of the state.

Recommendation: The WV SRC recommends this practice be continued with a continuing emphasis directed into underserved areas of the State.

Observation 2

A priority for WV DRS is reaching students during their secondary education (9th — 12th grades) for it is imperative to start early in identifying career paths. Establishing an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) early to outline a vocational goal area and necessary services needed to support this goal is important for a student's success when transitioning from High School to the next phase of life whether this being continuing education or employment. The agency has VR counselors assigned to all secondary schools in West Virginia with offices physically located in high schools in West Virginia — Brooke, Cabell Midland, Huntington, John Marshall, Parkersburg South, Preston County, Wheeling Park and Woodrow Wilson High Schools.

Uncertainties continue that once students are preparing to leave the secondary school system and move forward into higher education that students, parents and their advisors/counselors may not be fully aware of services available through DRS. Placing Pathways banners at all West Virginia high schools will also increase awareness of available transition resources for students.

Recommendation: The WV SRC recommends working with high schools and/or vocational schools to establish VR offices to be physically located on the campus of those selected schools. This would provide more access to VR counselors and assistance to those students and their families in an effort to gain applicants for services at an earlier age as funding allows.

Observation 3

With the demographics and cultural backgrounds of West Virginia, effective communication must be innovative. Finding the most efficient avenue to educate students and their families regarding available WV DRS services and programs is a continuing challenge. Effective, good communication is a key factor.

Recommendation: The WV SRC recommends that WV DRS:

-continues to keep students and their families abreast about services and programs offered by the agency through social media; and,

-increase visibility of and access to VR staff assigned to their respective schools by making school presentations, using VR displays, exhibiting posters in prominent locations and having an increased presence at Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and other transition planning meetings.

Observation 4

The partnership between WV DRS and the Department of Education is imperative for the successful transition of students into the workforce. To reinforce this partnership, the need for preserving open communication is a vital component to assure students are referred to vocational rehabilitation at a younger age and have an informed understanding of community based services offered by WV DRS.

Recommendation: The WV SRC recommends this component be continued to strengthen knowledge of policies, referral processes as well as emerging trends and practices on an annual basis.

Observation 5

Transportation issues persist as a state and national concern. The lack of personal and public transportation in many areas of our state continues to be a repeated challenge. WV DRS offers varying opportunities for instruction in learning to drive when barriers are present. All West Virginia high schools currently offer their students driver's education classes.

Recommendation: Considering the long-term goal for all students is to be employed, the Council suggests that VR counselors stress that Individual Plans for Employment (IPEs) include driver's education assessments for students with disabilities who may require accommodations in order to drive. This may require occupational and/or developmental visual evaluations. Any driver education instructor in the state should be supplied with the information available outlining the agency's driving program that offers technical and adaptive support or training.

Observation 6

In looking toward the future, the agency expects an influx of youth who have drug and/or alcohol related issues and will need services. The agency is not only concerned about the youth having substance related disorders of their own, but also the long term effects of prenatal opiate exposure. This will be an area that will require VR staff to have more diverse training in these specialized programs and skill sets.

Recommendation: The WV SRC recommends that the Agency continues to provide staff with the training and technical assistance needed to expand their knowledge of drug addiction related diseases.

Observation 7

With the national trend focusing on working more closely with individuals who are within the corrections system who have disabilities, WV DRS has implemented a position for a Behavioral Health and Corrections Specialist. The focus will be on individuals with mental illness or other cognitive disabilities. Even though the agency works with the correctional

system, providing more in depth, early intervention services to this underserved group of individuals will be of benefit.

Recommendation: The WVSRC recommends that the Agency continue to expand relationships with the Behavioral Health and Corrections communities in order to expand opportunities for these individuals with disabilities being served by these Agencies.

Observation 8

In the past when funding allowed, WV DRS has conducted VR State Conferences every two years. Speakers from a myriad of areas have been brought to this conference to expand knowledge, update staff on new regulations, changes in the law and bring new creative ideas for program and service delivery. These conferences also provided the opportunity for the VR staff from throughout the state to spend several days sharing experiences, understanding agency issues, Client Assistance Program (CAP) training, talking with guest speakers while networking with administrative staff and their peers.

Recommendation: Promoting team building and giving the opportunity for an educational experience to enhance job performances is vital to the continuing success of the agency and enriching staff. The Council encourages the agency to continue this means of edification and reinforcement for staff, as funding permits. Agency Quality Assurance professionals should keep staff abreast of emerging practices, policy changes and trends in the respective districts.

CONSUMER SATISFACTION

As part of its program improvement efforts, DRS continues to support the implementation of consumer satisfaction surveys of its clients to ensure quality services for DRS consumers. WVSRC conducts the consumer satisfaction surveys (with full DRS assistance and cooperation). WVSRC is primarily responsible for completion of the consumer satisfaction survey for VR consumers. DRS continues to provide and supplement fiscal and human resources needed for its successful completion.

WVSRC members selected a survey method that allows former DRS clients and individuals who were not accepted for VR services to be contacted via mail surveys as soon as they exit DRS from various VR statuses throughout the fiscal year. Selected Highlights of the 2017 Consumer Satisfaction Survey of DRS Clients as reported by WVSRC are presented below.

The latest consumer satisfaction report, entitled, Consumer Satisfaction: Report of Survey Findings, was prepared by the WVSRC in November 2017. The findings were based on consumer satisfaction information gathered from 284 responses across the six DRS districts. Respondents to the consumer satisfaction survey were asked to rate their agreement with statements about their interactions with DRS. The ratings were "strongly agree," "agree," "neutral," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." Respondents were provided an option to indicate replies that were neutral or that the survey item was not applicable.

Overall, the level of satisfaction remains high despite a slight decrease from the previous results. This may be due to a 35% reduction in the number of respondents coupled with a larger number of respondents with unsuccessful case closures. Most often, consumers whose cases were closed successfully report higher levels of satisfaction than those who were closed as unsuccessful. Major findings of the consumer satisfaction survey include:

respondents felt that their rehabilitation counselor treated them with respect (85%), their questions were answered clearly by DRS (82%), they were involved in their plan development (70%), their counselor stayed in contact so they knew what was happening (76%), and they received the services they needed (70%). Respondents also reported that they knew what each step of their IPE would be (76%) and their counselors told them about job opportunities (70%). Consumers also reported high ratings for accessibility of local offices (85% gave an "Above Average" or "Excellent" rating), their counselors (83%), and the overall experience with DRS (77%).

The consumers were asked to recall which client's rights information had been explained to them. There were 228 individuals who responded that at least one right had been explained (80% of the sample). Most individuals indicated that they had received several rights explanations. The most commonly explained rights to consumers were (1) their participation in developing the rehabilitation plan (90%) and (2) knowing about all of the services that were available (76%). When asked about needs that were not met by rehabilitation services, 109 of the 189 consumers who responded to this question reported that they had no additional needs (58%). Consumers who did report additional needs most commonly requested education/training, employment—related services, medical services, and transportation—related services.

Overall, the responses in this sample are very similar to the responses from the previous year. There had been a noticeable reduction in reported satisfaction over the past 5 reports, but this year, the responses appear to have stabilized. To maintain high quality of services and promote a greater satisfaction level for our consumers, DRS welcomes and considers compliments, complaints, suggestions, and recommendations that our clients reported in the consumer satisfaction survey.

The WVSRC and DRS were also interested in examining the pattern of responses for transitioning youth (clients who were age 24 or younger). Youth surveys were color—coded so the participants could be isolated. Their responses formed a subset of 99 returned surveys. Overall, youth satisfaction remained lower than the responses of the whole group. Transitioning youth respondents felt that their rehabilitation counselor treated them with respect (62%), their questions were answered clearly by DRS (69%), their counselor stayed in contact so they knew what was happening (66%), and they received the services they needed (59%). Youth respondents also reported that they knew what each step of their IPE would be (69%), DRS counselors helped them develop a plan to get a job (67%), and their counselors told them about job opportunities (79%). Transitioning youth also reported ratings for accessibility of local offices (77% gave an "Above Average" or "Excellent" rating), their counselors (71%), and the overall experience with DRS (65%).

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strategic planning discussions occur on a monthly basis at DRS Executive Management Group meetings, which include representatives of the SRC and Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC). Needs assessment results are shared with the SRC and SILC. DRS Goals and Priorities were presented at meetings of the SRC, where the SRC has opportunities for input. The SRC meetings include a variety of stakeholders, including representatives from the Client Assistance Program, SILC, and other state agencies. In February 2018, DRS held public "Q and A" Sessions in Morgantown, WV and Charleston, WV to receive comments and questions from VR stakeholders pertaining to the Vocational

Rehabilitation section of the Unified State Plan. To ensure transparency and public awareness regarding the Program Year (PY) 2018 VR section of the Unified State Plan, DRS posted a draft version on the agency's website for review.

On April 16, 2018, the agency Director received a letter from the SRC Chariperson to address the change in the Designated State Agency from The West Virginia Department of Education and the Arts to the West Virginia Department of Commerce (effective July 1, 2018). The SRC Chairperson stated that "The letter is to inform you that the West Virginia State Rehabilitation Council (WV SRC) supports the change in the Designated State Agency (DSA) from the West Virginia Department of Education and the Arts to the West Virginia Department of Commerce effective July 1st, 2018. The WV SRC looks forward to our continuing relationship with the agency and working with you and your staff. If the Council can be of any assistance during this transition period, we are readily available and eager to collaborate in any way needed. We value the rapport the Council has maintained with WV DRS over the years and look forward to our continuing partnership."

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

DRS Response to Observation/Recommendation 1

DRS agrees with the recommendation to continue efforts to inform the general public about the availability of DRS services. In recent years, the agency has focused on reaching out to stakeholders of vocational rehabilitation (VR) services, including potentially underserved/unserved areas of the state. DRS utilizes the latest technology for this purpose, including a web map that includes turn—by—turn directions to each office to help potential consumers more easily find DRS field offices. Additional activities include the sponsoring of community events and statewide radio advertisements. In Program Years (PYs) 2018-2019, DRS plans to continue to identify efficient and cost-effective ways to reach out to consumers with disabilities, including potentially underserved/unserved populations using various methods such as cross-promotion among the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) core partners (WorkForce WV, WV Adult Education, and DRS) within the WV workforce development system. Additionally, with the ongoing implementation of the WIOA, an additional focus for DRS is to reach out to students with disabilities, including their parents and service providers in the community. These outreach activities are discussed below in later responses.

DRS Response to Observation/Recommendation 2

DRS agrees that it is important for students with disabilities to begin the vocational rehabilitation process as early as appropriate. DRS is open to the recommendation and has requested that counselors identify any possible opportunities for embedded VR offices within high schools. If opportunities arise, DRS will move forward to establish offices, where appropriate and agreed upon by both parties.

In support of this aim, DRS has a vocational rehabilitation counselor assigned to each high school in the state. During PYs 2016-2017, DRS placed large banners in high schools in all 55 WV counties and in almost every high school in the state. These banners provide information on DRS' PathwaysWV.org website for students with disabilities. The website also provides access to additional information on ways to access services from DRS.

DRS Response to Observation/Recommendation 3

DRS agrees that effective, good communication is a key factor in making sure that students with disabilities and their families are aware of DRS services and programs that are available for eligible individuals as they begin preparing for post—secondary school goals. DRS engages in a variety of outreach activities to ensure widespread information dissemination that is beneficial for students with disabilities preparing to leave the school setting. These activities include sponsoring community events, attending job fairs, passing out brochures, student—focused radio advertisements, and speaking to classrooms.

In PYs 2016-2017, DRS collaborated with the WV Department of Education to develop and provide students and parents with disability-related and transition resource guides. These guides were initially distributed by the WV Department of Education to all students in special education, with future distributions for all 6th and 9th graders in special education each year. These guides serve as a marketing/recruiting tool for DRS in addition to providing valuable resource information to students and parents. DRS has also collaborated with the Mid—Ohio Valley Workforce Board to assist in developing and disseminating an employment guide to each high school guidance counselor and DRS counselor working with high school students in the region's nine counties.

Additionally, the agency has a counselor assigned to each high school in West Virginia as well as liaisons assigned to institutions of higher education around the state. This on—site presence assists the agency in developing and maintaining working relationships, on a personal level, with students and school staff. Counselors provide outreach materials, including a specialized brochure for transition students. The brochure highlights the DRS Transition program, including eligibility requirements and available services. The brochure has the agency's website address where additional information about the DRS Transition program is available. DRS will continue to explore new, effective methods of information dissemination to secondary schools and institutions of higher education. Furthermore, DRS will continue to consult with state and local education officials regarding the use of newsletters and registration packets to inform students and their families about DRS services.

DRS Response to Observation/Recommendation 4

DRS agrees with the Council's recommendation to continue to strengthen the link between the agency and the public school system, as this link is considered vital to the continued referral of students with disabilities. DRS continues to maintain a strong connection and working relationship with the West Virginia Department of Education, as well as the county—level Boards of Education. The agency has updated its Memorandums of Understanding with the WV Department of Education and all 55 County Boards of Education to reflect changes concerning Section 511 and pre-employment transition services (pre-ETS). With the implementation of WIOA, DRS has increased collaborative efforts with school staff at the state and local level, particularly regarding the provision of pre—employment transition services to high school students with disabilities beginning in the tenth grade.

Since 2015, DRS has partnered with the WV Department of Education for Graduation 20/20, aimed at increasing the high school graduation rates of students with disabilities. In 2016, DRS Counselors, LEA staff, and Regional Educational Service Agency staff participated in

multiple cross-training events to learn about pre-ETS, and to develop ideas for collaborative provision. Existing projects and programs in the state were highlighted, some of which were later duplicated in other areas. DRS Counselors joined local Graduation 20/20 teams across the state; Pre-ETS activities were coordinated and used as a strategy to not only promote graduation, but also encourage competitive, integrated employment for all students with disabilities.

In consultation with DRS, the WV Office of Special Education amended its policies to demonstrate compliance with WIOA Section 511, and include pre-ETS on the Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Additionally, the WV Department of Education plans to reduce the age at which Transition must be addressed on the IEP from 16 to 14 by the year 2019. Therefore, education and VR partners demonstrate alignment of not only WIOA and IDEA regulations, but also a shared vision of all students with disabilities offered the same transition service opportunities. After the implementation of the new policies, DRS and WV Department of Education staff conducted cross-trainings across the state. Those in attendance were County Special Education Directors, teachers, principals, IEP Specialists, and case managers. Staff were instructed on how to involve DRS Counselors in the coordination and provision of Pre-ETS for students with disabilities through the Transition Services Planner. Additionally, staff were instructed on how and when to use and distribute other transition materials for the tracking of and referral to pre-ETS and other transition services.

DRS Response to Observation/Recommendation 5

DRS agrees that driving and transportation in general are often a barrier to employment for West Virginians with disabilities of all ages. DRS continues to seek solutions to transportation issues and maintains this as an agency goal and priority. DRS will continue to make sure that consumers are aware of these options and continue to identify targeted solutions to the varied transportation issues for West Virginians with disabilities, focusing specifically on individualized transportation solutions. During the initial phase of the vocational rehabilitation process, DRS counselors discuss transportation—related issues with consumers. Counselors work with consumers to address and resolve any identified disability—related employment barriers; services to circumvent barriers are included in Individualized Plans for Employment and may include transportation services.

DRS Response to Observation/Recommendation 6

DRS agrees with the issues raised by the SRC regarding the potential increase in the number of consumers having drug and/or alcohol related issues. In addition to the implementation of a Behavioral Health and Correction Specialist at the state level, DRS has been proactive in this area in recent years by providing training to counselors. Training has occurred at the State Training Conference in the past and will continue to take place at future conferences and/or training events, as appropriate. This training will assist counselors in enhancing their service provision to individuals with addiction by providing an overview of the disease of addiction and an examination of historic, current, and future treatment modalities.

DRS Response to Observation/Recommendation 7

DRS agrees with the SRC about the importance of working with organizations and individuals with behavioral health issues and previous incarcerations, including individuals in juvenile detention programs. As mentioned, the agency has implemented a Behavioral

Health and Corrections Specialist to focus on outreach and comprehensive service provision to these individuals. The specialist will continue to develop and maintain working relationships with related national and state organizations, assist in the training of counselors in these specialized areas, and ensure that the agency is providing quality and timely services to these individuals. In PYs 2016-2017, DRS has worked with many agencies and organizations relating to behavioral health and corrections including the WV Division of Corrections, the Office of Institutional Education Programs, the WV Bureau for Medical Services, the WV Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities, the Governor's Summit on Alcohol and Drug Use in Higher Education, the WV Behavioral Health Planning Council, and the WV Division of Juvenile Services.

DRS Response to Observation/Recommendation 8

DRS agrees that the Annual State Training Conference is extremely valuable for agency staff members. The conference provides expert speakers, training sessions, and networking opportunities for field staff from across the state. Additionally, it is an enriching experience for staff members to meet others from across the state. The conference promotes cohesiveness among VR staff, as well as promoting team building, in order to serve consumers with disabilities statewide. Due to budget constraints, the Annual State Training Conference will only be held when funding is available. However, the agency will continue to provide training sessions and networking opportunities to staff members through the Quality Assurance Unit and District meetings, as appropriate.

3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

The agency is basically in agreement with the input and recommendations provided by the SRC. Please see the previous section for the full DRS responses to the SRC input and recommendations.

B. REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS

When requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement, the designated State unit must identify the types of services to be provided by the program on a non-statewide basis. The waiver request must also include written assurances that:

1. A LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCY WILL PROVIDE THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE OF COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WAIVER REQUEST;

This agency has not requested a waiver of statewideness.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

This agency has not requested a waiver of statewideness.

3. ALL STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS WILL APPLY

requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan will apply to the services approved under the waiver.

This agency has not requested a waiver of statewideness.

C. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH AGENCIES NOT CARRYING OUT ACTIVITIES UNDER THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM.

Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system with respect to:

1. FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS;

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) maintains cooperation and coordination with various agencies and entities. This section describes DRS association with agencies or entities that are not in the statewide workforce development system, education officials, private non—profit vocational rehabilitation service providers, and supported employment and extended services providers for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

DRS continues relationships with many agencies and organizations that are not in the statewide workforce development system and whose functions, in some capacity, involve the provision of services to individuals with disabilities. The association with other organizations occurs with varying degrees of involvement depending upon joint initiatives that may be planned and/or that may occur within any given year. Generally, DRS representatives may be included in advisory functions for other agencies, as are other agencies with the strategic planning that occurs within DRS. Some examples include:

—A DRS representative is actively involved with the West Virginia Behavioral Health Planning Council in the monitoring and oversight of behavioral health services in the state. The DRS representative participates in quarterly Council meetings and serves on various sub—committees.

—DRS representatives participate with the West Virginia Developmental Disabilities Council. DRS maintains a close working relationship with the staff and members of this Council and has provided support and received effective feedback for its work.

—DRS is represented on the State's Interagency Collaborative Team (ICT), a group (including agencies not under the state workforce development system) centered around WorkForce WV to provide on—going attention to addressing issues that will build and continually improve the statewide Workforce Development System (WDS). The team is the single State—level interagency group for addressing issues or concerns regarding building and maintaining the most effective and efficient implementation of the overall WDS in WV. DRS participates in regular, monthly meetings of the ICT, and is one of the signatories of the ICT Memorandum of Understanding, which is drafted annually. The ICT membership includes:

—-WorkForce WV — WV Employment Service

—-Bureau of Senior Services — State Unit on Aging

—-Council for Community and Technical College

—-Department of Education — Adult Education and Literacy Activities, Postsecondary Vocational Education, and Office of Institutional Programs

—-Department of Education and the Arts — Division of Rehabilitation Services

—-Department of Health and Human Resources — Bureau of Children and Families, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and Food Stamp Employment and Training

—-Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety — Division of Corrections

—-Development Office — Community Development Division and Business Industry Development

—DRS has a good working relationship with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) at the district level, which allows direct referrals of appropriate veterans from VA facilities to its rehabilitation technology unit for assistive technology and rehabilitation engineering services. Furthermore, DRS maintains liaisons for all VA offices in WV.

2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

With respect to state programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, DRS has a memorandum of understanding with the West Virginia Assistive Technology System of the West Virginia University Center for Excellence in Disabilities (CED). The purpose of this MOU is to delineate the working relationship between DRS and the CED in order to provide effective services to individuals with disabilities, ensuring statewide coverage of assistive technology needs.

3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

Although DRS does not maintain a formal agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) through the office of the Under Secretary for Rural Development, it provides rehabilitation services as necessary to eligible migrant and seasonal farm workers with disabilities. Another available resource is the WV AgrAbility Project, a USDA—funded program established to assist farmers and farm families who need to find ways to accommodate their disabilities in order to remain active in agriculture.

4. NONEDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

DRS works with a variety of non—educational agencies serving out—of—school youth. The primary coordinated activities serving this population are with WIOA partners — WorkForce WV and the regional workforce development boards. DRS strives to coordinate referrals and services to eligible out—of—school youth served by the WIOA youth programs that are overseen by WorkForce WV and the regional workforce development boards. These partnerships allow for improved service delivery through the blending of resources and expertise among the agencies. For example, sharing costs allows DRS and other agencies to enhance outreach efforts, serve increased numbers of out—of—school youth, and improve outcomes for participants.

In addition to DRS' reliance on WIOA partners in serving out—of—school youth, the agency continues to use community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) that have become a DRS—acknowledged vendor, to support the needs of this population across the state.

DRS also maintains communication and works with other non—educational agencies that serve out—of—school youth in order to introduce and provide VR services. These agencies include Youth Reporting Centers under the WV Division of Juvenile Services and Peer Support Centers, funded by the WV Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities. Youth Reporting Centers are community—based centers provide intervention programs for at—risk youth and also provide reintegration services for youth returning to the community. The Peer Support Centers provide a variety of support services for qualifying youth with behavioral health conditions.

5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

West Virginia's State Use Program was created by the legislature in 1984 and strengthened in 1989. The program allows employment opportunities to be created for citizens with disabilities through nonprofit Community Rehabilitation Programs. The State Use Law allows these programs and their clients to produce commodities and perform services for various state agencies without requiring competitive bidding. Prices charged for these special commodities and services are established by the governor—appointed Committee for the Purchase of Commodities and Services from the Handicapped.

The Governor's Committee consists of six (6) members appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. One member is selected by the Governor to serve as chairperson. Members represent the following:

—a private citizen who is conversant with the problems incidental to the employment of persons with disabilities

—a representative of a producing nonprofit workshop

—a representative of the Division of Rehabilitation Services

—a representative of the Department of Administration who is knowledgeable in the purchasing requirements of the state

—a representative of private business who is knowledgeable in the activities involved in the sale of commodities or services to governmental entities, and

—a representative of organized labor who is knowledgeable in matters relating to employment of people with disabilities.

Members serve two year terms. There is also an ex—officio, non—voting member of the committee who is appointed by the Director of the Purchasing Division. This person serves as the Executive Secretary. There are no geographical or political party constraints on who may be appointed.

The state network of Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) is critical to the effective and efficient delivery of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with significant disabilities. As of November 2015, there are 68 DRS—acknowledged parent company CRPs in West Virginia located at 97 service sites. Many of these CRPs participate in state use

contracting programs. DRS maintains working relationships with non—profit CRPs in West Virginia that provide supported and direct employment, community—based assessment, and/or work skills assessment. CRPs also provide employment readiness services such as life skills and work adjustment, job site training, and extended employment assessment. While respecting freedom of choice, DRS encourages work center programs to expand community—based programs for these individuals. Any CRP meeting the DRS acknowledgment process will be permitted under a written Vendor Acknowledgment to bill for services provided to DRS consumers. In order to become a DRS—acknowledged vendor, an applicant must request, complete, and return a Vendor Acknowledgment Packet. Upon receipt of the completed packet, a recommendation to acknowledge or not acknowledge will be made to the DRS Director.

The Vendor Acknowledgment Packet contains an application for Vendor Acknowledgment to provide supported employment services, an annual data summary that provides the agency's name, address, contact information, a checklist of those DRS services they will be providing, and a Vendor Acknowledgment form addressing conditions of and payment for services rendered to DRS consumers.

A signed Vendor Acknowledgment indicates that the vendor agrees to follow conditions set forth regarding standards, anti—discrimination, indemnification, and conditions/standards of operation. The acknowledgment is good for one year.

D. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS

Describe:

1. DSU'S PLANS

The designated State unit's plans, policies, and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of VR services, including pre-employment transition services, as well as procedures for the timely development and approval of individualized plans for employment for the students.

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) has cooperative agreements with the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDOE) Office of Special Programs, the WVDOE Division of Technical and Adult Education, Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development, local education agencies, and the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind. The cooperative agreements between DRS and WVDOE, both at the state and the local levels, assure that each student with a disability in the state who needs special education, vocational education, and/or vocational rehabilitation services is identified and that the appropriate services, including pre—employment transition services, are made available to the individual. The cooperative agreements cover:

1. Determination of DRS responsibility;

2. Student/consumer referrals;

3. Joint development of the Individualized Educational Program (IEP) and the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE);

4. Services;

5. Coordinated planning and payment of services;

6. Confidentiality of information;

7. Subminimum wage employment (per the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act);

8. Local agreements;

9. General supervision; and

10. Dispute resolution.

Prior to the 2015—2016 school year, the DRS director sent letters to each high school principal and special education director in West Virginia. The letter detailed changes in vocational rehabilitation service provision to high school students with disabilities since the enactment of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The most significant change relates to providing pre—employment transition services to high school students with disabilities. The letter described these services and the further collaboration between DRS and school staff to better serve students with disabilities.

DRS offices are located in some of the state's largest schools. Additionally, counselors visit every high school in the state to initiate rehabilitation services needed for transition from school to work. This allows the counselor to develop a collaborative relationship and assist the student in identifying goals, services, and service providers related to employment options prior to transition. In FY 2015, DRS re—structured its counselor assignments to increase service availability to students with disabilities. There are now 44 rehabilitation counselors assigned to work with the state's 55 local education agencies and the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and Blind. DRS' school counselors specialize in providing pre—employment transition services (PETS) to students with disabilities. Of these 44 PETS counselors, 43 work solely with high school students and have no other assignments. Expected benefits include increased counselor presence in schools, increased IEP meeting attendance, increased provision of PETS, and an increase in outreach and awareness of VR services to high school students with disabilities.

School (PETS) rehabilitation counselors also are invited to participate in IEP meetings. During these meetings the counselor describes DRS services, policies, and procedures as appropriate. The DRS counselor determines the student's eligibility and order of selection category utilizing information generated from the school, the student, and DRS. Prior to or shortly after the student's IEP transition meeting occurs, IPE development begins so both the student and counselor have an idea of what rehabilitation services will be necessary to meet the student's vocational goal. Therefore, if the student needs additional training or assessment prior to vocational goal determination, this information is already collected so that planned rehabilitation services may begin. IPE development and approval for students with disabilities, including those able to be served if DRS is on an order of selection, will begin as early as appropriate during the transition process, but before the student, determined to be eligible, leaves the school setting.

In 2016, DRS will partner with Community Access, Incorporated to implement a program to support the design and implementation of programming and outreach while addressing the new direction mandated by WIOA. Specifically, the program will address the five mandated PETS for high school students with disabilities through an expansion of the Student

Transition to Employment (STEP) program. The project will assist school districts by offering training and technical assistance in setting up community—based work experience programs for students with disabilities. The project will help level the playing field between resource—rich metropolitan areas and isolated rural settings that often have few services available. In addition, a strong statewide outreach to teachers, parents, students, and other VR stakeholders will be a component of the project. A concerted effort will be made to include historically under—served groups including students in the foster care system, those returning from out—of—state placements, and those students on the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) track. The project has the following goals:

1. To assist school districts in setting up community—based work exploration programs;

2. To develop statewide parent training network utilizing the Parent Community Resource Centers;

3. To develop a network of specialists to work with DRS, WorkForce WV, and WVDOE staff; and

4. To develop a statewide cross—sector outreach program with a strong emphasis on traditionally underserved populations.

DRS also assists WVDOE with Graduation 20/20, a West Virginia initiative that uses a data driven intervention framework developed by the National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities (NDPC—SD) to address issues that have negatively impacted school completion. Graduation 20/20 utilizes the innovation configuration on evidence—based transition practices and predictors of post school success to guide professional learning which was published by the Collaboration for Effective Educator, Development, Accountability, and Reform (CEEDAR) Center. The program, using tools from NDPC—SD and CEEDAR, trains local school—based teams and team leaders to diagnose the causes of dropout and develop site—specific improvement plans and strategies.

Information about the DRS school program is widely disseminated to education professionals, as well as students and their parents. An updated fact sheet and new brochure explaining DRS transition services is available. DRS has negotiated an agreement with the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission for its consumers who attend in—state public colleges and universities. The agreement describes the financial responsibility of DRS and the appropriate public institution of higher education, provides procedures to resolve interagency disputes, and coordinates policies and procedures to ensure timely delivery of vocational rehabilitation services. To better serve individuals in post—secondary school, DRS has liaisons assigned to 43 post—secondary community/technical colleges, 4—year colleges, and universities across the state.

DRS also coordinates with the WVDOE Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development, a WIOA core partner, to better serve individuals receiving adult education. The agencies have a formal MOU and collaborate at the state and local level. The MOU includes screening students for potential disabilities, including learning disabilities, and the collaboration between WVDOE and DRS to provide necessary accommodations (e.g., assistive technology, interpreters) for eligible individuals. DRS will evaluate the disability or disabilities and provide specific recommendations regarding testing accommodations, recommendations for instructional accommodations and recommendations for job accommodations. If it is found that the student requires assistive technology (which

includes information technology products such as software application, operating systems, web—based information applications, web accessibility, video equipment, multimedia products, and office equipment) then WVDOE and DRS will share, as appropriate, the cost for this technology. If it is determined that the person has a hearing disability and it is deemed necessary that an interpreter, CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation), note—taker, or other appropriate accommodations be provided, then WVDOE and DRS will share the cost. WVDOE will only hire qualified interpreters who are registered through the West Virginia Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

While the MOU covers the partnership statewide, there are numerous collaborative activities at the local level. DRS and Adult Education are collaborating with a university to assist adult education students in transitioning to post—secondary education through a curriculum that teaches time management, a basic math refresher, and any other identified needs for individuals with disabilities returning to post—secondary education. DRS, WorkForce WV, and Adult Education also collaborate in workforce development region 2 as part of WIOA One—Stop Management Partner meetings with local development groups to better identify and facilitate needed services for the local area. In DRS Districts 4 and 6, DRS has partnered with Adult Education to increase efforts to reach potential VR consumers being served by Adult Education and the Strategic Planning in Occupational Knowledge for Employment and Success (SPOKES) program. SPOKES was created by WV Adult Education under a contract between (a) the WVDOE Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development and (b) the WV Department of Health and Human Resources, in collaboration with the Workforce Development Boards.

2. INFORMATION ON THE FORMAL INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY WITH RESPECT TO:

A. CONSULTATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO ASSIST EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES IN PLANNING FOR THE TRANSITION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM SCHOOL TO POST-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING VR SERVICES;

The formal agreement includes the following:

DETERMINATION OF AGENCY RESPONSIBILITY

Education, through participation in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004), has assured the United States Department of Education (USDE) that it has established general supervisory authority over all education programs administered within the State. General supervisory authority means that:

1. All programs serving eligible students meet all requirements of IDEA 2004;

2. All programs serving eligible students within the state must meet State standards; and

3. Funds which support services to eligible school age students with disabilities, including state and local education funds and funds under Title V, Title VI, Title IX, and Title XX of the Social Security Act, will continue to provide any and all services provided by these funds prior to the passage of IDEA 2004; and no program will alter eligibility requirements for participating in federal, state, and local programs in order to increase the financial responsibility of agencies receiving IDEA 2004 funds. Part B of IDEA does not limit the responsibility of agencies other than educational agencies for providing for and paying for

some or all of the costs of a free appropriate public education to students with disabilities in the State.

Education has responsibility for providing appropriate special education and related services for each eligible student with a disability, ages 3 to 21, enrolled in the public school system. For each eligible student with a disability at age 16 or younger, if determined appropriate, the transition service needs of the student must be identified, including interagency linkages. Students with disabilities shall have equal access to services, which are normally provided by public schools for non—disabled individuals, provided that reasonable accommodations or modifications can be made.

Transition services are defined in IDEA 2004 as a coordinated set of activities for a student with an exceptionality that are designed within a results—oriented process focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the student to facilitate movement from school to post—school activities, including post—secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.

For students with disabilities ages 16 to 21, who are preparing to graduate or have exited school, the responsibility for vocational services rests with Rehabilitation. This provision also applies to all other school age students who meet eligibility requirements for Rehabilitation services. Rehabilitation will provide services, which are legally the responsibility of Rehabilitation for those individuals determined to be eligible for services.

Eligibility for Rehabilitation services is determined by the following criteria:

—An individual must have a physical or mental impairment which, for that individual, constitutes or results in a substantial impediment for employment; and

—The individual can benefit in terms of an employment outcome from vocational rehabilitation services.

It is important that Education and Rehabilitation work together to determine logistics for providing transition services. The IEP and the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) must be developed with coordinated goals, objectives, and planned services for effective and successful transition to post—school settings. Each agency will cooperate to provide referral, support, and assistance to the agency with responsibility for services.

IDEA 2004 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, require the individual's participation in the development of the IEP and IPE, respectively, and emphasize informed choice. Identification of transition services for the IEP is focused on a coordinated set of activities which considers the student's preferences and interests. Likewise, the IPE is developed with the assistance of a rehabilitation counselor who guides the individual in identifying goals through reviewing assessments, individual strengths, resources, interests, and needs. Education must provide both awareness and exploration activities in the areas of living, learning, and work to support decisions about post school outcomes. This interagency cooperation assures seamless transition services that prepare the student to pursue adult goals.

Rehabilitation and Education will assist students and parents in understanding the differences of entitlement services provided by Education and eligibility for Rehabilitation

services. Every student is entitled to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) under IDEA 2004. The provision of Rehabilitation services is offered to individuals with disabilities based on a determination of their eligibility as previously defined. The participation of Rehabilitation counselors in the IEP process will assist students and parents in understanding the differences and facilitate the provision of educational and rehabilitation services. Rehabilitation and Education will utilize a variety of activities to provide outreach, both jointly and individually, for eligible students with IEPs, students with 504 plans, and others with disabilities not currently receiving services. Activities may include participation in career/job fairs, presentations to students and parents, website links, brochures, surveys, conferencing between Rehabilitation School Counselors and School Counselors, and regularly scheduled contact with individual schools. Professional development activities between Education and Rehabilitation shall be provided and facilitated by state staff, including support of regional transition teams, participating in topic specific learning events and book studies.

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

The formal agreement includes the following:

DETERMINATION OF AGENCY RESPONSIBILITY

Education, through participation in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004), has assured the United States Department of Education (USDE) that it has established general supervisory authority over all education programs administered within the State. General supervisory authority means that:

1. All programs serving eligible students meet all requirements of IDEA 2004;

2. All programs serving eligible students within the state must meet State standards; and

3. Funds which support services to eligible school age students with disabilities, including state and local education funds and funds under Title V, Title VI, Title IX, and Title XX of the Social Security Act, will continue to provide any and all services provided by these funds prior to the passage of IDEA 2004; and no program will alter eligibility requirements for participating in federal, state, and local programs in order to increase the financial responsibility of agencies receiving IDEA 2004 funds. Part B of IDEA does not limit the responsibility of agencies other than educational agencies for providing for and paying for some or all of the costs of a free appropriate public education to students with disabilities in the State.

Education has responsibility for providing appropriate special education and related services for each eligible student with a disability, ages 3 to 21, enrolled in the public school system. For each eligible student with a disability at age 16 or younger, if determined appropriate, the transition service needs of the student must be identified, including interagency linkages. Students with disabilities shall have equal access to services, which are normally provided by public schools for non—disabled individuals, provided that reasonable accommodations or modifications can be made.

Transition services are defined in IDEA 2004 as a coordinated set of activities for a student with an exceptionality that are designed within a results—oriented process focused on

improving the academic and functional achievement of the student to facilitate movement from school to post—school activities, including post—secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.

For students with disabilities ages 16 to 21, who are preparing to graduate or have exited school, the responsibility for vocational services rests with Rehabilitation. This provision also applies to all other school age students who meet eligibility requirements for Rehabilitation services. Rehabilitation will provide services, which are legally the responsibility of Rehabilitation for those individuals determined to be eligible for services.

Eligibility for Rehabilitation services is determined by the following criteria:

—An individual must have a physical or mental impairment which, for that individual, constitutes or results in a substantial impediment for employment; and

—The individual can benefit in terms of an employment outcome from vocational rehabilitation services.

It is important that Education and Rehabilitation work together to determine logistics for providing transition services. The IEP and the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) must be developed with coordinated goals, objectives, and planned services for effective and successful transition to post—school settings. Each agency will cooperate to provide referral, support, and assistance to the agency with responsibility for services.

IDEA 2004 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, require the individual's participation in the development of the IEP and IPE, respectively, and emphasize informed choice. Identification of transition services for the IEP is focused on a coordinated set of activities which considers the student's preferences and interests. Likewise, the IPE is developed with the assistance of a rehabilitation counselor who guides the individual in identifying goals through reviewing assessments, individual strengths, resources, interests, and needs. Education must provide both awareness and exploration activities in the areas of living, learning, and work to support decisions about post school outcomes. This interagency cooperation assures seamless transition services that prepare the student to pursue adult goals.

Rehabilitation and Education will assist students and parents in understanding the differences of entitlement services provided by Education and eligibility for Rehabilitation services. Every student is entitled to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) under IDEA 2004. The provision of Rehabilitation services is offered to individuals with disabilities based on a determination of their eligibility as previously defined. The participation of Rehabilitation counselors in the IEP process will assist students and parents in understanding the differences and facilitate the provision of educational and rehabilitation services. Rehabilitation and Education will utilize a variety of activities to provide outreach, both jointly and individually, for eligible students with IEPs, students with 504 plans, and others with disabilities not currently receiving services. Activities may include participation in career/job fairs, presentations to students and parents, website links, brochures, surveys, conferencing between Rehabilitation School Counselors and School Counselors, and regularly scheduled contact with individual schools. Professional development activities between Education and Rehabilitation shall be provided and

facilitated by state staff, including support of regional transition teams, participating in topic specific learning events and book studies.

C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;

The formal agreement includes the following:

DETERMINATION OF AGENCY RESPONSIBILITY

Education, through participation in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004), has assured the United States Department of Education (USDE) that it has established general supervisory authority over all education programs administered within the State. General supervisory authority means that:

1. All programs serving eligible students meet all requirements of IDEA 2004;

2. All programs serving eligible students within the state must meet State standards; and

3. Funds which support services to eligible school age students with disabilities, including state and local education funds and funds under Title V, Title VI, Title IX, and Title XX of the Social Security Act, will continue to provide any and all services provided by these funds prior to the passage of IDEA 2004; and no program will alter eligibility requirements for participating in federal, state, and local programs in order to increase the financial responsibility of agencies receiving IDEA 2004 funds. Part B of IDEA does not limit the responsibility of agencies other than educational agencies for providing for and paying for some or all of the costs of a free appropriate public education to students with disabilities in the State.

Education has responsibility for providing appropriate special education and related services for each eligible student with a disability, ages 3 to 21, enrolled in the public school system. For each eligible student with a disability at age 16 or younger, if determined appropriate, the transition service needs of the student must be identified, including interagency linkages. Students with disabilities shall have equal access to services, which are normally provided by public schools for non—disabled individuals, provided that reasonable accommodations or modifications can be made.

Transition services are defined in IDEA 2004 as a coordinated set of activities for a student with an exceptionality that are designed within a results—oriented process focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the student to facilitate movement from school to post—school activities, including post—secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.

For students with disabilities ages 16 to 21, who are preparing to graduate or have exited school, the responsibility for vocational services rests with Rehabilitation. This provision also applies to all other school age students who meet eligibility requirements for Rehabilitation services. Rehabilitation will provide services, which are legally the responsibility of Rehabilitation for those individuals determined to be eligible for services.

Eligibility for Rehabilitation services is determined by the following criteria:

—An individual must have a physical or mental impairment which, for that individual, constitutes or results in a substantial impediment for employment; and

—The individual can benefit in terms of an employment outcome from vocational rehabilitation services.

It is important that Education and Rehabilitation work together to determine logistics for providing transition services. The IEP and the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) must be developed with coordinated goals, objectives, and planned services for effective and successful transition to post—school settings. Each agency will cooperate to provide referral, support, and assistance to the agency with responsibility for services.

IDEA 2004 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, require the individual's participation in the development of the IEP and IPE, respectively, and emphasize informed choice. Identification of transition services for the IEP is focused on a coordinated set of activities which considers the student's preferences and interests. Likewise, the IPE is developed with the assistance of a rehabilitation counselor who guides the individual in identifying goals through reviewing assessments, individual strengths, resources, interests, and needs. Education must provide both awareness and exploration activities in the areas of living, learning, and work to support decisions about post school outcomes. This interagency cooperation assures seamless transition services that prepare the student to pursue adult goals.

Rehabilitation and Education will assist students and parents in understanding the differences of entitlement services provided by Education and eligibility for Rehabilitation services. Every student is entitled to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) under IDEA 2004. The provision of Rehabilitation services is offered to individuals with disabilities based on a determination of their eligibility as previously defined. The participation of Rehabilitation counselors in the IEP process will assist students and parents in understanding the differences and facilitate the provision of educational and rehabilitation services. Rehabilitation and Education will utilize a variety of activities to provide outreach, both jointly and individually, for eligible students with IEPs, students with 504 plans, and others with disabilities not currently receiving services. Activities may include participation in career/job fairs, presentations to students and parents, website links, brochures, surveys, conferencing between Rehabilitation School Counselors and School Counselors, and regularly scheduled contact with individual schools. Professional development activities between Education and Rehabilitation shall be provided and facilitated by state staff, including support of regional transition teams, participating in topic specific learning events and book studies.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF EDUCATION

Education assumes responsibility for all expenses incurred in the provision of special education and related services to achieve FAPE when those services, including assistive technology devices and services, are necessary for the student's educational program or course of study, as well as participation in school activities and during the pendency of any interagency dispute.

Private Insurance Funds: With regard to services required to provide FAPE to an eligible student under this part, Education may access a parent's private insurance only if the parent provides informed consent consistent with federal regulations pursuant to IDEA 2004. Each time Education proposes to access the parent's private insurance, it must:

1. Obtain written parental consent; and

2. Inform the parent that their refusal to permit the district to access the private insurance does not relieve the district of its responsibility to ensure that all required services are provided at no cost.

Public Insurance Funds: Education may use the Medicaid or other public insurance benefits programs in which a student participates to provide or pay for services required. With regard to services required to provide FAPE to an eligible student under this part, Education may not:

1. Require parents to sign up for or enroll in public benefits or insurance programs in order for their child to receive FAPE under IDEA regulations;

2. Require parents to incur an out—of—pocket expense, such as the payment of a deductible or co—pay incurred in filing a claim for services provided pursuant to this part, but may pay the cost that the parent otherwise would be required to pay; and

3. Use a student's benefits under a public benefits or insurance program if that use would (a) decrease available lifetime coverage or any other insured benefit; (b) result in the family paying for services that would otherwise be covered by the public benefits or insurance program and that are required for the child outside of the time the child is in school; (c) increase premiums or lead to the discontinuation of benefits or insurance; or (d) risk loss of eligibility for home and community—based waivers, based on aggregate health—related expenditures.

To access a student's public insurance (e.g., Medicaid reimbursement), the district must obtain and maintain documentation of parent/adult student consent specifying the records to be disclosed; the services to be provided; and the extent, frequency, and duration of the services. The district must also obtain parent/adult student consent if billable services (i.e., type, amount, and/or duration) are revised at any time. The parents must be informed that their refusal to consent to the release of information does not relieve the district of its responsibility to ensure that all services are provided at no cost to the parents.

If Education is unable to obtain parental consent to use the parent's private insurance, or public benefits or insurance when the parents would incur a cost for a service specified on their child's IEP, the district may use Part B funds to pay for services to ensure FAPE. To avoid financial cost to parents who otherwise would consent to use private insurance or public benefits or insurance if the parent would incur a cost, the district may use its Part B funds to pay the cost the parents otherwise would have to pay to use the parents' benefits insurance (e.g., the deductible or co—pay amounts).

Proceeds from public or private insurance will not be treated as program income as pursuant to 34 CFR §80.25(2). If a district spends reimbursements from Federal funds (e.g., Medicaid) for services under this part, those funds will not be considered "State or local" funds for purposes of the maintenance of effort provisions of Part B of IDEA 2004.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF REHABILITATION

Rehabilitation may be responsible for services that occur outside of the school environment that are vocationally oriented and are specifically intended to prepare the student for post—secondary training or work. Rehabilitation is not responsible for payment of any service that has not been directly agreed to during the development of a student's IEP and is not included as a service on a student's IPE for Rehabilitation services. Rehabilitation is not responsible for career development activities that are part of a School to Work initiative within the school system. The responsibility for implementing the requirements of Department of Education Policy 2510 remains with the school system.

The transference to the student of assistive technology devices that have been purchased by the Local Education Agency (LEA) will occur consistent with the surplus equipment policies and regulations in existence within each LEA. After the student has exited the school system, Rehabilitation may reimburse the LEA at a rate in accordance with the surplus equipment policy, dependent upon the student's continued need or desire for the equipment, the condition of the equipment, and its future usefulness.

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

At present, DRS has representation in all high schools in all 55 WV counties. DRS counselors/staff regularly communicate with local school personnel to promote the awareness and usage of VR services. When permitted, DRS school counselors maintain an office in high schools to strengthen the DRS resolve to serve students with disabilities. DRS continually sponsors grants and activities to educate all stakeholders in high schools about VR services and employment opportunities for students with disabilities.

The cooperative agreement includes references that each student with a disability in the state who needs special education and/or vocational rehabilitation services should be promptly identified and the appropriate transition services are made available to the individual.

Education has responsibility for providing appropriate special education and related services for each eligible student with a disability, ages 3 to 21, enrolled in the public school system. For each eligible student with a disability at age 16 or younger, if determined appropriate, the transition service needs of the student must be identified, including interagency linkages. Students with disabilities shall have equal access to services, which are normally provided by public schools for non—disabled individuals, provided that reasonable accommodations or modifications can be made.

It is important that Education and Rehabilitation work together to determine logistics for providing transition services. The IEP and the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) must be developed with coordinated goals, objectives, and planned services for effective and successful transition to post—school settings. Each agency will cooperate to provide referral, support, and assistance to the agency with responsibility for services.

E. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(3)). Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.

Cooperative Agreements with Private Non—Profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers

The state network of Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) is critical to the effective and efficient delivery of vocational rehabilitation (VR) services to individuals with significant disabilities. As of November 2015, there are 68 DRS—acknowledged parent company CRPs in West Virginia located at 97 service sites. There are also an additional 29 Student Transition to Employment Project vendors that focus on serving students with disabilities.

DRS maintains working relationships with non—profit CRPs in West Virginia that provide supported and direct employment, community—based assessment, and/or work skills assessment. CRPs also provide employment readiness services such as life skills and work adjustment, job site training, and extended employment assessment. While respecting freedom of choice, DRS encourages work center programs to expand community—based programs for these individuals.

Any CRP meeting the DRS acknowledgment process will be permitted under a written Vendor Acknowledgment to bill for services provided to DRS consumers. In order to become a DRS—acknowledged vendor, an applicant must request, complete, and return a Vendor Acknowledgment Packet. Upon receipt of the completed packet, a recommendation to acknowledge or not acknowledge will be made to the DRS Director.

The Vendor Acknowledgment Packet contains an application for Vendor Acknowledgment to provide supported employment services, an annual data summary that provides the agency's name, address, contact information, a checklist of those DRS services they will be providing, and a Vendor Acknowledgment form addressing conditions of and payment for services rendered to DRS consumers.

A signed Vendor Acknowledgment indicates that the vendor agrees to follow conditions set forth regarding standards, anti—discrimination, indemnification, and conditions/standards of operation. The acknowledgment is good for one year.

CRPs also provide services, including pre—employment transition services (PETS), to students with disabilities. CRPs can also supplement work exploration activities and provide opportunities for VR consumers, especially students, statewide. DRS also utilizes school personnel as CRP vendors as part of the Student Transition to Employment Program (STEP). These teacher/vendors work with students outside of school hours to provide them with CRP services such as community based assessment, work skills assessment, work adjustment training, job placement, and job coaching. The students benefit from working with a trusted adult who is already familiar with the student's strengths and weaknesses. This eliminates the need for new and/or additional assessment by the service provider. Furthermore, this program allows DRS to ensure services are available in rural areas. DRS has made it an agency goal and priority to expand CRP service availability.

F. ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(4)). Describe the designated State agency's efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide supported

employment services and extended employment services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) continues to concentrate efforts on educating interested parties regarding the process of becoming a non—traditional provider source for supported employment services. A variety of supported employment provider choices are needed, particularly due to the rural nature of the state.

DRS continues to focus on providing technical assistance and coordinating training for vendors of supported employment services, DRS staff members, and staff members of other public and private agencies. DRS keeps current on changes and advances in supported employment through documented research, literature, and reviews of best practices.

Other agencies with which DRS collaborates for the provision of time—limited supported employment services are:

1. West Virginia Developmental Disabilities Council funds;

2. West Virginia Title XIX——Home and Community—Based Waiver Program for intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD) recipients; and

3. Social Security Administration work incentives programs.

In implementing school—to—work transition services for individuals exiting the school system, DRS also collaborates with family resource networks.

Through a combined effort with other disability organizations, $100,000 was appropriated by the West Virginia Legislature for supported employment follow—along services (extended supported employment services). DRS serves as the fiscal agent for these funds. DRS has created program guidelines governing the use of state—appropriated funds for extended services under the supported employment program created by state statute in 1993. The sole use of the state funds attached to this program is to provide extended services for individuals not eligible from any other funding source. All providers of supported employment services may access these funds for individuals who are eligible under the guidelines. At the end of FY 2015, DRS had sponsored 67 individuals in the extended supported employment program so they could maintain and retain their jobs within the community. This figure represents the cooperative efforts of 13 CRPs.

Agreements between DRS and all acknowledged providers of supported employment services document collaboration for extended services. Each agreement details the time—limited and extended services that DRS will secure through the vendor.

Extended services specified in the agreement will be provided by the vendor and include, at minimum, monitoring two hours per month (no more than eight) at the job site of each individual unless the individual can be better served through off—site monitoring. If off—site monitoring is determined to be appropriate, it must, at a minimum, consist of two hours per month with the individual and at least one contact with the employer during those hours. The vendor also agrees to provide other support services as needed and specified in the Individualized Plan for Employment.

In addition to the basic vendor agreement identifying the time—limited and extended services to be mutually provided by DRS and the vendor, DRS has attempted to collaborate with other agencies and organizations to provide funding for extended services.

These sources of extended supported employment services are:

1. West Virginia Title XIX——Homes and Community—Based Waiver Program for I/DD recipients;

2. DRS program funds for persons receiving extended services at DRS—acknowledged CRP work centers; and

3. Social Security Administration programs such as Impairment Related Work Experience and Plan for Achieving Self Support for approved Social Security recipients.

DRS continues its efforts to expand the number of acknowledged vendors of supported employment services, particularly in areas underserved and unserved within the current system. As of November 2015, the number of supported employment service providers was 68, an increase of 30 providers since FY 2006.

G. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(5)). Describe how the designated State unit will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of:

1. VR SERVICES; AND

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) believes that coordination with employers is integral to improving the workforce development system. Gathering/collecting information about employer needs, which will also be shared with other Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) partners, allows DRS to provide training and other services to vocational rehabilitation (VR) consumers in order to meet business needs and expectations of current and future workers. To optimize its coordination with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities for consumers with disabilities, DRS takes a multi—faceted approach. DRS utilizes its own personnel in addition to partnering with WorkForce West Virginia to coordinate with employers across the state. Additionally, DRS has specific programs/strategies to identify employment and career exploration opportunities for students with disabilities, including the provision of pre—employment transition services. The strategies that DRS uses are described below.

DRS has an in—house Employer Services Section that specializes in providing employers with disability—related information, services, and pre—screened job seekers. The DRS Employer Services Section has 12 employment specialists that cover all 55 counties in West Virginia. DRS' team of employment specialists provide business owners and employers with critical business options and assistance in staffing, employee retention strategies, education on disability—related issues, job accommodations, and information about financial incentives for employers who hire individuals with disabilities. In the previous fiscal year, employment specialists contacted 1,575 employers, attended 25 job fairs, coordinated with WorkForce WV, participated in rapid response events, attended local workforce

development board (WDB; formerly known as workforce investment board, or WIB) meetings, and provided Job Clubs for students with disabilities.

Sample of services provided to employers:

—Pre—screened qualified applicants to reduce employers' cost of recruitment and hiring.

—Consultation, recommendation, and training for retention of employees who acquire a disability.

—Technical assistance on the Americans with Disability Act (ADA).

—Accessibility options and solutions.

—Employer on—site disability awareness training.

—Information on tax credits available to employers.

Direct contact with employers is a key strategy to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities for VR consumers, including students with disabilities. Employment specialists contact employers to identify current and future job openings. To complement this, DRS utilizes labor market information provided by WorkForce WV to identify the top employers in each county; contact is always made with the top ten employers in each county. When meeting with employers, employment specialists provide valuable information, including the DRS Employer Resource Guide. The resource guide provides the following information:

—Staffing services;

—Training programs and incentives for hiring people with disabilities;

—Financial incentives;

—Accessibility assessments;

—Accommodating employees with disabilities;

—Basic disability etiquette;

—Attitudinal barriers;

—Americans with Disabilities Act;

—Locating a DRS office; and

—Where to find additional resources.

The Employer Services Section maintains a database of each DRS—employer interaction with employment specialists. The information collected includes the business name, contact person, and current job openings by occupation. If needed, a referral to the DRS Rehabilitation Technology Unit is made to address workplace accommodations. This list is distributed to field staff to potentially match a job—ready VR consumer with a current job opening. Through positive working relationships, 19 employers, including some of the largest in the state, now send job postings directly to DRS' Employer Services Section.

DRS also coordinates with employers through participation and membership in various community and regional organizations. These activities range from employer—specific organizations to public—private partnerships and allow DRS to better understand the needs of employers while jointly developing employment—related activities. Some of these partnerships include:

—Regional WDBs;

—Beckley—Raleigh Chamber of Commerce;

—Fayette County Chamber of Commerce;

—Weirton Area Chamber of commerce;

—Employer engagement and worksite tours for VR consumers through partnerships with community colleges such as Mountwest and Bridge Valley; and

—Employer tours through partnerships with high school and adult vocational/technical centers including South Branch Career and Technical Center and James Rumsey Technical Institute.

To raise awareness of DRS' services available to employers and potential VR consumers, the agency engages in a statewide marketing campaign. To directly target business professionals, DRS has full—page advertisements in West Virginia Executive Magazine, West Virginia's premier business publication. The agency also purchases radio advertisements across the state. Several of these ads are specifically directed toward businesses and outline the previously detailed employer services that DRS can provide. DRS also sponsors community events to ensure awareness among the general public.

Another key strategy to coordinate with employers is through collaboration with WorkForce WV, a WIOA core partner. WorkForce WV is the state agency that oversees numerous U.S. Department of Labor programs. This partnership takes place at all levels, including local offices, regional workforce development boards, and state level Interagency Collaboration Team meetings. These partnerships have been of great benefit for West Virginians with disabilities seeking training and employment.

Because of the services it provides, WorkForce WV has the largest database of both job seekers and job openings in the state. DRS is able to tap into these resources to identify current employment opportunities for VR consumers, identify needs of employers across the state, and utilize detailed labor market information to assist individuals (including students) with disabilities in identifying future career opportunities. This allows VR consumers to identify potential employment opportunities and any training or other VR services that are required for the job. Additionally, job—ready VR consumers can create an account with WorkForce WV to match with employers seeking workers with specific skills they already possess.

2. TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

In addition to the previously—described activities, the Employer Services Section also works with employers to better serve transitioning youth with disabilities, including providing career exploration opportunities for students with disabilities. In 2015, DRS

debuted the Positive Outcomes within Education and Rehabilitation (POWER) program. POWER is a job shadowing program that offers transitioning students, who may be having a difficult time choosing a career path, the opportunity to experience an occupation by spending time with a professional working in the students' vocational goal/career field of interest. The POWER program allows the student the opportunity to experience an occupation prior to committing to training. It guides the student to take a serious, realistic look at the occupation, allowing the student to make a more informed choice.

Employment specialist services, including PETS, provided to students with disabilities:

—POWER job shadowing program

—Transition Fairs

—Job Readiness Workshops

—Job Clubs

——Interviewing

——Resume Preparation

——Application Assistance

——Dressing for an Interview/Employment

——Job Retention and Good Work Habits

—Job search and employer contacts

——Assist students in locating employment opportunities and assisting with applying to openings

——Advocating on the student's behalf to employers when requested by the student

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;

DRS maintains an memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau for Medical Services (BMS), the state agency responsible for the State Medicaid plan under the title XIX of the Social Security Act; this is also known as the Waiver program. An advisory group for the program is constituted with the WV Developmental Disability Council (WVDDC). DRS has a position on the council. DRS and BMS interact as part of this advisory group through the WVDDC. The primary involvement of the XIX Medicaid Waiver program in fostering competitive, integrated employment outcomes through vocational rehabilitation is by mandating referral to DRS and providing ongoing support funding for those cases closed by DRS in Supported Employment. The WVDDC also advises BMS on policy development and meeting unmet needs of those participating in the XIX Medicaid Waiver program.

In addition to interacting with XIX Medicaid Waiver staff as part of the WVDDC meetings, DRS participates in two subcommittees; Employment First and Medley Management. The Employment First committee focuses on promoting employment for intellectually/developmentally disabled (IDD) individuals as a first option among services providers, legislators, state policy makers, and the community at large. The Medley Management committee provides oversight and advice to the Bureau for Behavioral Health on the state's Medley program, which serves a specific group of IDD individuals that are at risk of institutionalization. These are often individuals that are also XIX Medicaid Waiver eligible. On both of these committees, DRS promotes a focus on competitive, integrated employment outcomes.

DRS counselors will, at the time of application, gather information regarding an individual's third party resources, including Medicaid. If it is determined that the individual receives Medicaid benefits, BMS will provide all Medicaid—covered services to the individual, regardless of that individual's continued status with DRS. If an individual is approved to receive services from DRS, and begins to receive Medicaid benefits at a later time, BMS will provide all Medicaid—covered services to the individual from that time forward.

Individuals receiving services from BMS will receive information on the eligibility requirements for DRS and the services DRS provides. If an individual receiving services from BMS expresses a desire to work, he or she will be referred to DRS at that time. Similarly, DRS consumers who are Medicaid—eligible will be referred to BMS.

DRS also maintains an MOU with the Division of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD), within the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities (BBHHF), the State agency with primary responsibility for providing services and supports for individuals with intellectual disabilities and individuals with developmental disabilities. DRS interacts with both BBHHF and its subsidiary, DIDD.

DRS, BBHHF, and DIDD agree to interact in the following ways to facilitate delivery of services, including extended services, to individuals with the most significant disabilities: —The DIDD program manager and DRS will interact regularly as part of the WV Developmental Disability Council (WVDDC) meetings, as well as the Employment First and Medley Management committees. The Employment First committee focuses on promoting employment for IDD individuals as a first option among services providers, legislators, state policy makers, and the community at large. The Medley Management committee provides oversight and advice to the BBHHF on the state's Medley program, which serves a specific group of IDD individuals that are at risk of institutionalization. On both of these committees, DRS promotes a focus on competitive, integrated employment outcomes.

—The BBHHF administers several Customized Employment grants with vendors of DRS. BBHHF and DRS will jointly train the Community Rehabilitation Programs receiving these grants as well as DRS staff working with these programs.

—BBHHF and DRS will work together in mediating problems in cases being served jointly in the programs.

—DRS will meet monthly with BBHHF staff to review applicants for an Unmet Needs funding program to foster assistance to IDD individuals where traditional funding sources do not provide needed supports.

—Individuals receiving services from BBHHF or DIDD will receive information on the eligibility requirements for DRS and the services DRS provides. If an individual receiving services from BBHHF or DIDD expresses a desire to work, he or she will be referred to DRS at that time.

In order to provide quality and timely vocational rehabilitation services to West Virginians with behavioral health conditions who qualify, DRS collaborates with the BBHHF and its partners. BBHHF is the federally designated Single State Authority for mental health and substance use disorders and operates under the auspices of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources. The primary programs within BBHHF and their partners that DRS works with are as follows:

—The Office of Consumer Affairs and Community Outreach (CACO), is charged with providing collaborative support to the clinical section of the Office of Programs through the provision of legislative tracking, disaster coordination and response, development and operation of a Consumer Advisory Council, coordination of BBHHF training activities, researching and circulating information on evidence—based and emerging best practices, development of health promotion and wellness campaigns, researching and applying for high priority discretionary grants, and by providing a centralized response to requests for assistance and patient grievances. DRS maintains a relationship with this office and has worked together on anti—stigma campaigns, supporting recovery coaching and peer support, and training in the area of mental health first aid and medication assisted treatment.

—The Division of Adult Behavioral Health assures and provides access to services and supports to meet the mental health and co—occurring needs of adults and transitional age youth, enabling them to live, learn, work, and participate actively in their communities. The Division establishes standards to ensure effective and culturally competent care to promote recovery. The Division sets policy, promotes self—determination, protects human rights, and supports mental health training and research. DRS maintains a relationship with this office and has teamed up with them on several efforts, such as having them present on "Behavioral Health Connections" at the DRS 2014 Statewide Training Conference, assisting them in the planning of their 2015 Integrated Behavioral Health Care Conference and exhibiting at that conference whereby information regarding DRS was disseminated to approximately 700 behavioral health professionals, and serving as a subject matter expert on their Clinical Adult Review Process (CARP), which looks at the needs of individuals transitioning out of state psychiatric facilities.

—The Division of Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health is the Single State Authority for Children's Mental Health charged with monitoring and improving the children's behavioral health service delivery system. The Division is responsible for overseeing the implementation and evaluation of the federal block grant. The Division works collaboratively across all child serving systems, at both the state and local level, to ensure access to quality behavioral health services and supports for children and adolescents with and/or at risk for serious emotional disturbances. The Division provides leadership and technical assistance to facilitate an effective system of care for children and their families. DRS continues a working relationship with this office and their partners and, for example, has been working with the Expanded School Mental Health Steering Team Initiative. DRS has also worked together with The Family Advocacy, Support, & Training (FAST) program

which is a statewide parent and youth network that engages families in the planning, management, and evaluation of their child's mental health treatment and service needs.

—The Division on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, an operating division of BBHHF within the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Services, is charged in code with being the Single State Authority primarily responsible for prevention, control, treatment, rehabilitation, educational research, and planning for substance abuse related services. DRS cooperates with this office to share resources and circulate information that comes from attending the Governor's Regional Substance Abuse Task Force meetings, such as the WV Substance Abuse Services Directory and 844—HELP4WV, the first statewide 24—hour substance abuse call line.

—The Olmstead Coordinator is a part of the WV Department of Health & Human Resources & Office of the Inspector General. Olmstead v. L.C. (1999) is a landmark United States Supreme Court decision upholding the civil rights of people with disabilities (including those with behavioral health conditions that result in disability) to receive services and supports in the most integrated setting in the community. DRS is one of the required state agencies to participate in quarterly Olmstead Council meetings. Currently, the DRS Program Specialist for Behavioral Health and Corrections is the designated representative to communicate information regarding the agency's activities.

—The West Virginia Behavioral Health Planning Council (WVBHPC) is a unified voice that promotes wellness, recovery, and resiliency for all West Virginians. The primary purpose of the WVBHPC is to advocate for and evaluate the provision of community—based behavioral health services. BBHHF and DRS are two of the principal state agencies that must have membership on the council and attend quarterly meetings working together and with others to accomplish the goals of the WVBHPC.

2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

DRS maintains an memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau for Medical Services (BMS), the state agency responsible for the State Medicaid plan under the title XIX of the Social Security Act; this is also known as the Waiver program. An advisory group for the program is constituted with the WV Developmental Disability Council (WVDDC). DRS has a position on the council. DRS and BMS interact as part of this advisory group through the WVDDC. The primary involvement of the XIX Medicaid Waiver program in fostering competitive, integrated employment outcomes through vocational rehabilitation is by mandating referral to DRS and providing ongoing support funding for those cases closed by DRS in Supported Employment. The WVDDC also advises BMS on policy development and meeting unmet needs of those participating in the XIX Medicaid Waiver program.

In addition to interacting with XIX Medicaid Waiver staff as part of the WVDDC meetings, DRS participates in two subcommittees, Employment First and Medley Management. The Employment First committee focuses on promoting employment for intellectually/developmentally disabled (IDD) individuals as a first option among services providers, legislators, state policy makers, and the community at large. The Medley Management committee provides oversight and advice to the Bureau for Behavioral Health on the state's Medley program, which serves a specific group of IDD individuals that are at

risk of institutionalization. These are often individuals that are also XIX Medicaid Waiver eligible. On both of these committees, DRS promotes a focus on competitive, integrated employment outcomes.

3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

In addition to interacting with XIX Medicaid Waiver staff as part of the WVDDC meetings, DRS participates in two subcommittees, Employment First and Medley Management. The Employment First committee focuses on promoting employment for intellectually/developmentally disabled (IDD) individuals as a first option among services providers, legislators, state policy makers, and the community at large. The Medley Management committee provides oversight and advice to the Bureau for Behavioral Health on the state's Medley program, which serves a specific group of IDD individuals that are at risk of institutionalization. These are often individuals that are also XIX Medicaid Waiver eligible. On both of these committees, DRS promotes a focus on competitive, integrated employment outcomes.

DRS counselors will, at the time of application, gather information regarding an individual's third party resources, including Medicaid. If it is determined that the individual receives Medicaid benefits, BMS will provide all Medicaid—covered services to the individual, regardless of that individual's continued status with DRS. If an individual is approved to receive services from DRS, and begins to receive Medicaid benefits at a later time, BMS will provide all Medicaid—covered services to the individual from that time forward.

Individuals receiving services from BMS will receive information on the eligibility requirements for DRS and the services DRS provides. If an individual receiving services from BMS expresses a desire to work, he or she will be referred to DRS at that time. Similarly, DRS consumers who are Medicaid—eligible will be referred to BMS.

DRS also maintains an MOU with the Division of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD), within the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities (BBHHF), the State agency with primary responsibility for providing services and supports for individuals with intellectual disabilities and individuals with developmental disabilities. DRS interacts with both BBHHF and its subsidiary, DIDD.

DRS, BBHHF, and DIDD agree to interact in the following ways to facilitate delivery of services, including extended services, to individuals with the most significant disabilities: —The DIDD program manager and DRS will interact regularly as part of the WV Developmental Disability Council (WVDDC) meetings, as well as the Employment First and Medley Management committees. The Employment First committee focuses on promoting employment for IDD individuals as a first option among services providers, legislators, state policy makers, and the community at large. The Medley Management committee provides oversight and advice to the BBHHF on the state's Medley program, which serves a specific group of IDD individuals that are at risk of institutionalization. On both of these committees, DRS promotes a focus on competitive, integrated employment outcomes.

—The BBHHF administers several Customized Employment grants with vendors of DRS. BBHHF and DRS will jointly train the Community Rehabilitation Programs receiving these grants as well as DRS staff working with these programs.

—BBHHF and DRS will work together in mediating problems in cases being served jointly in the programs.

—DRS will meet monthly with BBHHF staff to review applicants for an Unmet Needs funding program to foster assistance to IDD individuals where traditional funding sources do not provide needed supports.

—Individuals receiving services from BBHHF or DIDD will receive information on the eligibility requirements for DRS and the services DRS provides. If an individual receiving services from BBHHF or DIDD expresses a desire to work, he or she will be referred to DRS at that time.

In order to provide quality and timely vocational rehabilitation services to West Virginians with behavioral health conditions who qualify, DRS collaborates with the BBHHF and its partners. BBHHF is the federally designated Single State Authority for mental health and substance use disorders and operates under the auspices of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources. The primary programs within BBHHF and their partners that DRS works with are as follows:

—The Office of Consumer Affairs and Community Outreach (CACO), is charged with providing collaborative support to the clinical section of the Office of Programs through the provision of legislative tracking, disaster coordination and response, development and operation of a Consumer Advisory Council, coordination of BBHHF training activities, researching and circulating information on evidence—based and emerging best practices, development of health promotion and wellness campaigns, researching and applying for high priority discretionary grants, and by providing a centralized response to requests for assistance and patient grievances. DRS maintains a relationship with this office and has worked together on anti—stigma campaigns, supporting recovery coaching and peer support, and training in the area of mental health first aid and medication assisted treatment.

—The Division of Adult Behavioral Health assures and provides access to services and supports to meet the mental health and co—occurring needs of adults and transitional age youth, enabling them to live, learn, work, and participate actively in their communities. The Division establishes standards to ensure effective and culturally competent care to promote recovery. The Division sets policy, promotes self—determination, protects human rights, and supports mental health training and research. DRS maintains a relationship with this office and has teamed up with them on several efforts such as having them present on "Behavioral Health Connections" at the DRS 2014 Statewide Training Conference, assisting them in the planning of their 2015 Integrated Behavioral Health Care Conference and exhibiting at that conference whereby information regarding DRS was disseminated to approximately 700 behavioral health professionals, and serving as a subject matter expert on their Clinical Adult Review Process (CARP), which looks at the needs of individuals transitioning out of state psychiatric facilities.

—The Division of Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health is the Single State Authority for Children's Mental Health charged with monitoring and improving the children's behavioral health service delivery system. The Division is responsible for overseeing the implementation and evaluation of the federal block grant. The Division works collaboratively across all child serving systems, at both the state and local level, to ensure

access to quality behavioral health services and supports for children and adolescents with and/or at risk for serious emotional disturbances. The Division provides leadership and technical assistance to facilitate an effective system of care for children and their families. DRS continues a working relationship with this office and their partners and for example has been working with the Expanded School Mental Health Steering Team Initiative. DRS has also worked together with The Family Advocacy, Support, & Training (FAST) program which is a statewide parent and youth network that engages families in the planning, management, and evaluation of their child's mental health treatment and service needs.

—The Division on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, an operating division of BBHHF within the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Services, is charged in code with being the Single State Authority primarily responsible for prevention, control, treatment, rehabilitation, educational research, and planning for substance abuse related services. DRS cooperates with this office to share resources and circulate information that comes from attending the Governor's Regional Substance Abuse Task Force meetings, such as the WV Substance Abuse Services Directory and 844—HELP4WV, the first statewide 24—hour substance abuse call line.

—The Olmstead Coordinator is a part of the WV Department of Health & Human Resources & Office of the Inspector General. Olmstead v. L.C. (1999) is a landmark United States Supreme Court decision upholding the civil rights of people with disabilities (including those with behavioral health conditions that result in disability) to receive services and supports in the most integrated setting in the community. DRS is one of the required state agencies to participate in quarterly Olmstead Council meetings. Currently the DRS Program Specialist for Behavioral Health and Corrections is the designated representative to communicate information regarding the agency's activities.

—The West Virginia Behavioral Health Planning Council (WVBHPC) is a unified voice that promotes wellness, recovery, and resiliency for all West Virginians. The primary purpose of the WVBHPC is to advocate for and evaluate the provision of community—based behavioral health services. BBHHF and DRS are two of the principal state agencies that must have membership on the council and attend quarterly meetings working together and with others to accomplish the goals of the WVBHPC.

I. COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT; DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.10)). Describe the designated State agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated State unit, including the following:

1. DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

A. QUALIFIED PERSONNEL NEEDS.

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:

i. the number of personnel who are employed by the State agency in the provision of VR services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;

DRS is committed to providing a comprehensive system of personnel development (CSPD) that complies with Section 101(a)(7)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 and Section 721(a)(7)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014. Members of the State Rehabilitation Council are afforded the opportunity to review and comment upon this entire section, particularly the DRS plan for recruitment, preparation, and retention of qualified personnel, DRS personnel standards, and staff development needs and activities.

Provisions of this section should assist in recruiting and retaining qualified staff members to ensure skilled personnel are available to provide rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities. Furthermore, these endeavors will help ensure an improved level of competence and expand and improve vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities, especially those with significant disabilities, allowing them to reach employment.

The Human Resources Unit is primarily responsible for performing DRS personnel administration activities in keeping with guidance from the West Virginia Division of Personnel (WVDOP), Rehabilitation Services Administration, Social Security Administration, and other appropriate bodies. The DRS Staff Development Unit administers the in—service training grant program. The Quality Assurance (QA) Unit also works closely with the Field Services Unit to ensure quality and timely training for new field counselors and rehabilitation services associates (RSAs).

The following narrative describes the DRS CSPD and policies, procedures, and activities relating to the establishment and maintenance of standards to ensure that personnel needed within DRS are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained for DRS operations.

DRS Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development Needs

Statistics and information utilized for personnel planning are maintained in several databases within the Human Resources Unit. Staffing and salary information is available from the State of West Virginia Financial Information Management System (FIMS) and wvOASIS. These databases allow DRS administrators to review salary, pay grade, job title, reporting unit, and personal employee information. Such information is available to DRS Assistant Directors and District Managers who use it for planning, hiring negotiations, and pay equity. Information about DRS retirees also may be obtained from these databases.

The Human Resources Senior Manager periodically (at least monthly) maintains and provides statistical data to the DRS Director. The data are a list of the number of individuals under various classifications who are employed by DRS in the provision of rehabilitation services. This includes a ratio of the number of counselors to the number of consumers served each year. DRS estimates the ratio of consumers served (13,551) to the number of counselors (102) will be 133 in Federal Fiscal Year (FY) 2017.

Each year the DRS Director receives a summary report that estimates and projects the number of such personnel that will be needed during the next five—year period. In

November 2015, DRS had 102 counselors in various offices across the state. Of the 102 counselors, DRS had 64 Rehabilitation Counselors, 26 Senior Rehabilitation Counselors, and 12 Certified Rehabilitation Counselors. The DRS believes its existing counselors and field staff members are needed to provide services to consumers who are currently in the DRS system.

DRS had several unfilled positions as of November 2015: 12 Rehabilitation Counseling positions, 5 Senior Rehabilitation Counselor positions, and 8 Certified Rehabilitation Counselor positions. Each unfilled position is being used to expand the number of field counselors when needed.

A breakdown by personnel category, including the number of personnel in relation to the estimated number of individuals served in FY 2017, is as follows (information current as of November 2015):

—Rehabilitation Counselors, 82 total positions, 11 vacancies, and 12 projected vacancies over the next five years. The number of Rehabilitation Counselors in relation to the number of individuals served is 191.

—Senior Rehabilitation Counselors, 31 total positions, 3 vacancies, and 9 projected vacancies over the next five years. The number of Senior Rehabilitation Counselors in relation to the number of individuals served is 484.

—Certified Rehabilitation Counselors, 15 total positions, 0 vacancies, and 6 projected vacancies over the next five years. The number of Certified Rehabilitation Counselors in relation to the number of individuals served is 903.

—Fiscal personnel, 16 total positions, 1 vacancy, and 4 projected vacancies over the next five years. The number of Fiscal personnel in relation to the number of individuals served is 903.

—Administrative Services personnel, nine total positions, zero vacancies, and two projected vacancies over the next five years. The number of Administrative Services personnel in relation to the number of individuals served is 1,506.

—Field Services personnel, 160 total positions, 15 vacancies, and 44 projected vacancies over the next five years. The number of Field Services personnel in relation to the number of individuals served is 93.

—Support Services personnel (e.g., human resources, rehabilitation technology unit), 65 total positions, 3 vacancies, and 23 projected vacancies over the next five years. The number of Support Services personnel in relation to the number of individuals served is 219.

—Information Technology personnel, eight total positions, two vacancies, and two projected vacancies over the next five years. The number of Information Technology personnel in relation to the number of individuals served is 2,259.

—Other personnel (e.g., vocational instructors, technical analysists), 21 total positions, 2 vacancies, and 6 projected vacancies over the next five years. The number of other personnel in relation to the number of individuals served is 713.

ii. the number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and

Each year the DRS Director receives a summary report that estimates and projects the number of such personnel that will be needed during the next five-year period. In January 2018, DRS had 109 counselors in various offices across the state. Of the 109 counselors, DRS had 52 Rehabilitation Counselors, 24 Senior Rehabilitation Counselors, 13 Certified Rehabilitation Counselors, and 20 Rehabilitation Counselor Trainees to provide services to consumers who are currently in the DRS system. DRS had several unfilled positions as of January 2018: 15 Rehabilitation Counseling positions, 5 Senior Rehabilitation Counselor positions, 1 Certified Rehabilitation Counselor position, and 2 Rehabilitation Counselor Trainee positions. Each unfilled position will be filled to expand the number of field counselors when needed.

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.

DRS expects to see a decrease in the number of consumers in its caseload system, from 12,251 individuals in FY 2017 to a projected 8,133 individuals in FY 2022. DRS administrators believe that the expected future caseload size will be managed by existing counseling personnel and the gradual filling of the 23 vacant counselor positions over the next five years. Additionally, DRS employs 48 RSAs to assist Counselors with their caseloads, in order to more efficiently meet the needs of consumers. The following information presents a range of the number of counselors and other agency personnel projected to leave DRS employment after becoming eligible for early retirement under the West Virginia Public Employees Retirement System by FY 2022. Of the 17 counselors who will be eligible, there will be 6 Rehabilitation Counselors, 7 Senior Rehabilitation Counselors, and 4 Certified Rehabilitation Counselors. DRS continues to experience a gradual retirement of counselors and other personnel. The agency expects this trend will continue over the coming years.

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;

DRS annually collects information from higher education institutions that provide training to prospective rehabilitation personnel. Based on information provided by West Virginia University (WVU) and Marshall University, WVU reports 49 students enrolled in the Rehabilitation Counseling graduate program and 8 graduates in the 2016—2017 period. For the Counseling graduate program, WVU reports 52 enrolled students and 22 graduates in the 2016—2017 period. For the Social Work graduate program, WVU reports an enrollment of 66 students and 68 graduates in the 2016—2017 period. The report from Marshall University shows 120 students and 42 graduates in Counseling graduate programs. It also reports 83 students and 55 graduates in Psychology graduate programs.

ii. the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

DRS annually collects information from higher education institutions that provide training to prospective rehabilitation personnel. Based on information provided by West Virginia University (WVU) and Marshall University, WVU reports 49 students enrolled in the Rehabilitation Counseling graduate program and 8 graduates in the 2016—2017 period. For the Counseling graduate program, WVU reports 52 enrolled students and 22 graduates in the 2016—2017 period. For the Social Work graduate program, WVU reports an enrollment of 66 students and 68 graduates in the 2016—2017 period. The report from Marshall University shows 120 students and 42 graduates in Counseling graduate programs. It also reports 83 students and 55 graduates in Psychology graduate programs.

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.

DRS annually collects information from higher education institutions that provide training to prospective rehabilitation personnel. Based on information provided by West Virginia University (WVU) and Marshall University, WVU reports 49 students enrolled in the Rehabilitation Counseling graduate program and 8 graduates in the 2016—2017 period. For the Counseling graduate program, WVU reports 52 enrolled students and 22 graduates in the 2016—2017 period. For the Social Work graduate program, WVU reports an enrollment of 66 students and 68 graduates in the 2016—2017 period. The report from Marshall University shows 120 students and 42 graduates in Counseling graduate programs. It also reports 83 students and 55 graduates in Psychology graduate programs.

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.

DRS Recruitment Efforts DRS will continue its efforts to recruit and advance employees of traditionally under—represented groups such as people with disabilities, seniors, women, and members of racial or ethnic minority groups. DRS Re—training Efforts for Existing Rehabilitation Professionals DRS is in full compliance with the CSPD requirement and its standard to employ only rehabilitation counselors who (1) possess a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling or a counseling—related field, or (2) are employees who have two years of full—time or equivalent part—time paid experience in the position of Rehabilitation Counselor Trainee. As stated above, DRS makes no exceptions to the state standard when hiring new rehabilitation counselors. Therefore, the agency provides for existing personnel to receive the training necessary to meet requirements of the state standard. As part of its non—discriminatory employment practices, DRS ensures that all personnel are selected for employment without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. The DRS affirmative action plan is updated annually and the agency has formally adopted this policy of non—discriminatory employment practices.

3. PERSONNEL STANDARDS

Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) and 34 CFR 361.18(c) to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

A. STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH ANY NATIONAL OR STATE-APPROVED OR -RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATION, LICENSING, REGISTRATION, OR OTHER COMPARABLE REQUIREMENTS THAT APPLY TO THE PROFESSION OR DISCIPLINE IN WHICH SUCH PERSONNEL ARE PROVIDING VR SERVICES; AND

To ensure a high standard of competency and credentials for its qualified rehabilitation professionals, DRS has established job classifications. The lowest standard for Rehabilitation Counselors requires a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling, counseling and guidance, social work, or closely related behavioral science field; or two years of experience as a Rehabilitation Counselor Trainee. Senior Rehabilitation Counselors require: (1) a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling or counseling—related field; and (2) two years of full—time or equivalent part—time paid professional experience in vocational rehabilitation counseling. Certified Rehabilitation Counselors require: (1) a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling or counseling—related field; (2) current national certification as a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor or Certified Vocational Evaluator or current West Virginia licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor; and (3) at least three years of full—time or equivalent part—time paid professional experience as a rehabilitation counselor.

DRS has established the position of Rehabilitation Counselor Trainee. An employee in this position is under direct supervision and performs work at the entry level in a probationary, training capacity which is intended to qualify the employee for specific duties for this position. The employee may become eligible for the position of Rehabilitation Counselor after two years of full—time or equivalent part—time paid experience in the position of Rehabilitation Counselor Trainee. Minimum qualifications for the Rehabilitation Counselor Trainee position are a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university in counseling and guidance, social work, nursing, special education, or related behavioral science or human service field; or a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university with three years of full—time or equivalent part—time experience in the position of Rehabilitation Services Associate.

DRS strives to recruit graduates of accredited master's degree programs in rehabilitation like the one at WVU, but it does not require the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) credential as the minimum qualification for a new counselor. Graduates of accredited master's degree programs in rehabilitation counseling are eligible for certification by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC), which sets the national standards for quality rehabilitation counseling services in the U.S. DRS encourages the achievement of CRC by existing counselors and gives special preference to applicants with the CRC credential and qualified applicants with disabilities and from minority backgrounds.

The DRS standard is specific to rehabilitation counselors only and is consistent with registration requirements of WVDOP—the DRS state hiring authority. WVDOP administers and scores unassembled examinations to potential rehabilitation counselor candidates.

To ensure that counselors and other personnel remain up—to—date with evolving labor force needs and the needs of individuals with disabilities, DRS provides ongoing training opportunities for its field staff in group and individual settings. This occurs through educational activities such as the State training conference, periodic district—level training sessions, continuing education credit opportunities (Certified Rehabilitation Counselor), and training sessions by DRS Quality Assurance Specialists and DRS Employment Specialists. These activities allow DRS counselors and field staff to enhance their knowledge of labor force needs and ultimately better serve individuals with disabilities.

Individuals not meeting the above personnel standards for rehabilitation professionals are ineligible to interview for vacant rehabilitation counseling positions. Classification specifications for each position utilized by DRS are available through the WVDOP website: http://www.personnel.wv.gov/job_seekers/Pages/default.aspx.

When employing new rehabilitation counselors, DRS makes no exceptions to its standard and provides the training necessary to meet requirements of the state standard only to existing personnel. These efforts are described later in this section.

Should qualified candidates be unavailable, the DRS Director, Assistant Directors, Human Resources Manager, and the Unit Manager or District Manager may re—assess staffing/consumer needs and re—assign qualified employees to assume duties of the vacant position. Qualified DRS retirees may also be re—hired on a contractual/intermittent basis until permanent qualified employees can be hired.

The career ladder for advancement within the rehabilitation counseling ranks requires additional experience and credentials as well as increased responsibilities.

DRS Requirements for Qualified Rehabilitation Paraprofessionals

In order to more efficiently meet the needs of its consumers, DRS upgraded several clerical positions to paraprofessional status. A Rehabilitation Services Associate must be a high school (or equivalent) graduate and have at least four years of full—time or equivalent part—time paid experience in paraprofessional or responsible clerical office support work, which requires familiarity with casework procedures and delivery of direct consumer services in a state vocational rehabilitation services agency. A bachelor's degree from an accredited four year college or university may be substituted for the required experience. The WVDOP specification for the Rehabilitation Services Associate position may be accessed at http://www.personnel.wv.gov/job_seekers/Pages/default.aspx.

A Rehabilitation Services Associate assists qualified rehabilitation counselors in several ways: providing information about the rehabilitation process and services available to interested applicants and members of the general public; obtaining information needed to complete the application process; initiating vocational diagnostic interviews; arranging medical, psychological, and vocational evaluations for DRS consumers; and assisting consumers in applying for student financial aid.

DRS employed 48 Rehabilitation Services Associates as of January 2018. These paraprofessionals are assigned to DRS offices throughout West Virginia. To ensure statewide coverage, at least one is located within each DRS district.

System of Staff Evaluation

DRS requires that each permanent employee receive an annual job performance evaluation. Work performance of probationary employees is reviewed upon completion of the third and sixth (and for certain job classifications, twelfth) months during a probationary period. This evaluation system enables DRS to monitor the job performance of all staff members and identify areas of weakness and skill deficiencies that need training or remediation, as well as areas of strong performance. The evaluation also provides a systematic method of determining training needs for all staff members.

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, TO ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL HAVE A 21ST CENTURY UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLVING LABOR FORCE AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

To ensure a high standard of competency and credentials for its qualified rehabilitation professionals, DRS has established job classifications. The lowest standard for Rehabilitation Counselors requires a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling, counseling and guidance, social work, or closely related behavioral science field; or two years of experience as a Rehabilitation Counselor Trainee. Senior Rehabilitation Counselors require: (1) a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling or counseling—related field; and (2) two years of full—time or equivalent part—time paid professional experience in vocational rehabilitation counseling. Certified Rehabilitation Counselors require: (1) a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling or counseling—related field; (2) current national certification as a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor or Certified Vocational Evaluator or current West Virginia licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor; and (3) at least three years of full—time or equivalent part—time paid professional experience as a rehabilitation counselor.

DRS has established the position of Rehabilitation Counselor Trainee. An employee in this position is under direct supervision and performs work at the entry level in a probationary, training capacity which is intended to qualify the employee for specific duties for this position. The employee may become eligible for the position of Rehabilitation Counselor after two years of full—time or equivalent part—time paid experience in the position of Rehabilitation Counselor Trainee. Minimum qualifications for the Rehabilitation Counselor Trainee position are a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university in counseling and guidance, social work, nursing, special education, or related behavioral science or human service field; or a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university with three years of full—time or equivalent part—time experience in the position of Rehabilitation Services Associate.

DRS strives to recruit graduates of accredited master's degree programs in rehabilitation like the one at WVU, but it does not require the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) credential as the minimum qualification for a new counselor. Graduates of accredited master's degree programs in rehabilitation counseling are eligible for certification by the

Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC), which sets the national standards for quality rehabilitation counseling services in the U.S. DRS encourages the achievement of CRC by existing counselors and gives special preference to applicants with the CRC credential and qualified applicants with disabilities and from minority backgrounds.

The DRS standard is specific to rehabilitation counselors only and is consistent with registration requirements of WVDOP—the DRS state hiring authority. WVDOP administers and scores unassembled examinations to potential rehabilitation counselor candidates.

To ensure that counselors and other personnel remain up—to—date with evolving labor force needs and the needs of individuals with disabilities, DRS provides ongoing training opportunities for its field staff in group and individual settings. This occurs through educational activities such as the State training conference, periodic district—level training sessions, continuing education credit opportunities (Certified Rehabilitation Counselor), and training sessions by DRS Quality Assurance Specialists and DRS Employment Specialists. These activities allow DRS counselors and field staff to enhance their knowledge of labor force needs and ultimately better serve individuals with disabilities.

Individuals not meeting the above personnel standards for rehabilitation professionals are ineligible to interview for vacant rehabilitation counseling positions. Classification specifications for each position utilized by DRS are available through the WVDOP website: http://www.personnel.wv.gov/job_seekers/Pages/default.aspx.

When employing new rehabilitation counselors, DRS makes no exceptions to its standard and provides the training necessary to meet requirements of the state standard only to existing personnel. These efforts are described later in this section.

Should qualified candidates be unavailable, the DRS Director, Assistant Directors, Human Resources Manager, and the Unit Manager or District Manager may re—assess staffing/consumer needs and re—assign qualified employees to assume duties of the vacant position. Qualified DRS retirees may also be re—hired on a contractual/intermittent basis until permanent qualified employees can be hired.

The career ladder for advancement within the rehabilitation counseling ranks requires additional experience and credentials as well as increased responsibilities.

DRS Requirements for Qualified Rehabilitation Paraprofessionals

In order to more efficiently meet the needs of its consumers, DRS upgraded several clerical positions to paraprofessional status. A Rehabilitation Services Associate must be a high school (or equivalent) graduate and have at least four years of full—time or equivalent part—time paid experience in paraprofessional or responsible clerical office support work, which requires familiarity with casework procedures and delivery of direct consumer services in a state vocational rehabilitation services agency. A bachelor's degree from an accredited four year college or university may be substituted for the required experience. The WVDOP specification for the Rehabilitation Services Associate position may be accessed at http://www.personnel.wv.gov/job_seekers/Pages/default.aspx.

A Rehabilitation Services Associate assists qualified rehabilitation counselors in several ways: providing information about the rehabilitation process and services available to

interested applicants and members of the general public; obtaining information needed to complete the application process; initiating vocational diagnostic interviews; arranging medical, psychological, and vocational evaluations for DRS consumers; and assisting consumers in applying for student financial aid.

DRS employed 48 Rehabilitation Services Associates as of January 2018. These paraprofessionals are assigned to DRS offices throughout West Virginia. To ensure statewide coverage, at least one is located within each DRS district.

System of Staff Evaluation

DRS requires that each permanent employee receive an annual job performance evaluation. Work performance of probationary employees is reviewed upon completion of the third and sixth (and for certain job classifications, twelfth) months during a probationary period. This evaluation system enables DRS to monitor the job performance of all staff members and identify areas of weakness and skill deficiencies that need training or remediation, as well as areas of strong performance. The evaluation also provides a systematic method of determining training needs for all staff members.

4. STAFF DEVELOPMENT.

Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

A. SYSTEM OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT

a system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated State unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology, including training implemented in coordination with entities carrying out State programs under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998; and

Staff Development and Training Activities The selection of DRS participants for training activities is based upon documented organizational, unit, or individual training needs. Training programs will be provided for all classes and types of staff members on an internally-assessed priority basis. Particular emphasis is placed on programs addressing assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, policy and procedure, ethics, and rehabilitation technology. DRS does not discriminate in the selection of trainees for these programs based on age, sex, religion, disability, and national or ethnic origin.

DRS is committed to utilizing only institutions or training facilities that are accessible programmatically and architecturally free of other barriers with respect to trainees with disabilities. In addition, DRS will ensure that program materials are accessible in the most appropriate format for all participants with disabilities (assistive communication devices, interpreters, large print, audio tapes, Braille material, etc.). The technology to ensure these accommodations is available through various support units within DRS. Moreover, to promote equal access for individuals with disabilities in facilities of higher education, DRS houses a rehabilitation counselor on campus at Marshall University.

The majority of the training needs are met through local training and the agency’s annual State Training Conference. DRS also maintains strong cooperative and collaborative

relationships with institutions of higher education, particularly those receiving funds from the Rehabilitation Services Administration to train rehabilitation professionals. This is to ensure that personnel needed within DRS are appropriately and adequately prepared for employment.

Throughout FY 2017, DRS continued to utilize a group training approach for newly hired counselors and RSAs. The training is led by QA Unit staff members and consists of three two—day sessions, provided on a quarterly basis for new hires. The first session is titled "New Counselor/RSA Training" and provides introductory materials as well as training on case management and agency policies and procedures. The second and third sessions cover Decision Tree Training, detailing appropriate case work practices from referral to closure. In addition to the training, a CRP services overview is provided in a one-on-one format. While staff members are on location in Nitro, WV, they receive a Rehabilitation Services Program overview and a tour of the DRS Rehabilitation Technology Unit.

This approach ensures that all rehabilitation counselors and paraprofessionals receive standardized and accurate training. QA Unit staff members conduct regular case record reviews to ensure compliance with federal, state, and agency casework standards. Any deficiencies identified from the reviews are addressed through appropriate training.

All Staff Development Unit—sponsored programs provide continuing education credits that assist DRS CRCs, Licensed Professional Counselors, and members of other certified groups to maintain or obtain their certification. DRS has received approval authority from the CRCC to provide CRC continuing education credits for training programs meeting CRCC criteria.

In FY 2017, 23 DRS managers and supervisors attended management training events to meet the requirements for the West Virginia Division of Personnel Policy 18, which mandates specialized training for all supervisors and managers. New managers and supervisors are required to take eight classes in the first two years. All appropriate DRS staff members attended these required courses.

In order to meet the ongoing leadership needs of the agency, selected DRS staff members will attend training series at the National Rehabilitation Leadership Institute offered through San Diego State University. The training consists of four one—week sessions over the course of 14 to 16 months. The mission of the institute is, "To enrich the leadership, knowledge, skills, and perceptions of rehabilitation leaders through a powerful organizational learning experience that reinforces leaning, creativity, strategic thinking, and passion for the public program of vocational rehabilitation." Further information can be found at the institute's website, http://interwork.sdsu.edu/main/nrli/.

In May 2017, 226 rehabilitation staff members participated in the agency's State Training Conference. To address the specific needs of certain positions, concurrent pre—conference sessions were held for field managers, counselors for the blind, counselors for the deaf, and employment specialists. The full conference provided an overview of the latest Statewide Quality Assurance Review results, a review of services provided by the DRS Rehabilitation Programs Unit, and presentations on various VR—related topics. The topics covered included ethics, substance abuse treatment, career counseling, and behavioral health connections. This conference helps ensure that all staff members are connected to the overall mission and vision of the agency.

In 2017, 11 different training sessions were approved for CRC credits, totaling 58.75 clock hours.

DRS staff confront the challenge of refining and improving their skills and knowledge while dealing with the current explosion of knowledge, technology, and treatment modalities. The agency will continue to make intensive efforts to provide ongoing information that will ensure the skills of DRS employees are responsive to the needs of the people they serve.

With respect to training implemented in coordination with entities carrying out State programs under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, DRS maintains a working relationship and a formal memorandum of understanding with the West Virginia Assistive Technology System (WVATS). In West Virginia, the WVATS, under the Center for Excellence in Disabilities at West Virginia University, is the administrator of the assistive technology grant. DRS is also represented on the West Virginia Assistive Technology Board and works with WVATS in a number of ways, including:

—Maintain an updated resource database for Assistive Technology services in West Virginia;

—Participate in special projects (i.e., finding and advocating for accessible recreational resources);

—Provide information resources, awareness and training for consumers and professionals in assistive technology services and devices;

—Provide information to WVATS partners regarding DRS and other disability related subjects; and

—Participate as a member on an interagency team, Partnerships in Assistive TecHnologies (PATHS), with a focus of interagency collaboration for the provision of Assistive Technology training and conferences.

B. ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE

procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.

Staff Development and Training Activities The selection of DRS participants for training activities is based upon documented organizational, unit, or individual training needs. Training programs will be provided for all classes and types of staff members on an internally—assessed priority basis. Particular emphasis is placed on programs addressing assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, policy and procedure, ethics, and rehabilitation technology. DRS does not discriminate in the selection of trainees for these programs based on age, sex, religion, disability, and national or ethnic origin.

DRS is committed to utilizing only institutions or training facilities that are accessible programmatically and architecturally free of other barriers with respect to trainees with disabilities. In addition, DRS will ensure that program materials are accessible in the most appropriate format for all participants with disabilities (assistive communication devices, interpreters, large print, audio tapes, Braille material, etc.). The technology to ensure these accommodations is available through various support units within DRS. Moreover, to

promote equal access for individuals with disabilities in facilities of higher education, DRS houses a rehabilitation counselor on campus at Marshall University.

The majority of the training needs are met through local training and the agency's State Training Conference. DRS also maintains strong cooperative and collaborative relationships with institutions of higher education, particularly those receiving funds from the Rehabilitation Services Administration to train rehabilitation professionals. This is to ensure that personnel needed within DRS are appropriately and adequately prepared for employment.

Throughout FY 2017, DRS continued to utilize a group training approach for newly hired counselors and RSAs. The training is led by QA Unit staff members and consists of three two—day sessions, provided on a quarterly basis for new hires. The first session is titled "New Counselor/RSA Training" and provides introductory materials as well as training on case management and agency policies and procedures. The second and third sessions cover Decision Tree Training, detailing appropriate case work practices from referral to closure. In addition to the training, a CRP services overview is provided in a one-on-one format. While staff members are on location in Nitro, WV, they receive a Rehabilitation Services Program overview and a tour of the DRS Rehabilitation Technology Unit.

This approach ensures that all rehabilitation counselors and paraprofessionals receive standardized and accurate training. QA Unit staff members conduct regular case record reviews to ensure compliance with federal, state, and agency casework standards. Any deficiencies identified from the reviews are addressed through appropriate training.

All Staff Development Unit—sponsored programs provide continuing education credits that assist DRS CRCs, Licensed Professional Counselors, and members of other certified groups to maintain or obtain their certification. DRS has received approval authority from the CRCC to provide CRC continuing education credits for training programs meeting CRCC criteria.

In FY 2017, 23 DRS managers and supervisors attended management training events to meet the requirements for the West Virginia Division of Personnel Policy 18, which mandates specialized training for all supervisors and managers. New managers and supervisors are required to take eight classes in the first two years. All appropriate DRS staff members attended these required courses.

In order to meet the ongoing leadership needs of the agency, selected DRS staff members will attend training series at the National Rehabilitation Leadership Institute offered through San Diego State University. The training consists of four one—week sessions over the course of 14 to 16 months. The mission of the institute is, "To enrich the leadership, knowledge, skills, and perceptions of rehabilitation leaders through a powerful organizational learning experience that reinforces leaning, creativity, strategic thinking, and passion for the public program of vocational rehabilitation." Further information can be found at the institute's website, http://interwork.sdsu.edu/main/nrli/.

In May 2017, 226 rehabilitation staff members participated in the agency's State Training Conference. To address the specific needs of certain positions, concurrent pre—conference sessions were held for field managers, counselors for the blind, counselors for the deaf, and employment specialists. The full conference provided an overview of the latest Statewide Quality Assurance Review results, a review of services provided by the DRS Rehabilitation Programs Unit, and presentations on various VR—related topics. The topics covered

included ethics, substance abuse treatment, career counseling, and behavioral health connections. This conference helps ensure that all staff members are connected to the overall mission and vision of the agency.

In 2017, 11 different training sessions were approved for CRC credits, totaling 58.75 clock hours.

DRS staff confront the challenge of refining and improving their skills and knowledge while dealing with the current explosion of knowledge, technology, and treatment modalities. The agency will continue to make intensive efforts to provide ongoing information that will ensure the skills of DRS employees are responsive to the needs of the people they serve.

With respect to training implemented in coordination with entities carrying out State programs under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, DRS maintains a working relationship and a formal memorandum of understanding with the West Virginia Assistive Technology System (WVATS). In West Virginia, the WVATS, under the Center for Excellence in Disabilities at West Virginia University, is the administrator of the assistive technology grant. DRS is also represented on the West Virginia Assistive Technology Board and works with WVATS in a number of ways, including:

—Maintain an updated resource database for Assistive Technology services in West Virginia;

—Participate in special projects (i.e., finding and advocating for accessible recreational resources);

—Provide information resources, awareness and training for consumers and professionals in assistive technology services and devices;

—Provide information to WVATS partners regarding DRS and other disability related subjects; and

—Participate as a member on an interagency team, Partnerships in Assistive TecHnologies (PATHS), with a focus of interagency collaboration for the provision of Assistive Technology training and conferences.

5. PERSONNEL TO ADDRESS INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS

Describe how the designated State unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.

West Virginia does not have large populations of ethnic groups who speak a language other than English. Consequently, DRS has not experienced difficulties making its programs accessible and available statewide. The agency's main language accessibility needs concern people who are deaf, and each DRS district is staffed with a specialist counselor providing full access to programs and services for people who have deafness or hearing impairments.

DRS continues to work with the West Virginia Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing to train and certify interpreters in order to strengthen the network of providers for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf—blind. Numerous workshops and seminars are

conducted to increase the number of interpreters, improve their communication skills, and provide better statewide coverage. These coordinated efforts will continue as needed.

DRS also ensures that its employees and consumers with blindness or visual impairments receive information and materials in their preferred mode of communication through various accommodations. Upon request, various DRS support units provide such services as assistive communication devices, large print and/or Braille materials, audiotapes, and electronic (computer) copies.

6. COORDINATION OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated State unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

DRS will continue to coordinate its system of personnel development with the West Virginia Department of Education's (WVDOE) personnel development under IDEA/No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. This coordination will include collaborative efforts to share information, liaison activities, and cooperative training endeavors for DRS school counselors, teachers, and WVDOE employees, particularly those assigned to the Office of Special Education.

The DRS state level liaison attends WVDOE training functions related to special education and disseminates information about education policy or law changes to DRS school counselors as needed. DRS school counselors also receive information during their annual meeting. DRS school counselors also participate in cross—training efforts that occur on the local level through Regional Education Services Agencies. In some areas of the state, DRS school counselors and managers participate in local interagency planning groups where training issues are discussed and planned.

J. STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.11(a)).

1. PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE REHABILITATION NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING WITHIN THE STATE, PARTICULARLY THE VR SERVICES NEEDS OF THOSE:

A. WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

To comply with provisions of Title I, Section 101, State Plans, of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 and Section 721, State Plans, of the Rehabilitation Act as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) and the West Virginia State Rehabilitation Council (WVSRC) conducted a three-year comprehensive statewide assessment of the vocational rehabilitation (VR) services needs of individuals with disabilities in West Virginia. The WVSRC-DRS Joint Committee on Needs Assessment was established in Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 to oversee the needs assessment activity. Joint committee members including those

selected by WVSRC and DRS personnel were fully committed to the needs assessment study and want to ensure successful completion of its objectives.

As part of the WVSRC-DRS Joint Committee on Needs Assessment, the State Plan and Program Evaluation (SPPE) Unit conducted the needs assessment study for the agency in conjunction with WVSRC, which was fully involved from inception to the reporting of the results.

Four major objectives of the comprehensive statewide needs assessment study included examination of the rehabilitation needs of: (1) individuals with significant and most significant disabilities, including their needs for supported employment services; (2) individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program; (3) individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce development system; and (4) youth with disabilities, and students with disabilities, including their need for pre-employment transition services or other transition services. The role of community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) as service providers was reviewed to address the need to establish, develop, or improve CRPs in West Virginia.

To maintain effective and comprehensive service delivery programs for West Virginians with disabilities, the needs assessment identified various service needs of individuals with significant and most significant disabilities. Some needed services such as transportation, housing, and personal assistance are beyond the scope of the state VR program and thus, require coordination and cooperation among a diverse range of public and private agencies and other organizations serving West Virginians with disabilities. The needs assessment recognized the service providers' perceptions of the needs of consumers with disabilities, including rehabilitation services associates, counselors, supervisors and managers of DRS, CRPs, Consumer Affairs Conference attendees, and Workforce Development Board members throughout West Virginia.

NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

One of the major objectives of the comprehensive statewide needs assessment included an examination of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their needs for supported employment services. In multiple instances, the assessment directed inquiry into the provision of services by CRPs, which are the primary service providers to individuals with the most significant disabilities. These inquiries included a survey to DRS field staff on the needs of persons with the most significant disabilities that included items regarding gaps in 1) employment services (including supported employment) and 2) CRP services, as well as a separate survey to DRS field staff specifically focused on the provision of CRP services.

Based on the results of the survey of DRS field staff members on the needs of persons with the most significant disabilities, some of the most commonly identified gaps in CRP services included direct placement (52.17% of respondents), Life Skills Training (40.37%), and Community Based Assessment (37.89%). Extended supported employment services (30.43% of respondents) and supported employment (29.81%) were two of the most commonly identified employment service gaps. This finding was reaffirmed by the separate survey of DRS field staff members which focused solely on the provision of CRP services,

wherein supported employment was indicated as one of the most common CRP service gaps (21.6% of respondents). Because of these results, DRS continues to make the enhancement of relationships with CRPs a focus for the coming years to improve and increase services for persons with most significant disabilities [i.e., DRS Goal 5 - Continue to build collaborative relationships with community providers (including CRPs, Independent Living, and other community providers) to enhance the availability of services to DRS consumers].

CRPs are essential to the service provision of individuals with significant disabilities, especially those with the most significant disabilities. DRS is committed to moving forward in support of CRPs as they continue to meet their commitment to providing the best possible services to individuals with the most significant disabilities statewide. DRS' commitment is demonstrated historically by large numbers of acknowledged CRP vendors and significant financial resources allocated for supported employment and other services. DRS anticipates this to continue in the coming years.

THE STATEWIDE NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF CONSUMERS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES

As part of the intake process for VR services, a question regarding service needs was posed to potential DRS consumers at the time of application. The reported service needs were then recorded in the DRS electronic case management system. In 2014, SPPE staff members conducted a qualitative analysis of the reported service needs of 2,863 persons with disabilities of various age and disability groups statewide. Included in these active cases with expressed VR service needs across the state were 235 persons with significant disabilities from minority backgrounds, 70 individuals aged 65 or older, and 1,551 transitioning youth. The findings of this analysis are presented below.

Results of the Analysis of the Reported Service Needs of Persons with Significant Disabilities

In 2014, SPPE staff members, under guidance of the WVSRC—DRS Joint Committee on Needs Assessment, conducted a qualitative analysis of the reported service needs of 2,863 persons with significant disabilities of various age and disability groups statewide. These individuals represent a good sample of consumers with significant disabilities that will continue to seek assistance from agencies in coming years, ceteris paribus. All 55 counties in West Virginia were represented in the sample. The demographic profile of these individuals with significant disabilities consists of the following characteristics:

Gender: 54.5% male, 45.5% female;

Race: 91.3% White, 8.2% Other (African American/Hispanic/American Indian/Native Hawaiian/Asian), 0.5% Unknown;

Age: 45.0% under 20 years old, 21.9% 20—34 years, 10.5% 35—44 years, 20.2% 45—64 years, 2.4% 65 years or older;

Primary Impairment: 13.0% Sensory/Communicative Impairments, 23.2% Physical Impairments, 63.7% Mental Impairments, 0.1% Unknown.

Comments from the 2,863 DRS case management records were analyzed and grouped into one or more of five general service themes: education, training, health, employment, and support. More specific service themes, within each general theme, were then determined for each comment.

As part of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, DRS identified the following as the most frequently reported service needs in each of the categories of Education, Training, Health, Employment, and Support, based on the qualitative analysis of the reported service needs of 2,863 consumers with significant disabilities. The approximate percentage of consumers with significant disabilities reporting each service need is also listed below.

EDUCATION (21.7%): College (14.8%); Non—Specific Education (4.9%); Testing for Accommodations/LD (1.4%); GED (1.1%). TRAINING (30.1%): Vocational Training (26.0%); Driving (2.3%). HEALTH (17.1%): Hearing (9.8%); Treatments (3.8%); Vision (1.6%); Ailment (1.6%); Surgeries (1.3%). EMPLOYMENT (72.5%): Finding a Job (29.5%); Placement (19.8%); Career Counseling (8.7%); Career (7.5%); Job Retention (6.1%); Transition from High School (6.0%). SUPPORT (16.4%): Financial Aid for College (6.5%); General Financial (2.9%); Accommodations (2.2%); Other (1.2%); Assistive Technology (1.1%); Miscellaneous Support (1.0%) Financial Aid for School (1.0%); Transportation (0.9%).

Of the statewide total of 2,863 persons with significant disabilities at the time of their DRS application, 1,551 persons were determined to be of transition status (age 24 and under). The demographic profile of this subset of transition status individuals with significant disabilities consists of the following characteristics:

Gender: 56.1% male, 43.9% female;

Race: 92.3% White, 7.2% Other (African American/Hispanic/American Indian/Native Hawaiian/Asian), 0.5% Unknown;

Age: 82.9% under 20 years old, 17.1% 20—34 years;

Primary Impairment: 5.2% Sensory/Communicative Impairments, 16.0% Physical Impairments, 78.8% Mental Impairments, 0.1% Unknown.

As part of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, DRS identified the following as the most frequently reported service needs in each of the categories of Education, Training, Health, Employment, and Support, based on the qualitative analysis of the reported service needs of 1,551 transitioning youth with significant disabilities. The approximate percentage of transitioning youth with significant disabilities reporting each service need is also listed below.

EDUCATION (30.6%): College (22.8%); Non—Specific Education (5.5%); Testing for Accommodations/LD (1.6%). TRAINING (34.2%): Vocational Training (30.7%); Driving (3.0%); HEALTH (4.7%): Treatments (2.3%); Hearing (1.5%); Ailment (0.8%). EMPLOYMENT (71.2%): Finding a Job (27.4%); Placement (19.3%); Career Counseling (13.9%); Transition from High School (11.1%); Career (10.8%). SUPPORT (20.0%): Financial Aid for College (10.3%); General Financial (3.6%); Accommodations (1.9%); Financial Aid for School (1.4%); Miscellaneous Support (1.1%).

Of the statewide total of 2,863 persons with significant disabilities at the time of their DRS application, 235 persons were determined to be of minority status. The demographic profile of this subset of minority status individuals with significant disabilities consists of the following characteristics:

Gender: 53.85% male, 46.15% female;

Race: 5.5% American Indian, 3.8% Asian, 80.4% African American, 9.4% Hispanic, and 0.9% Native Hawaiian;

Age: 37.0% under 20 years old, 23.4% 20—34 years, 14.0% 35—44 years, 23.8% 45—64 years, 1.7% 65 years or older;

Primary Impairment: 11.9% Sensory/Communicative Impairments, 22.6% Physical Impairments, 65.5% Mental Impairments, 0.0% Unknown.

As part of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, DRS identified the following as the most frequently reported service needs in each of the categories of Education, Training, Health, Employment, and Support, based on the qualitative analysis of the reported service needs of 235 consumers with significant disabilities from minority backgrounds. The approximate percentage of consumers with significant disabilities from minority backgrounds reporting each service need is also listed below.

EDUCATION (18.3%): College (11.9%); Non—Specific Education (6.4%). TRAINING (35.3%): Vocational Training (31.5%); Driving (3.8%). HEALTH (16.2%): Hearing (6.0%); Treatments (4.3%); Vision (3.8%); Ailment (3.0%). EMPLOYMENT (75.3%): Placement (32.3%); Finding a Job (28.5%); Career Counseling (7.7%); Career (7.2%); Transition from High School (3.8%). SUPPORT (14.9%): Financial Aid for College (4.3%); Accommodations (4.3%).

Of the statewide total of 2,863 persons with significant disabilities at the time of their DRS application, 70 persons were determined to be aged 65 years or older. The demographic profile of this subset of individuals with significant disabilities aged 65 years or older consists of the following characteristics:

Gender: 60.0% male, 40.0% female;

Race: 94.3% White, 5.7% Other (African American/Hispanic/American Indian/Native Hawaiian/Asian), 0.0% Unknown;

Age: 100% 65 years or older;

Primary Impairment: 82.9% Sensory/Communicative Impairments, 14.6% Physical Impairments, 0.0% Mental Impairments, 2.4% Unknown.

As part of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, DRS identified the following as the most frequently reported service needs in each of the categories of Education, Training, Health, Employment, and Support, based on the qualitative analysis of the reported service needs of 70 consumers with significant disabilities aged 65 years or older. The approximate percentage of consumers with significant disabilities aged 65 years or older reporting each service need is also listed below.

EDUCATION (0.0%). TRAINING (8.6%): Other Training (4.3%). HEALTH (78.6%): Hearing (75.7%). EMPLOYMENT (54.3%): Job Retention (38.6%); Finding a Job (10.0%). SUPPORT (8.6%): Assistive Technology (4.3%).

COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Results of the Survey of Consumer Affairs Conference (CAC) Attendees on the Needs of Persons with Significant Disabilities

In the fall of 2014, DRS solicited input on the service needs of persons with significant disabilities by requesting input from CAC attendees.

DRS issued surveys in the conference registration packets provided to all attendees as part of the comprehensive statewide needs assessment for individuals with significant disabilities. Based on analysis of the responses of 35 CAC attendees from across the state, the most frequently reported service needs for persons with significant disabilities included the following: transportation (27, 30.0% of the 90 total needs reported), employment needs (11, 12.2%), housing (9, 10.0%), health care needs (8, 8.9%), and accessibility (8, 8.9%).

The survey also asked respondents to indicate service gaps for individuals with disabilities. The most commonly reported statewide service gaps were transportation (13, 20.0% of the 65 total gaps reported), housing (8, 12.3%), employment (6, 9.2%), emergency services (5, 7.7%), and health care (5, 7.7%).

Results of the Survey of DRS Field Staff on the Needs of Persons with Significant Disabilities

DRS is mandated under the federal Rehabilitation Act to periodically conduct a needs assessment of persons with significant disabilities. As part of this process and in conjunction with WVSRC, DRS issued a survey in May 2014 to its field staff, including rehabilitation services associates, counselors, supervisors, and managers. The comprehensive survey asked them to offer their perceptions of the service needs and service gaps of persons with significant disabilities being served, including students with disabilities' need for pre—employment transition services. The survey also obtained the specific areas where service needs and gaps were perceived to exist.

The survey instrument and methodology were based on previous needs assessment studies, as they generated valid and reliable information on the service needs of persons with significant disabilities in West Virginia. After pre—testing the questionnaire with the selected field counselors, supervisors, and managers along with discussions with the WVSRC Executive Director, the field staff survey was completed by 161 DRS rehabilitation services associates/counselors/supervisors/managers during the annual state conference.

Current Job Title

Of the 159 respondents, 103 were counselors — 64 (40.25%) Rehabilitation Counselors, 17 (10.69%) Senior Rehabilitation Counselors, and 22 (13.84%) Certified Rehabilitation Counselors. There were 34 (21.38%) Rehabilitation Services Associates (RSAs), 16 (10.06%) Field Office Managers/Supervisors, and 6 (3.77%) District Managers.

The survey asked respondents to rate the level of need for 69 VR—related services on a five—point Likert scale ranging from "1—least needed/used" to "5—most highly needed/used;" not applicable (N/A) was also an option for each service. Services that were rated by 50% or more respondents as having a high level of need (a rating of 4 or 5) are found below for each service category.

Educational Services

Vocational Education (124, 77.02%), 2—year or 4—year College (113, 70.18%), High School (107, 66.46%), and Special Education (103, 63.98%).

Training Services

Job Search Training/Assistance (136, 84.47%), Career Planning (106, 65.84%), Business Vocational (106, 65.84%), and On—the—job Training/Job Trial (90, 55.90%).

Health Services

Counseling and Guidance (139, 86.34%), Psychological/Psychiatric Treatment (124, 77.02%), Physician's Services (106, 65.83%), and Substance Abuse Treatment (92, 57.14%).

Employment Services

Job Placement (140, 86.95%), Availability of Psychological Evaluation (126, 78.26%), Vocational Evaluation (118, 73.30%), Job Development (109, 67.70%), and Community Based Assessment (101, 62.74%).

Support Services

Transportation (129, 80.13%) and Financial Assistance (106, 65.84).

CRP Services

Direct Placement (99, 61.49%), Work Adjustment Training (91, 56.52%), Community Based Assessment (88, 54.66%), and Job Coaching—Other than Supported Employment (SE; 81, 50.31%).

Service Gaps

Respondents that indicated a perceived service gap in either the multiple—choice (Yes, No, or N/A) or open—ended response ("Which of the above services are most in need of an increase in availability?") sections were totaled for each service. The number and percentage of respondents who reported a gap for the service are in parentheses followed by the number of responses by DRS office location.

Educational Services

The five most commonly reported gaps for educational services were:

Tutoring (97, 60.25%) —— Beckley—6, Charleston—9, Clarksburg—5, Elkins—2, Huntington—7, Keyser—2, Lewisburg—4, Logan—7, Marshall—2, Martinsburg—2, Moorefield—2, Morgantown—3, Mullens—2, Oak Hill—3, Parkersburg—3, Point Pleasant—2, Princeton—5, Ripley—1, Romney—2, Sistersville—1, Spencer—1, Summersville—5, Teays Valley—5, Weirton—4, Welch—1, Weston—4, and Wheeling—5. (Unknown—2)

Vocational Education (86, 53.42%) —— Beckley—4, Charleston—6, Clarksburg—4, Elkins—3, Fairmont—1, Huntington—2, Keyser—3, Lewisburg—5, Logan—3, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—2, Moorefield—4, Morgantown—6, Mullens—2, Oak Hill—2, Parkersburg—5, Point Pleasant—3, Princeton—3, Romney—1, Sistersville—1, Spencer—1, Summersville—3, Teays Valley—3, Weirton—5, Welch—1, Weston—3, and Wheeling—5. (Unknown—4)

Adult Basic Education (65, 40.37%) —— Beckley—3, Charleston—9, Clarksburg—4, Elkins—1, Fairmont—1, Huntington—4, Lewisburg—2, Logan—7, Marshall—2, Martinsburg—2, Morgantown—3, Mullens—2, Oak Hill—2, Parkersburg—1, Princeton—1, Romney—1, Sistersville—2, Summersville—4, Teays Valley—2, Weirton—3, Welch—1, Weston—2, and Wheeling—3. (Unknown—3)

Literacy Instruction (67, 41.61%) —— Beckley—4, Charleston—6, Clarksburg—6, Huntington—5, Lewisburg—3, Logan—5, Marshall—2, Martinsburg—2, Moorefield—1, Morgantown—4, Oak Hill—3, Parkersburg—2, Point Pleasant—1, Princeton—6, Romney—1, Sistersville—2, Summersville—2, Teays Valley—3, Weirton—1, Weston—3, and Wheeling—3. (Unknown—2)

High School (31, 19.25%) —— Beckley—2, Charleston—3, Clarksburg—2, Fairmont—1, Keyser—4, Logan—3, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—1, Morgantown—3, Mullens—1, Point Pleasant—1, Princeton—2, Summersville—2, Teays Valley—2, Weston—1, and Wheeling—1. (Unknown—1)

Training Services

The five most commonly reported gaps for training services were:

Job Search Training/Assistance (82, 50.93%) —— Beckley—3, Charleston—10, Clarksburg—7, Elkins—2, Fairmont—1, Huntington—2, Keyser—1, Lewisburg—4, Logan—5, Marshall—2, Martinsburg—3, Moorefield—2, Morgantown—5, Mullens—1, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—3, Point Pleasant—2, Princeton—3, Romney—1, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—3, Teays Valley—3, Weirton—2, Weston—5, and Wheeling—7. (Unknown—1)

On—the—job Training/Job Trial (80, 49.69%) —— Beckley—3, Charleston—8, Clarksburg—4, Elkins—4, Huntington—3, Keyser—2, Lewisburg—3, Logan—5, Marshall—2, Martinsburg—5, Moorefield—1, Morgantown—5, Mullens—1, Oak Hill—2, Parkersburg—4, Point Pleasant—3, Princeton—3, Romney—1, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—3, Teays Valley—3, Weirton—3, Welch—1, Weston—2, and Wheeling—6.

Career Planning Training (67, 41.61%) —— Beckley—5, Charleston—7, Clarksburg—3, Elkins—2, Fairmont—2, Huntington—5, Keyser—2, Lewisburg—1, Logan—5, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—2, Moorefield—1, Morgantown—3, Mullens—1, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—3, Point Pleasant—1, Princeton—4, Romney—1, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—3, Teays Valley—2, Weirton—1, Weston—3, and Wheeling—3. (Unknown—2)

Drive Training/Licensing (58, 36.02%) —— Beckley—2, Charleston—2, Clarksburg—4, Elkins—1, Fairmont—1, Huntington—1, Keyser—1, Lewisburg—4, Logan—4, Marshall—2, Martinsburg—3, Mullens—1, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—4, Point Pleasant—2, Princeton—4, Ripley—1, Romney—1, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—4, Teays Valley—1, Weirton—5, Weston—2, and Wheeling—2. (Unknown—2)

Job Club Skills (55, 34.16%) —— Beckley—2, Charleston—4, Clarksburg—6, Elkins—3, Fairmont—2, Huntington—3, Keyser—1, Lewisburg—1, Logan—3, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—1, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—5, Point Pleasant—2, Sistersville—2, Summersville—3, Teays Valley—1, Weirton—5, Weston—2, and Wheeling—4. (Unknown—3)

Life Skills (61, 37.89%) —— Beckley—3, Charleston—4, Clarksburg—3, Elkins—4, Fairmont—1, Huntington—2, Keyser—1, Lewisburg—3, Logan—5, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—4, Morgantown—1, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—1, Point Pleasant—2, Princeton—3, Ripley—1, Romney—1, Sistersville—2, Spencer—2, Summersville—3, Teays Valley—2, Weirton—2, Welch—1, Weston—3, and Wheeling—3. (Unknown—2)

Health Services

The five most commonly reported gaps for health services were:

Psychological/Psychiatric Treatment (101, 62.73%) —— Beckley—6, Charleston—10, Clarksburg—5, Elkins—3, Fairmont—2, Huntington—4, Keyser—4, Lewisburg—4, Logan—5, Marshall—2, Martinsburg—3, Morgantown—5, Mullens—1, Oak Hill—3, Parkersburg—3, Point Pleasant—1, Princeton—5, Ripley—1, Romney—1, Sistersville—2, Spencer—2, Summersville—3, Teays Valley—6, Weirton—5, Welch—1, Weston—4, and Wheeling—7. (Unknown—3)

Dental Care (75, 46.58%) —— Beckley—4, Charleston—9, Clarksburg—6, Elkins—4, Huntington—5, Keyser—3, Lewisburg—4, Logan—5, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—6, Morgantown—3, Mullens—1, Parkersburg—4, Point Pleasant—1, Princeton—2, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—2, Teays Valley—3, Weirton—1, Welch—1, Weston—1, and Wheeling—3. (Unknown—3)

Substance Abuse Treatment (77, 47.83%) —— Beckley—5, Charleston—6, Clarksburg—3, Elkins—3, Fairmont—1, Huntington—4, Keyser—4, Lewisburg—3, Logan—5, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—2, Moorefield—1, Morgantown—5, Mullens—3, Oak Hill—3, Parkersburg—1, Point Pleasant—1, Princeton—7, Romney—1, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—3, Teays Valley—2, Weirton—1, Welch—1, Weston—3, and Wheeling—4. (Unknown—1)

Occupational Therapy (47, 29.19%) —— Charleston—5, Clarksburg—2, Elkins—2, Huntington—3, Keyser—3, Lewisburg—4, Logan—3, Marshall—2, Martinsburg—1, Morgantown—3, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—2, Princeton—3, Romney—1, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—3, Teays Valley—1, Welch—1, Weston—1, and Wheeling—2. (Unknown—1)

Hearing/Audiological Services (39, 24.22%) —— Beckley—1, Charleston—2, Clarksburg—4, Elkins—1, Logan—5, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—2, Morgantown—3, Parkersburg—3, Point Pleasant—1, Princeton—3, Ripley—1, Sistersville—2, Spencer—2, Summersville—2, Teays Valley—1, Weston—3, and Wheeling—2.

Employment Services

The five most commonly reported gaps for employment services were:

Job Development (91, 56.52%) —— Beckley—4, Charleston—10, Clarksburg—9, Elkins—4, Huntington—3, Keyser—3, Lewisburg—4, Logan—5, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—3, Moorefield—2, Morgantown—5, Oak Hill—2, Parkersburg—4, Point Pleasant—3, Princeton—2, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—4, Teays Valley—5, Weirton—5, Welch—1, Weston—4, and Wheeling—4. (Unknown—3)

Job Placement (68, 42.24%) —— Beckley—3, Charleston—5, Clarksburg—5, Elkins—4, Huntington—1, Keyser—4, Lewisburg—4, Logan—4, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—3, Moorefield—1, Morgantown—5, Mullens—1, Parkersburg—3, Point Pleasant—2, Princeton—2, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—2, Teays Valley—2, Weirton—3, Welch—1, Weston—5, and Wheeling—2. (Unknown—2)

Job Coaching— Other than SE (61, 37.89%) —— Beckley—3, Charleston—6, Clarksburg—4, Elkins—3, Fairmont—1, Huntington—1, Keyser—1, Lewisburg—4, Logan—3, Marshall—1,

Martinsburg—3, Morgantown—4, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—2, Point Pleasant—1, Princeton—2, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—3, Teays Valley—2, Weirton—3, Welch—1, Weston—1, and Wheeling—5. (Unknown—3)

Extended Supported Employment Services (49, 30.43%) —— Beckley—3, Charleston—1, Clarksburg—2, Elkins—2, Huntington—4, Keyser—2, Lewisburg—2, Logan—3, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—4, Morgantown—3, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—5, Point Pleasant—1, Princeton—1, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—4, Weirton—3, Weston—1, and Wheeling—2. (Unknown—1)

Supported Employment Services (48, 29.81%) —— Beckley—2, Charleston—4, Clarksburg—2, Elkins—2, Keyser—2, Lewisburg—2, Logan—3, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—2, Morgantown—3, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—3, Point Pleasant—2, Princeton—4, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—2, Teays Valley—1, Weirton—3, Welch—1, Weston—2, and Wheeling—3.

Small Business Development (48, 29.81%) —— Beckley—2, Charleston—4, Clarksburg—2, Elkins—3, Huntington—1, Keyser—3, Lewisburg—1, Logan—3, Moorefield—1, Morgantown—2, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—3, Point Pleasant—3, Princeton—1, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—3, Teays Valley—2, Weirton—4, Welch—1, Weston—1, and Wheeling—3. (Unknown—1)

Trial Work Experience (48, 29.81%) —— Beckley—3, Charleston—2, Clarksburg—4, Elkins—4, Huntington—1, Lewisburg—3, Logan—3, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—3, Morgantown—5, Oak Hill—2, Point Pleasant—1, Princeton—3, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—3, Teays Valley—1, Weirton—3, Welch—1, Weston—1, and Wheeling—1.

Support Services

The five most commonly reported gaps for support services were:

Transportation (135, 83.85%) —— Beckley—7, Charleston—11, Clarksburg—8, Elkins—4, Fairmont—3, Huntington—10, Keyser—4, Lewisburg—6, Logan—8, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—6, Moorefield—1, Morgantown—6, Mullens—3, Oak Hill—3, Parkersburg—6, Point Pleasant—3, Princeton—7, Ripley—1, Romney—1, Sistersville—2, Spencer—2, Summersville—5, Teays Valley—5, Weirton—7, Welch—1, Weston—3, and Wheeling—8. (Unknown—3)

Financial Assistance (90, 55.90%) —— Beckley—4, Charleston—9, Clarksburg—6, Elkins—4, Fairmont—1, Huntington—7, Keyser—2, Lewisburg—3, Logan—4, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—4, Moorefield—2, Morgantown—5, Mullens—1, Oak Hill—3, Parkersburg—2, Point Pleasant—2, Princeton—3, Romney—1, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—4, Teays Valley—2, Weirton—3, Welch—1, Weston—4, and Wheeling—7. (Unknown—2)

Vehicle Maintenance/Repair (72, 44.72%) —— Beckley—3, Charleston—8, Clarksburg—6, Elkins—3, Huntington—4, Keyser—2, Lewisburg—1, Logan—3, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—4, Morgantown—3, Mullens—2, Oak Hill—3, Parkersburg—5, Point Pleasant—2, Princeton—3, Ripley—1, Romney—1, Sistersville—2, Spencer—2, Summersville—3, Teays Valley—1, Weirton—2, Welch—1, Weston—1, and Wheeling—4. (Unknown—1)

Child Care (69, 42.86%) —— Beckley—4, Charleston—9, Clarksburg—4, Elkins—2, Fairmont—1, Huntington—4, Keyser—2, Lewisburg—4, Logan—4, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—1, Moorefield—1, Morgantown—2, Mullens—1, Oak Hill—3, Parkersburg—1, Point Pleasant—1, Princeton—2, Sistersville—2, Summersville—3, Teays Valley—3, Weirton—1, Welch—1, Weston—3, and Wheeling—5. (Unknown—4)

Housing Assistance (62, 38.51%) —— Beckley—3, Charleston—6, Clarksburg—2, Elkins—3, Fairmont—1, Huntington—4, Keyser—1, Lewisburg—5, Logan—4, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—3, Morgantown—2, Oak Hill—2, Parkersburg—5, Point Pleasant—2, Princeton—5, Romney—1, Spencer—1, Teays Valley—2, Welch—1, Weston—2, and Wheeling—5. (Unknown—1)

CRP Services (primarily for individuals with the most significant disabilities)

The five most commonly reported gaps for CRP Services were:

Direct Placement (84, 52.17%) —— Beckley—4, Charleston—8, Clarksburg—3, Elkins—3, Fairmont—3, Huntington—1, Keyser—4, Lewisburg—5, Logan—5, Marshall—2, Martinsburg—3, Morgantown—5, Mullens—1, Oak Hill—2, Parkersburg—4, Point Pleasant—3, Princeton—4, Romney—1, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—4, Teays Valley—4, Weirton—6, Welch—1, Weston—2, and Wheeling—1. (Unknown—2)

Life Skills Training (65, 40.37%) —— Beckley—3, Charleston—3, Clarksburg—5, Elkins—3, Fairmont—1, Huntington—2, Keyser—2, Lewisburg—2, Logan—6, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—4, Moorefield—1, Morgantown—2, Mullens—1, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—3, Point Pleasant—3, Princeton—3, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—5, Teays Valley—1, Weirton—1, Welch—1, Weston—4, and Wheeling—3. (Unknown—1)

Community Based Assessment (61, 37.89%) —— Beckley—2, Charleston—5, Clarksburg—3, Elkins—3, Huntington—3, Keyser—1, Lewisburg—3, Logan—3, Martinsburg—1, Moorefield—2, Morgantown—6, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—3, Point Pleasant—2, Princeton—2, Romney—1, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—5, Teays Valley—3, Weirton—3, Welch—1, Weston—1, and Wheeling—4.

Job Coaching— Other than SE (59, 36.65%) —— Beckley—2, Charleston—5, Clarksburg—3, Elkins—3, Fairmont—1, Huntington—3, Keyser—3, Lewisburg—4, Logan—5, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—3, Morgantown—4, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—2, Point Pleasant—2, Princeton—2, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—4, Teays Valley—1, Weirton—1, Welch—1, Weston—3, and Wheeling—2.

Work Adjustment Training (52, 32.30%) —— Beckley—2, Charleston—5, Clarksburg—3, Elkins—3, Keyser—1, Lewisburg—3, Logan—3, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—2, Morgantown—4, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—1, Point Pleasant—2, Princeton—2, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—3, Teays Valley—2, Weirton—3, Welch—1, Weston—3, and Wheeling—3. (Unknown—1)

Overall Service Needs for West Virginians with Disabilities

Respondents were asked to identify the top five overall service needs for different consumer groups with which they have experience with providing VR services. Respondents were also asked to indicate if they did not have experience working with the

consumer group. The number and percentage of respondents who indicated a gap for the service are in parentheses followed by the number of responses by DRS office location.

Note: New categories were created to incorporate answers that were not specific to a pre—existing service category from the survey. For example, the "Overall Training" category was created to include a number of open—ended responses where the respondent indicated a need for training, but not a specific type; for example, "Training options" and "Training services." The Miscellaneous category contains individual responses that were not clear in meaning or otherwise could not be grouped into a particular theme.

General Territories

The survey asked participants to "Please list the TOP FIVE services that our consumers with disabilities in DRS general territories need within your service area." There were 131 respondents to this question. The most commonly reported service needs were:

Transportation (94, 71.76%) —— Beckley—6, Charleston—7, Clarksburg—6, Elkins—2, Fairmont—2, Huntington—9, Keyser—2, Lewisburg—6, Logan—3, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—5, Morgantown—6, Mullens—3, Oak Hill—2, Parkersburg—2, Point Pleasant—2, Princeton—7, Ripley—2, Romney—1, Sistersville—1, Spencer—2, Summersville—3, Teays Valley—2, Weirton—5, Welch—1, Weston—3, and Wheeling—1. (Unknown—2)

Job Placement (41, 31.30%) —— Charleston—5, Clarksburg—2, Elkins—1, Fairmont—1, Huntington—3, Keyser—2, Lewisburg—2, Logan—1, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—3, Morgantown—2, Mullens—1, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—1, Point Pleasant—1, Princeton—1, Sistersville—2, Spencer—2, Teays Valley—2, Weirton—1, Weston—2, and Wheeling—1. (Unknown—3)

Psychological/Psychiatric Services (35, 26.72%) —— Beckley—1, Charleston—6, Clarksburg—1, Fairmont—1, Huntington—4, Keyser—1, Lewisburg—2, Logan—2, Marshall—2, Martinsburg—1, Oak Hill—1, Princeton—1, Summersville—1, Teays Valley—2, Weirton—1, and Wheeling—4. (Unknown—4)

Overall Training (29, 22.14%) —— Beckley—1, Charleston—5, Clarksburg—6, Fairmont—1, Huntington—3, Keyser—1, Lewisburg—1, Morgantown—2, Mullens—2, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—2, Ripley—1, Sistersville—1, Summersville—1, and Wheeling—1.

Substance Abuse Treatment (23, 17.56%) —— Beckley—3, Elkins—3, Huntington—2, Lewisburg—2, Logan—2, Moorefield—2, Morgantown—1, Mullens—2, Princeton—2, Summersville—1, and Weirton—1. (Unknown—2)

Life Skills Training (23, 17.56%) —— Charleston—2, Elkins—1, Fairmont—1, Huntington—3, Keyser—1, Lewisburg—1, Logan—3, Martinsburg—1, Parkersburg—1, Princeton—2, Summersville—2, Weirton—1, and Weston—3. (Unknown—1)

Transitioning Youth

The survey asked, "From your experience with transitioning youth with disabilities, please list the TOP FIVE services that you feel these consumers need in your service area." There were 110 respondents to this question. The most commonly reported service needs were:

Job Placement (29, 26.36%) —— Charleston—2, Clarksburg—2, Fairmont—2, Huntington—1, Keyser—2, Lewisburg—3, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—1, Morgantown—1, Mullens—1, Parkersburg—1, Point Pleasant—1, Spencer—1, Summersville—1, Teays Valley—4, Weirton—2, Welch—2, and Weston—1.

Transportation (26, 23.64%) —— Beckley—1, Clarksburg—1, Elkins—1, Fairmont—1, Huntington—2, Keyser—2, Lewisburg—2, Logan—1, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—2, Morgantown—1, Parkersburg—2, Princeton—1, Spencer—1, Summersville—1, Teays Valley—1, Weirton—2, Weston—1, and Wheeling—1. (Unknown—1)

Financial Assistance (22, 20.00%) —— Beckley—1, Charleston—1, Clarksburg—3, Elkins—3, Huntington—1, Logan—2, Martinsburg—2, Mullens—1, Oak Hill—2, Sistersville—1, Summersville—2, Weirton—2, and Wheeling—1.

Counseling and Guidance (16, 14.55%) —— Beckley—1, Charleston—1, Clarksburg—2, Elkins—1, Huntington—1, Keyser—1, Marshall—1, Mullens—1, Parkersburg—1, Point Pleasant—1, Romney—1, Spencer—1, Weirton—1, and Wheeling—2.

Overall Training (17, 15.45%) —— Beckley—1, Charleston—2, Clarksburg—2, Fairmont—1, Huntington—1, Morgantown—1, Mullens—1, Parkersburg—1, Point Pleasant—1, Princeton—1, Sistersville—1, Summersville—2, Teays Valley—1, and Wheeling—1.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing

Respondents were asked, "From your experience with individuals who are deaf/hard of hearing with disabilities, please list the TOP FIVE services that you feel these consumers need in your service area." There were 49 respondents to this question. The most commonly reported service needs were:

Hearing/Audiological Services (29, 59.18%) —— Charleston—3, Clarksburg—1, Elkins—2, Huntington—1, Keyser—1, Logan—3, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—6, Parkersburg—1, Point Pleasant—1, Princeton—1, Summersville—1, Weirton—1, Weston—1, and Wheeling—1. (Unknown—2)

Interpreter Services (17, 34.69%) —— Beckley—2, Charleston—1, Clarksburg—2, Huntington—1, Lewisburg—3, Logan—1, Point Pleasant—1, Princeton—1, Teays Valley—1, Weirton—1, and Wheeling—2. (Unknown—1)

Job Placement (9, 18.37%) —— Charleston—2, Clarksburg—1, Lewisburg—1, Martinsburg—2, Morgantown—1, Teays Valley—1, and Weston—1.

Transportation (8, 16.33%) —— Beckley—1, Elkins—1, Lewisburg—2, Logan—1, Morgantown—1, and Teays Valley—2.

Overall Training (8, 16.33%) —— Beckley—1, Charleston—2, Elkins—1, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—1, Morgantown—1, and Parkersburg—1.

Blind/Visually Impaired

Respondents were asked, "From your experience with individuals who are blind/visually impaired with disabilities, please list the TOP FIVE services that you feel these consumers need in your service area." There were 33 respondents to this question. The most commonly reported service needs were:

Transportation (18, 54.55%) —— Beckley—2, Charleston—1, Clarksburg—1, Elkins—1, Fairmont—1, Huntington—1, Keyser—1, Lewisburg—2, Morgantown—1, Parkersburg—1, Princeton—1, Romney—1, Weirton—1, and Wheeling—2. (Unknown—1)

Orientation/Mobility Services (10, 30.30%) —— Beckley—1, Charleston—2, Fairmont—1, Huntington—1, Keyser—1, Lewisburg—1, Martinsburg—1, Romney—1, and Wheeling—1.

Job Placement (7, 21.21%) —— Charleston—2, Elkins—1, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—1, Morgantown—1, and Weston—1.

Assistive Technology (6, 18.18%) —— Charleston—1, Clarksburg—1, Elkins—1, Logan—1, Marshall—1, and Martinsburg—1.

Overall Training (6, 18.18%) —— Elkins—1, Lewisburg—1, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—1, Morgantown—1, Parkersburg—1.

Minority Individuals

The survey asked, "From your experience with minority individuals with disabilities, please list the TOP FIVE services that you feel these consumers need in your service area." There were 92 respondents to this question. The most commonly reported service needs were:

Transportation (73, 79.35%) —— Beckley—4, Charleston—4, Clarksburg—5, Elkins—1, Fairmont—3, Huntington—7, Keyser—2, Lewisburg—5, Logan—2, Marshall—2, Martinsburg—2, Morgantown—4, Mullens—2, Oak Hill—3, Parkersburg—3, Princeton—4, Ripley—1, Romney—2, Spencer—2, Summersville—1, Teays Valley—3, Weirton—7, Welch—1, and Wheeling—2. (Unknown—1)

Job Placement (22, 23.91%) —— Charleston—2, Clarksburg—1, Huntington—3, Martinsburg—1, Morgantown—1, Point Pleasant—1, Princeton—2, Ripley—1, Teays Valley—4, Weirton—2, Weston—1, and Wheeling—2. (Unknown—1)

Overall Training (21, 22.83%) —— Beckley—1, Charleston—5, Clarksburg—2, Elkins—1, Fairmont—1, Huntington—2, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—2, Morgantown—1, Oak Hill—1, Ripley—2, Romney—1, and Teays Valley—1.

Counseling and Guidance (17, 18.48%) —— Beckley—2, Charleston—2, Clarksburg—2, Elkins—2, Huntington—2, Keyser—1, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—1, Parkersburg—3, and Teays Valley—1.

Housing Assistance (16, 17.39%) —— Charleston—2, Martinsburg—4, Morgantown—1, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—2, Point Pleasant—2, Princeton—3, and Wheeling—1.

Financial Assistance (16, 17.39%) —— Charleston—1, Clarksburg—3, Martinsburg—2, Mullens—2, Oak Hill—1, Princeton—1, Summersville—1, and Weirton—5.

Comments and Suggestions

There were 115 respondents that provided comments when asked for ways in which DRS could help them perform their job more effectively and efficiently. Suggestions with similar themes were grouped and some respondents provided comments that spanned several themes. The most common responses were Paperwork Reduction (13 respondents, 11.30%), Time with Clients (13, 11.30%), Policy Changes (12, 10.43%), Caseload Size (11, 9.57%), and Transportation (10, 8.70%).

Additional Comments on the Unmet Service Needs of Individuals with Disabilities

There were 43 respondents that provided 58 additional comments which were grouped into major themes. Thirteen (30.23%) responses were related to Transportation. The next most common responses were for more CRPs/Vendors (5 respondents, 11.63%), DRS Employee Training (4, 9.30%), and Psychological/Psychiatric Services (4, 9.30%).

B. WHO ARE MINORITIES;

In 2014, SPPE staff members, under guidance of the WVSRC—DRS Joint Committee on Needs Assessment, conducted a qualitative analysis of the reported service needs of 2,863 persons with significant disabilities of various age and disability groups statewide.

Of the statewide total of 2,863 persons with significant disabilities at the time of their DRS application, 235 persons were determined to be of minority status. The demographic profile of this subset of minority status individuals with significant disabilities consists of the following characteristics:

Gender: 53.85% male, 46.15% female;

Race: 5.5% American Indian, 3.8% Asian, 80.4% African American, 9.4% Hispanic, and 0.9% Native Hawaiian;

Age: 37.0% under 20 years old, 23.4% 20—34 years, 14.0% 35—44 years, 23.8% 45—64 years, 1.7% 65 years or older;

Primary Impairment: 11.9% Sensory/Communicative Impairments, 22.6% Physical Impairments, 65.5% Mental Impairments, 0.0% Unknown.

As part of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, DRS identified the following as the most frequently reported service needs in each of the categories of Education, Training, Health, Employment, and Support, based on the qualitative analysis of the reported service needs of 235 consumers with significant disabilities from minority backgrounds. The approximate percentage of consumers with significant disabilities from minority backgrounds reporting each service need is also listed below.

EDUCATION (18.3%): College (11.9%); Non—Specific Education (6.4%). TRAINING (35.3%): Vocational Training (31.5%); Driving (3.8%). HEALTH (16.2%): Hearing (6.0%); Treatments (4.3%); Vision (3.8%); Ailment (3.0%). EMPLOYMENT (75.3%): Placement (32.3%); Finding a Job (28.5%); Career Counseling (7.7%); Career (7.2%); Transition from High School (3.8%). SUPPORT (14.9%): Financial Aid for College (4.3%); Accommodations (4.3%).

Respondents to the DRS field staff survey were asked to identify the top five overall service needs for different consumer groups with which they have experience with providing VR services. Respondents were also asked to indicate if they did not have experience working with the consumer group. The number and percentage of respondents who indicated a gap for the service are in parentheses followed by the number of responses by DRS office location.

Note: New categories were created to incorporate answers that were not specific to a pre—existing service category from the survey. For example, the “Overall Training” category was created to include a number of open—ended responses where the respondent indicated a

need for training, but not a specific type; for example, "Training options" and "Training services." The Miscellaneous category contains individual responses that were not clear in meaning or otherwise could not be grouped into a particular theme.

Minority Individuals

The survey asked, "From your experience with minority individuals with disabilities, please list the TOP FIVE services that you feel these consumers need in your service area." There were 92 respondents to this question. The most commonly reported service needs were:

Transportation (73, 79.35%) —— Beckley—4, Charleston—4, Clarksburg—5, Elkins—1, Fairmont—3, Huntington—7, Keyser—2, Lewisburg—5, Logan—2, Marshall—2, Martinsburg—2, Morgantown—4, Mullens—2, Oak Hill—3, Parkersburg—3, Princeton—4, Ripley—1, Romney—2, Spencer—2, Summersville—1, Teays Valley—3, Weirton—7, Welch—1, and Wheeling—2. (Unknown—1)

Job Placement (22, 23.91%) —— Charleston—2, Clarksburg—1, Huntington—3, Martinsburg—1, Morgantown—1, Point Pleasant—1, Princeton—2, Ripley—1, Teays Valley—4, Weirton—2, Weston—1, and Wheeling—2. (Unknown—1)

Overall Training (21, 22.83%) —— Beckley—1, Charleston—5, Clarksburg—2, Elkins—1, Fairmont—1, Huntington—2, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—2, Morgantown—1, Oak Hill—1, Ripley—2, Romney—1, and Teays Valley—1.

Counseling and Guidance (17, 18.48%) —— Beckley—2, Charleston—2, Clarksburg—2, Elkins—2, Huntington—2, Keyser—1, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—1, Parkersburg—3, and Teays Valley—1.

Housing Assistance (16, 17.39%) —— Charleston—2, Martinsburg—4, Morgantown—1, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—2, Point Pleasant—2, Princeton—3, and Wheeling—1.

Financial Assistance (16, 17.39%) —— Charleston—1, Clarksburg—3, Martinsburg—2, Mullens—2, Oak Hill—1, Princeton—1, Summersville—1, and Weirton—5.

C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

Identifying Individuals with Disabilities Who Have Been Unserved or Underserved by DRS

According to the United States 2010 Census, there are 113,006 minorities in West Virginia, making up 6.1% of the state's total population. Since FY 2012, DRS has exceeded this percentage in terms of minority consumers served (6.8%, 6.5%, and 7.2% for FY 2012, FY 2013, and FY 2014, respectively), indicating overall equal access to services.

United States 2010 Census data reveals that 11 counties in West Virginia have minority populations that exceed 3,000: Kanawha (21,027, 10.9% of total county population); Berkeley (12,669, 12.2 %); Raleigh (9,059, 11.5%); Monongalia (8,701, 9.1%); Cabell (8,125, 8.4%); Jefferson (6,622, 12.4%); Mercer (5,255, 8.4%); Marion (3,192, 5.7%); Wood (3,110, 3.6%); Ohio (3,027, 6.8%); and Fayette (3,013, 6.5%). In each year since FY 2012, the DRS minority service percentage has exceeded the county minority population percentage for seven of the eleven aforementioned counties: Kanawha, Berkeley, Raleigh, Cabell, Jefferson, Mercer, and Marion. The DRS minority service percentage was below the county minority population percentage in each year since FY 2012 for Monongalia and Ohio counties. In Wood and Fayette counties, the DRS minority service percentage matched or

exceeded the county minority population percentage in FY 2012 and FY 2014, but was below the county minority population percentage in FY 2013. Below is a list of each of these eleven counties (with its respective minority population and percentage in parentheses), followed by the DRS minority service percentage for each county in FY 2012, FY 2013, and FY 2014.

Kanawha (21,027, 10.9%): FY 2012 — 14.0%; FY 2013 — 13.7%; FY 2014 — 14.6%

Berkeley (12,669, 12.2 %): FY 2012 — 16.3%; FY 2013 — 15.4%; FY 2014 — 19.0%

Raleigh (9,059, 11.5%): FY 2012 — 17.3%; FY 2013 — 14.9%; FY 2014 — 14.7%

Monongalia (8,701, 9.1%): FY 2012 — 6.6%; FY 2013 — 7.6%; FY 2014 — 8.3%

Cabell (8,125, 8.4%): FY 2012 — 12.0%; FY 2013 — 11.5%; FY 2014 — 11.3%

Jefferson (6,622, 12.4%): FY 2012 — 14.2%; FY 2013 — 13.2%; FY 2014 — 14.1%

Mercer (5,255, 8.4%): FY 2012 — 10.8%; FY 2013 — 10.8%; FY 2014 — 11.2%

Marion (3,192, 5.7%): FY 2012 — 10.0%; FY 2013 — 10.6%; FY 2014 — 10.6%

Wood (3,110, 3.6%): FY 2012 — 3.6%; FY 2013 — 3.3%; FY 2014 — 4.4%

Ohio (3,027, 6.8%): FY 2012 — 5.3%; FY 2013 — 6.5%; FY 2014 — 6.1%

Fayette (3,013, 6.5%): FY 2012 — 8.2%; FY 2013 — 5.5%; FY 2014 — 7.4%

In addition, the United States 2010 Census data indicated three additional counties in West Virginia with a minority population under 3,000 and a county minority population percentage greater than 6.5%: McDowell (2,403; 10.9%), Gilmer (1,520; 17.5%), and Summers (970; 7.0%). Of these three counties, only McDowell County had a DRS minority service percentage (15.3% in FY 2012, 15.6 in FY 2013, and 15.3% in FY 2014) higher than its county minority population percentage (10.9%). No minorities were served by DRS between FY 2012 to FY 2014 in either Gilmer or Summers counties. Below is a list of each of these three counties (with its respective minority population and percentage in parentheses), followed by the DRS minority service percentage for each county in FY 2012, FY 2013, and FY 2014.

McDowell (2,403, 10.9%): FY 2012 — 15.3%; FY 2013 — 15.6%; FY 2014 — 15.3%

Gilmer (1,520, 17.5%): FY 2012 — 0.0%; FY 2013 — 0.0%; FY 2014 — 0.0%

Summers (970, 7.0%): FY 2012 — 0.0%; FY 2013 — 0.0%; FY 2014 — 0.0%

To determine potentially underserved areas, the DRS minority service percentage for the three—year period (FY 2012 — FY 2014) for each county was compared to that county's minority population percentage. Counties with mean DRS minority service percentages that are lower than the minority population percentage are considered to be potentially underserved. Of the 14 aforementioned counties, only 4 counties met this criterion: Monongalia, Ohio, Gilmer, and Summers counties.

DRS utilized geographic information systems (GIS) to pinpoint potential underserved zip codes in Gilmer and Summers counties. Zip codes that meet two criteria are identified as potential underserved areas: (1) the zip code has a minority population greater than or

equal to 50 and (2) there are 10 or fewer minority consumers (as of March, 2015) reported in the agency's database for the last four fiscal years. Applying these criteria reveals four potentially underserved zip codes, one in Gilmer County (Glenville) and three in Summers County (Alderson, Hinton, and Talcott). In Glenville (Gilmer County) and Alderson (Summers County) zip codes there exists Federal Corrections Institutions, thus eliminating them from the list of potential underserved zip codes. DRS will pursue outreach efforts in Summers County, targeting Hinton and Talcott zip codes to market and expand VR services to individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds.

D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

Fiscal Year 2015 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment of The West Virginia Workforce Development System

Introduction

One requirement of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) is an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce development system. In West Virginia, this system is overseen at the state level by the Workforce Investment Council (WIC) and the Interagency Collaborative Team (ICT); seven regional Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) that preside over localized workforce development system activities. The WIC and the regional WDBs are comprised of representatives from business, labor, and public agencies. The ICT is comprised of nine state partner agencies that encompass the WV workforce development system. The purpose of the ICT is to foster cooperation and coordination of services among partner agencies.

One—Stop Career Centers are physical locations where consumers, including those with disabilities, can utilize services provided by partner agencies operating under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. WorkForce WV is the agency, within the WV Department of Commerce, that operates One—Stop Career Centers across the seven workforce development regions across the state. DRS' involvement in the WIC, ICT, and regional WDBs in addition to its presence at One—Stop Centers ensures that people with disabilities are considered as employment training needs and services are identified.

Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment

To assess the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities in West Virginia, DRS utilizes a multifaceted, broad approach. This report only covers a single activity and targeted population within the overall comprehensive statewide needs assessment— the rehabilitation needs of individuals served through other components of the statewide workforce development system. This report provides a brief overview of service availability via physical One—Stop locations followed by the results of a survey provided to all members of the ICT, including the directors of all regional WDBs.

One—Stop Career Center Types and Locations

In fiscal year (FY) 2015, there were 43 WorkForce WV One—Stop locations including 10 comprehensive, 10 satellite, and 23 affiliate centers. Based on the 2014 WV Annual Report on the WIA (please note that this was prior to the enactment of the Workforce Innovation

and Opportunity Act), the three types of One—Stop locations are defined based on the following criteria:

1) Comprehensive One—Stop Center — A physical location within each local Workforce Investment Board (WIB) area that must provide the core services specified in Workforce Investment Act (WIA) section 134(d)(2), and must provide access to other programs and activities carried out by the One—Stop partners, pursuant to WIA section 121. Public access to services offered must be at least 32 hours per week.

2) Satellite One—Stop Center — A physical location within each local WIB area that consists of at least three WIA mandated partners that are co—located; providing core services specified in WIA section 121(b)(1)(A)(i)(ii); providing a majority of the intensive services specified in WIA section 134(d)(3); may provide training services specified in WIA section 134(d)(4), but at a minimum must provide a documented means for referral to training services; and maintain hours for public access of at least 32 hours per week.

3) Affiliate One—Stop Site — A physical location where at least one WIA mandated partner provides core services specified in WIA section 121(b)(1)(A)(i)(ii); and must provide a documented means for referral to that WIA region's comprehensive One—Stop Center's partner services, including intensive and training services.

Please note that there are seven workforce development regions in West Virginia, whereas DRS has six regions. The following provides the breakdown of One—Stop centers by type and workforce development region:

—Region 1 has two comprehensive centers, three satellite centers, and four affiliate sites for a total of nine locations.

—Region 2 has one comprehensive center, one satellite center, and five affiliate sites for a total of seven locations.

—Region 3 has one comprehensive center, zero satellite centers, and three affiliate sites for a total of four locations.

—Region 4 has one comprehensive center, two satellite centers, and five affiliate sites for a total of eight locations.

—Region 5 has one comprehensive center, two satellite centers, and zero affiliate sites for a total of three locations.

—Region 6 has two comprehensive centers, two satellite centers, and six affiliate sites for a total of ten locations.

—Region 7 has two comprehensive centers, zero satellite centers, and zero affiliate sites for a total of two locations.

Survey of ICT Members

In February 2015, DRS emailed a survey to all members of the ICT. In addition to the seven regional WDB directors, ICT membership includes the following WV state agencies:

—WorkForce WV — WV Employment Service;

—Bureau of Senior Services — State Unit on Aging;

—Council for Community and Technical College;

—Department of Education — Adult Education and Literacy Activities, Postsecondary Vocational Education, and Office of Institutional Programs;

—Department of Education and the Arts — Division of Rehabilitation Services;

—Department of Health and Human Resources — Bureau of Children and Families, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and Food Stamp Employment and Training;

—Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety — Division of Corrections; and

—Development Office — Community Development Division and Business Industry Development.

Survey

The survey consisted of seven questions to collect information about the respondent, the agency they represent, and their perception of the rehabilitation service needs and gaps of the individuals with disabilities that they serve. The questions were as follows:

—Name

—Title

—Agency

—Approximately how many consumers with disabilities are served by your agency per year?

—Please identify the vocational rehabilitation services most often needed by consumers with disabilities served by your agency (up to five services).

—Please identify any vocational rehabilitation service gaps (i.e., services that are needed, but not available in sufficient quantities, if at all) for consumers with disabilities served by your agency (up to five services).

—How can WVDRS assist your agency to better serve your consumers with disabilities? Please add any additional comments you wish to provide.

Results

Ten surveys were returned via email. Respondents represented the Development Office, Division of Corrections, Office of Adult Education, and six WDBs. One WDB provided separate responses for adult and youth programs.

Number of Individuals with Disabilities Served

The approximate number of consumers with disabilities served by each agency varied greatly, from 15 to over 8,000. Five of the respondents were unsure due to limited or non—existent data on the disability status of individuals served by their agency.

Services Most Often Needed

The most commonly reported service need (five respondents) was training. This included college, vocational, and on—the—job training. The second most commonly reported service

needed (three respondents) was vocational counseling and guidance. Respondents indicated that the individuals with disabilities they serve often benefit from assistance in selecting an appropriate vocational goal that is consistent with the individual's strengths, weaknesses, interests, and disability—related functional limitations.

Service Gaps

Six respondents reported no service gaps. Two respondents indicated the need for more collaboration and coordination of services with DRS. Dental services, public and employer awareness of DRS, and free tutoring were also reported.

DRS Assistance and Additional Comments

Eight respondents indicated they would like DRS to provide more outreach/awareness of available services. Recommendations for this included providing information brochures, educating partner agency staff, and educating individuals with disabilities served by partner agencies about the services that DRS can provide to eligible consumers.

E. WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

Results of the Analysis of the Reported Pre—Employment Transition Service Needs of Students with Disabilities

SPPE staff members in 2014, under guidance of the WVSRC—DRS Joint Committee on Needs Assessment, conducted a qualitative analysis of the reported service needs of 2,863 persons with significant disabilities of various age and disability groups statewide. These individuals represent a good sample of consumers with significant disabilities that will continue to seek assistance from agencies in coming years, ceteris paribus. All 55 counties in West Virginia were represented in the sample. SPPE staff members separately analyzed the needs comments of the 1,059 students with disabilities included in the sample. The needs comments were analyzed and grouped based on their indication or implication of need of one or more of five required pre—employment transition services (PETS services):

—Job exploration counseling;

—Work—based learning experiences, which may include in—school or after school opportunities, or experience outside the traditional school setting (including internships), that is provided in an integrated environment to the maximum extent possible;

—Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institutions of higher education;

—Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living; and

—Instruction in self—advocacy, which may include peer mentoring.

Of the 1,059 students with disabilities providing needs comments, 929 (87.7%) indicated or implied a need for one or more PETS services.

The demographic profile of these 929 students with disabilities consists of the following characteristics:

Gender: 55.9% male, 44.1% female;

Race: 92.8% White, 6.7% Other (African American/Hispanic/American Indian/Native Hawaiian/Asian), 0.5% Unknown;

Age: 100.0% under 20 years old;

Primary Impairment: 4.3% Sensory/Communicative Impairments, 15.2% Physical Impairments, 80.5% Mental Impairments, 0.0% Unknown.

As part of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, the following report presents the results of the qualitative analysis on the needs comments of these 929 students with disabilities who indicated or implied a need for one or more PETS services.

Job Exploration Counseling (676, 72.8%); Counseling on Opportunities for Enrollment in Comprehensive Transition or Postsecondary Educational Programs (348, 37.5); Social Skills and Independent Living (70, 7.5%); Work—Based Learning Experiences (21, 2.3%); and Self—Advocacy (3, 0.3%).

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires that the comprehensive statewide needs assessment include an assessment of the vocational rehabilitation service needs of "youth with disabilities, and students with disabilities, including their need for pre—employment transition services." DRS field staff that serve transitioning youth are one key resource in identifying the service needs of youth with disabilities in West Virginia. Therefore, needs assessment surveys completed by field staff that serve transitioning youth were analyzed separately in order to identify students' needs for pre—employment transition services (PETS). There were 18 services in the survey that are considered PETS and were used for the post—hoc PETS subset analysis of need and gap ratings by field counselors who are assigned to serve high school youth.

Selected PETS

The following services from the survey were considered PETS for this analysis:

—Special Education Services;

—Tutoring;

—Work Adjustment Training;

—Job Search Training;

—On—the—job Training;

—Career Planning Training;

—Training on Disability Rights;

—Independent Living Skills;

—Drive Training;

—Job Club Skills;

—Counseling and Guidance;

—Community Based Assessment;

—Trial Work Experience;

—Vocational Evaluation;

—Job Placement;

—Peer Support;

—Work Skills Assessment; and

—Life Skills Training.

Respondents

There were 74 respondents, 46% of the 161, that indicated having a partial or full school territory. The breakdown of the respondents by current position is as follows:

Rehabilitation Counselor, 33 respondents (44.59% of respondents)

Senior Rehabilitation Counselor, 13 respondents (17.57%)

Certified Rehabilitation Counselor, 7 respondents (9.46%)

Field Office Manager/Supervisor, 3 respondents (4.05%)

Rehabilitation Services Associate, 18 respondents (24.32%)

Office Location

Respondents were from 27 branch office locations. The Ripley office was the only location not represented in the PETS subset. One respondent did not provide their office location. The total number of respondents by district and office location are as follows:

District 1 (13 Respondents) — Charleston—4, Point Pleasant—2, Ripley—0, Spencer—2, Teays Valley—5.

District 2 (10) — Clarksburg—2, Elkins—3, Morgantown—1, Fairmont—1, Weston—3.

District 3 (11) — Parkersburg—3, Sistersville—2, Weirton—3, Wheeling—3.

District 4 (12) — Beckley—2, Lewisburg—4, Oak Hill—2, Princeton—2, Summersville—2.

District 5 (14) — Huntington—1, Logan—2, Marshall University—6, Mullens—3, Welch—2.

District 6 (13) — Keyser—4, Martinsburg—6, Moorefield—2, Romney—1.

Top PETS Needs

Service need/use for each PET service was assessed to allow respondents to indicate which services their consumers need/use most often. This was done independently of the service gap assessment as some services may be highly needed/used, but are readily available and therefore do not require an increase in availability.

Services that were identified as either “4” or “5,” indicating frequent need by 50% or more of the total respondents are listed for each service category below with the total number and percentage of respondents in parentheses.

—Job Placement (67, 90.54%)

—Counseling and Guidance (64, 86.49%)

—Special Education Services (61, 82.43%)

—Job Search Training (61, 82.43%)

—Vocational Evaluation (55, 74.32%)

—Career Planning Training (51, 68.92%)

—Community Based Assessment (48, 64.86%)

—On—the—job Training (43, 58.11%)

—Work Skills Assessment (41, 55.41%)

—Work Adjustment Training (38, 51.35%)

—Driver Training (38, 51.35%)

—Tutoring (37, 50.00%)

Top Five Reported PETS Gaps

Respondents that indicated a perceived service gap in either the multiple—choice (Yes, No, or N/A) or open—ended response ("Which of the above services are most in need of an increase in availability?") sections were totaled for each service. The number and percentage of respondents who reported a gap for the service are in parentheses.

—Tutoring (44, 59.46%)

—On—the—job Training (38, 51.35%)

—Job Search Training (31, 41.89%)

—Life Skills Training (31, 41.89%)

—Job Placement (31, 41.89%)

Overall Service Needs for West Virginians with Disabilities

Respondents to the DRS field staff survey were asked to identify the top five overall service needs for different consumer groups with which they have experience with providing VR services. Respondents were also asked to indicate if they did not have experience working with the consumer group. The number and percentage of respondents who indicated a gap for the service are in parentheses followed by the number of responses by DRS office location.

Note: New categories were created to incorporate answers that were not specific to a pre—existing service category from the survey. For example, the "Overall Training" category was created to include a number of open—ended responses where the respondent indicated a need for training, but not a specific type; for example, "Training options" and "Training services." The Miscellaneous category contains individual responses that were not clear in meaning or otherwise could not be grouped into a particular theme.

Transitioning Youth

The survey asked, "From your experience with transitioning youth with disabilities, please list the TOP FIVE services that you feel these consumers need in your service area." There were 110 respondents to this question. The most commonly reported service needs were:

Job Placement (29, 26.36%) —— Charleston—2, Clarksburg—2, Fairmont—2, Huntington—1, Keyser—2, Lewisburg—3, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—1, Morgantown—1, Mullens—1, Parkersburg—1, Point Pleasant—1, Spencer—1, Summersville—1, Teays Valley—4, Weirton—2, Welch—2, and Weston—1.

Transportation (26, 23.64%) —— Beckley—1, Clarksburg—1, Elkins—1, Fairmont—1, Huntington—2, Keyser—2, Lewisburg—2, Logan—1, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—2, Morgantown—1, Parkersburg—2, Princeton—1, Spencer—1, Summersville—1, Teays Valley—1, Weirton—2, Weston—1, and Wheeling—1. (Unknown—1)

Financial Assistance (22, 20.00%) —— Beckley—1, Charleston—1, Clarksburg—3, Elkins—3, Huntington—1, Logan—2, Martinsburg—2, Mullens—1, Oak Hill—2, Sistersville—1, Summersville—2, Weirton—2, and Wheeling—1.

Counseling and Guidance (16, 14.55%) —— Beckley—1, Charleston—1, Clarksburg—2, Elkins—1, Huntington—1, Keyser—1, Marshall—1, Mullens—1, Parkersburg—1, Point Pleasant—1, Romney—1, Spencer—1, Weirton—1, and Wheeling—2.

Overall Training (17, 15.45%) —— Beckley—1, Charleston—2, Clarksburg—2, Fairmont—1, Huntington—1, Morgantown—1, Mullens—1, Parkersburg—1, Point Pleasant—1, Princeton—1, Sistersville—1, Summersville—2, Teays Valley—1, and Wheeling—1.

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

Results from the survey of DRS Field Staff on CRP Services

Information on the needs and gaps for CRP services was also collected from 119 DRS field staff as part of the FY 2015 comprehensive statewide needs assessment. Survey respondents rated nine different CRP service categories for their level of understanding of the service, need/use of the service, and their perception of any gap for each service. The nine CRP service categories were: Community Based Assessment; Supported Employment; Work Skills Assessment; Direct Placement; Work Adjustment Training; Life Skills Training; Extended Assessments; Extended Supported Employment; and Job Coaching—Other than Supported Employment.

All nine CRP service categories were reported as being understood by at least 87% of the field staff surveyed. The most commonly needed/used CRP service categories were: Community Based Assessment (105 of 115 responses, 91.3%); Direct Placement (104 of 116 responses, 89.7%); Job Coaching—Other than Supported Employment (99 of 114 responses, 86.8%); Work Adjustment Training (96 of 113 responses, 85.0%); and Life Skills Training (95 of 114 responses, 83.3%). The most commonly reported gaps for CRP Services were: Community Based Assessment (44 of 114 responses, 38.6%); Direct Placement (35 of 111 responses, 31.5%); Work Skills Assessment (27 of 106 responses, 25.5%); Work

Adjustment Training (25 of 108 responses, 23.2%); and Supported Employment (24 of 111 responses, 21.6%).

DRS conducted a survey of CRPs/community service providers (CSPs) with acknowledged vendor status to provide services (including supported—employment services) to DRS consumers across the state. The survey was conducted as a part of the statewide comprehensive needs assessment study of persons with significant disabilities in West Virginia.

DRS distributed the survey via email to 58 DRS—acknowledged CRPs/CSPs to collect input on their provision of services to West Virginians with significant disabilities, their level of communication with DRS, ways in which DRS could improve services or service delivery, and what the CRPs/CSPs urgently needed to better serve West Virginians with significant disabilities. Forty—seven surveys were returned to DRS, for a response rate of 81.0 percent. Surveys were returned from CRPs/CSPs working with DRS offices across the state.

Service Provision

In each of the six DRS districts, all nine categories of CRP services were reported as being provided. Services were also reported as being provided in 53 out of 55 counties in West Virginia (based on DRS records, CRP services are provided in the two remaining counties, although not by the respondents of the survey). All nine services were reported as being provided in 37 out of 55 counties (67.3%). Excluding the two aforementioned "unserved" counties, the remaining counties were provided between five and eight services. Additionally, in most counties, various services were provided by multiple CRPs/CSPs.

Communication and Liaison Contact

All 47 CRPs/CSPs provided a rating of their communication with DRS. Rating options included Excellent, Very Good, Good, Poor, and Very Poor. No CRPs/CSPs gave a rating of Very Poor and 43 of the 47 CRPs/CSPs (91.5%) gave a response of Good or better. Additionally, CRPs/CSPs were asked whether a DRS liaison counselor was in contact on a regular basis. Thirty—two (32) CRPs/CSPs responded yes, while 15 CRPs/CSPs responded no (68.1% and 31.9%, respectively).

DRS Improvement

Forty—four (44) of the 47 CRPs/CSPs gave comments regarding specific things that DRS could do to improve services or service delivery. One of the most common themes in the comments involved referrals. This included not only requests for greater numbers of referrals, but also an increase in referral quality.

Another major theme from these comments included improvements in information sharing and awareness. This theme was multi—faceted, weaving through multiple types of information to be shared with various stakeholders, including consumers. Several CRPs/CSPs indicated that DRS counselors lacked awareness about services, while some made a recommendation for information—sharing meetings to serve as a remedy for such a deficiency. Other CRPs/CSPs provided comments indicating a need for more consumer—related awareness including greater consideration of the consumers' needs when selecting services, more information about the consumers at the time of referral, and educating consumers about the effects that employment can have on their other benefits.

Funding, aside from the funding generated from an increase in referrals, was an additional theme found in the comments of CRPs regarding DRS improvement. These comments regarding funding varied, from requests for grant monies to increases in service fees.

CRP/CSP Needs

Forty—one (41) of the 47 CRPs/CSPs gave comments on what the CRP/CSP urgently needed to better serve West Virginians with disabilities. Funding and referrals were the most reported needs. Several comments were also made that emphasized an enhancement of the relationship between DRS and CRPs on some level. In general, these comments referred to a greater sharing of information and responsibility between DRS and the CRPs. Other, less commonly addressed themes that could be found in the comments included needs for more transportation help and better relationships with employers to facilitate placement.

Conclusions Based on the Survey of CRPs/CSPs

No less than five CRP service categories were reported, by CRPs/CSPs, as being provided in each of West Virginia's counties, with the exception of two counties. All nine CRP services were reported as being provided in all six DRS districts and in two—thirds of all West Virginia counties.

Over 90% of CRPs/CSPs reported a Good or better rating of communication with DRS and no CRP/CSP rated communication with DRS as being Very Poor. This is somewhat contradictory with the fact that only 68.1% of the CRPs/CSPs claimed that a DRS liaison counselor was in contact on a regular basis. This raises the slightly counter—intuitive idea that communication does not have to be frequent, or even regularly occurring, in order to be good. Comments regarding communication reflected this at times, suggesting that communication was good when it occurred. At other times, comments indicated that the lack of regular communication was indeed a problem.

Communication was also a factor in comments regarding DRS improvement and CRP/CSP needs. These comments demonstrated CRPs'/CSPs' beliefs that improvements in information acquisition and sharing between the parties would better enable the parties to make well—informed decisions regarding services and consumer needs. Comments on DRS improvement and CRP/CSP needs also emphasized funding and referrals, requesting that DRS continue to provide (or provide more of) each.

CRP Service Responses from DRS Field Staff Survey

The five most commonly reported gaps for CRP Services were:

Direct Placement (84, 52.17%) —— Beckley—4, Charleston—8, Clarksburg—3, Elkins—3, Fairmont—3, Huntington—1, Keyser—4, Lewisburg—5, Logan—5, Marshall—2, Martinsburg—3, Morgantown—5, Mullens—1, Oak Hill—2, Parkersburg—4, Point Pleasant—3, Princeton—4, Romney—1, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—4, Teays Valley—4, Weirton—6, Welch—1, Weston—2, and Wheeling—1. (Unknown—2)

Life Skills Training (65, 40.37%) —— Beckley—3, Charleston—3, Clarksburg—5, Elkins—3, Fairmont—1, Huntington—2, Keyser—2, Lewisburg—2, Logan—6, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—4, Moorefield—1, Morgantown—2, Mullens—1, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—3,

Point Pleasant—3, Princeton—3, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—5, Teays Valley—1, Weirton—1, Welch—1, Weston—4, and Wheeling—3. (Unknown—1)

Community Based Assessment (61, 37.89%) —— Beckley—2, Charleston—5, Clarksburg—3, Elkins—3, Huntington—3, Keyser—1, Lewisburg—3, Logan—3, Martinsburg—1, Moorefield—2, Morgantown—6, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—3, Point Pleasant—2, Princeton—2, Romney—1, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—5, Teays Valley—3, Weirton—3, Welch—1, Weston—1, and Wheeling—4.

Job Coaching— Other than SE (59, 36.65%) —— Beckley—2, Charleston—5, Clarksburg—3, Elkins—3, Fairmont—1, Huntington—3, Keyser—3, Lewisburg—4, Logan—5, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—3, Morgantown—4, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—2, Point Pleasant—2, Princeton—2, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—4, Teays Valley—1, Weirton—1, Welch—1, Weston—3, and Wheeling—2.

Work Adjustment Training (52, 32.30%) —— Beckley—2, Charleston—5, Clarksburg—3, Elkins—3, Keyser—1, Lewisburg—3, Logan—3, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—2, Morgantown—4, Oak Hill—1, Parkersburg—1, Point Pleasant—2, Princeton—2, Sistersville—2, Spencer—1, Summersville—3, Teays Valley—2, Weirton—3, Welch—1, Weston—3, and Wheeling—3. (Unknown—1)

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 .

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires that the comprehensive statewide needs assessment include an assessment of the vocational rehabilitation service needs of "youth with disabilities, and students with disabilities, including their need for pre—employment transition services." DRS field staff that serve transitioning youth are one key resource in identifying the service needs of youth with disabilities in West Virginia. Therefore, needs assessment surveys completed by field staff that serve transitioning youth were analyzed separately in order to identify students' needs for pre—employment transition services (PETS). There were 18 services in the survey that are considered PETS and were used for the post—hoc PETS subset analysis of need and gap ratings by field counselors who are assigned to serve high school youth.

Selected PETS

The following services from the survey were considered PETS for this analysis:

—Special Education Services;

—Tutoring;

—Work Adjustment Training;

—Job Search Training;

—On—the—job Training;

—Career Planning Training;

—Training on Disability Rights;

—Independent Living Skills;

—Drive Training;

—Job Club Skills;

—Counseling and Guidance;

—Community Based Assessment;

—Trial Work Experience;

—Vocational Evaluation;

—Job Placement;

—Peer Support;

—Work Skills Assessment; and

—Life Skills Training.

Respondents

There were 74 respondents, 46% of the 161, that indicated having a partial or full school territory. The breakdown of the respondents by current position is as follows:

—Rehabilitation Counselor, 33 respondents (44.59% of respondents)

—Senior Rehabilitation Counselor, 13 respondents (17.57%)

—Certified Rehabilitation Counselor, 7 respondents (9.46%)

—Field Office Manager/Supervisor, 3 respondents (4.05%)

—Rehabilitation Services Associate, 18 respondents (24.32%)

Office Location

Respondents were from 27 branch office locations. The Ripley office was the only location not represented in the PETS subset. One respondent did not provide their office location. The total number of respondents by district and office location are as follows:

District 1 (13 Respondents) — Charleston—4, Point Pleasant—2, Ripley—0, Spencer—2, Teays Valley—5.

District 2 (10) — Clarksburg—2, Elkins—3, Morgantown—1, Fairmont—1, Weston—3.

District 3 (11) — Parkersburg—3, Sistersville—2, Weirton—3, Wheeling—3.

District 4 (12) — Beckley—2, Lewisburg—4, Oak Hill—2, Princeton—2, Summersville—2.

District 5 (14) — Huntington—1, Logan—2, Marshall University—6, Mullens—3, Welch—2.

District 6 (13) — Keyser—4, Martinsburg—6, Moorefield—2, Romney—1.

Top PETS Needs

Service need/use for each PET service was assessed to allow respondents to indicate which services their consumers need/use most often. This was done independently of the service gap assessment as some services may be highly needed/used, but are readily available and therefore do not require an increase in availability.

Services that were identified as either "4" or "5," indicating frequent need by 50% or more of the total respondents are listed for each service category below with the total number and percentage of respondents in parentheses.

—Job Placement (67, 90.54%)

—Counseling and Guidance (64, 86.49%)

—Special Education Services (61, 82.43%)

—Job Search Training (61, 82.43%)

—Vocational Evaluation (55, 74.32%)

—Career Planning Training (51, 68.92%)

—Community Based Assessment (48, 64.86%)

—On—the—job Training (43, 58.11%)

—Work Skills Assessment (41, 55.41%)

—Work Adjustment Training (38, 51.35%)

—Driver Training (38, 51.35%)

—Tutoring (37, 50.00%)

Top Five Reported PETS Gaps

Respondents that indicated a perceived service gap in either the multiple—choice (Yes, No, or N/A) or open—ended response ("Which of the above services are most in need of an increase in availability?") sections were totaled for each service. The number and percentage of respondents who reported a gap for the service are in parentheses.

—Tutoring (44, 59.46%)

—On—the—job Training (38, 51.35%)

—Job Search Training (31, 41.89%)

—Life Skills Training (31, 41.89%)

—Job Placement (31, 41.89%)

Overall Service Needs for West Virginians with Disabilities

Respondents to the DRS field staff survey were asked to identify the top five overall service needs for different consumer groups with which they have experience with providing VR services. Respondents were also asked to indicate if they did not have experience working with the consumer group. The number and percentage of respondents who indicated a gap

for the service are in parentheses followed by the number of responses by DRS office location.

Note: New categories were created to incorporate answers that were not specific to a pre—existing service category from the survey. For example, the "Overall Training" category was created to include a number of open—ended responses where the respondent indicated a need for training, but not a specific type; for example, "Training options" and "Training services." The Miscellaneous category contains individual responses that were not clear in meaning or otherwise could not be grouped into a particular theme.

Transitioning Youth

The survey asked, "From your experience with transitioning youth with disabilities, please list the TOP FIVE services that you feel these consumers need in your service area." There were 110 respondents to this question. The most commonly reported service needs were:

Job Placement (29, 26.36%) —— Charleston—2, Clarksburg—2, Fairmont—2, Huntington—1, Keyser—2, Lewisburg—3, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—1, Morgantown—1, Mullens—1, Parkersburg—1, Point Pleasant—1, Spencer—1, Summersville—1, Teays Valley—4, Weirton—2, Welch—2, and Weston—1.

Transportation (26, 23.64%) —— Beckley—1, Clarksburg—1, Elkins—1, Fairmont—1, Huntington—2, Keyser—2, Lewisburg—2, Logan—1, Marshall—1, Martinsburg—2, Morgantown—1, Parkersburg—2, Princeton—1, Spencer—1, Summersville—1, Teays Valley—1, Weirton—2, Weston—1, and Wheeling—1. (Unknown—1)

Financial Assistance (22, 20.00%) —— Beckley—1, Charleston—1, Clarksburg—3, Elkins—3, Huntington—1, Logan—2, Martinsburg—2, Mullens—1, Oak Hill—2, Sistersville—1, Summersville—2, Weirton—2, and Wheeling—1.

Counseling and Guidance (16, 14.55%) —— Beckley—1, Charleston—1, Clarksburg—2, Elkins—1, Huntington—1, Keyser—1, Marshall—1, Mullens—1, Parkersburg—1, Point Pleasant—1, Romney—1, Spencer—1, Weirton—1, and Wheeling—2.

Overall Training (17, 15.45%) —— Beckley—1, Charleston—2, Clarksburg—2, Fairmont—1, Huntington—1, Morgantown—1, Mullens—1, Parkersburg—1, Point Pleasant—1, Princeton—1, Sistersville—1, Summersville—2, Teays Valley—1, and Wheeling—1.

K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

Describe:

1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES;

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) calculated its estimate of individuals with disabilities who are eligible for services under this State Plan by applying the state incidence of disability rate for individuals ages 18—64 (17.4%) to the state general population figure for individuals who are ages 18—64 (1,118,913). Both statistics are from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2012—2016 American Community Survey five—year estimates.

Based on an estimate from the American Community Survey (as of January 2018), there are 194,175 people with a disability in WV between ages 18—64. If DRS authorizes an Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 average of $1,638 of services per consumer in a fiscal year, then over $318 million would be needed to purchase vocational rehabilitation (VR) services for these potentially eligible individuals to move them toward competitive employment outcomes.

2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

A. THE VR PROGRAM;

In FY 2019, the Division expects to serve 8,133 consumers with disabilities (i.e., eligible to receive services based on an Individualized Plan for Employment), obligating $12.6 million of Title I funds. Additionally, the agency expects to serve 147 consumers with most significant disabilities [i.e., Order of Selection (OS) category 1] in supported employment, using Title I funds. These estimates are based on historical data and current trends in caseload levels, Order of Selection, and the availability of fiscal and personnel resources. Over the past few years, the agency has experienced a decrease in its number of consumers and a significant reduction in reallocated funds. As the agency continues to implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, there will continue to be dynamic forces and multiple factors that contribute to the estimated number of consumers served by the agency. One factor is the agency continuing to experience a high level of turnover among its vocational rehabilitation counselors. This contributes to lower service levels due to the learning curve for new counselors. Another contributing factor to the estimates is the provision of pre-employment transition services. The agency has shifted fiscal and human resources to better serve students with disabilities. Finally, as eligible consumers with significant and non-significant disabilities continue to enlist in the VR program, they will continue to be placed on a waitlist to allow the agency to focus on individuals with the most significant disabilities.

B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

In FY 2019, the Division expects to serve 8,133 consumers with disabilities (i.e., eligible to receive services based on an Individualized Plan for Employment), obligating $12.6 million of Title I funds. The agency also expects to use Title I funds for supported employment services for 147 consumers with most significant disabilities [i.e., Order of Selection (OS) category 1] These estimates are based on historical data and current trends in caseload levels, Order of Selection, and the availability of fiscal and personnel resources. Over the past few years, the agency has experienced a decrease in its number of consumers and a significant reduction in reallocated funds. As the agency continues to implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, there will continue to be dynamic forces and multiple factors that contribute to the estimated number of consumers served by the agency.

One factor is the agency continuing to experience a high level of turnover among its vocational rehabilitation counselors. This contributes to lower service levels due to the learning curve for new counselors. Another contributing factor to the estimates is the provision of pre-employment transition services. The agency has shifted fiscal and human resources to better serve students with disabilities. Finally, as eligible consumers with significant and non-significant disabilities continue to enlist in the VR program, they will

continue to be placed on a waitlist to allow the agency to focus on individuals with the most significant disabilities.

C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION;

In Fiscal Year 2019, it is estimated that:

—5,551 individuals will be served in OS Category 1, using an estimated $8,693,198 of Title I funds (average of $1,566).

—2,579 individuals will be served in OS Category 2, using an estimated $3,864,635 of Title I funds (average of $1,499).

—3 individuals will be served in OS Category 3, using an estimated $3,262 of Title I funds (average of $1,087).

—0 individuals will be served in OS Category 4, using an estimated $0 of Title I funds (average of $0).

3. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VR SERVICES, BUT ARE NOT RECEIVING SUCH SERVICES DUE TO AN ORDER OF SELECTION; AND

DRS estimates that during FY 2019, 3,483 individuals who are eligible for VR services, will not be receiving services due to an order of selection. Specifically, DRS estimates that 2,622 individuals in OS Category 2 will not be served, 843 individuals in OS Category 3 will not be served, and 18 individuals in OS Category 4 will not be served. However, these individuals may be served if resources become available. Of the 3,483 individuals who are eligible for VR services but will not receive services due to an order of selection, 1,651 individuals are expected to be new applicants in FY 2019. Specifically, 1,468 new applicants in OS Category 2, 176 new applicants in OS Category 3, and 7 new applicants in OS Category 4

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.

In Fiscal Year 2019, it is estimated that:

—5,551 individuals will be served in OS Category 1, using an estimated $8,693,198 of Title I funds (average of $1,566).

—2,579 individuals will be served in OS Category 2, using an estimated $3,864,635 of Title I funds (average of $1,499).

—3 individuals will be served in OS Category 3, using an estimated $3,262 of Title I funds (average of $1,087).

—0 individuals will be served in OS Category 4, using an estimated $0 of Title I funds (average of $0).

L. STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

The designated State unit must:

1. IDENTIFY IF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES WERE JOINTLY DEVELOPED

Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the State VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has a Council, and jointly agreed to any revisions.

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) employs many goals to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities, particularly those individuals with the most significant disabilities. Furthermore, DRS recognizes those services essential to needs identified in the comprehensive assessment, evaluation of the Designated State Unit's performance on pre—WIOA Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) standards and indicators to ensure quality services for individuals with significant disabilities, and services vital to the operation and effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program in West Virginia.

For the development of agency goals and priorities, DRS followed WIOA guidance in the development of the Unified State Plan. DRS worked closely with the WIOA core partners including WorkForce WV and the WV Adult Education. The DRS goals and priorities were developed to support the overall state goals and priorities in achieving a well—integrated workforce development system that provided customer—focused services to job seekers in West Virginia.

The West Virginia State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) maintained involvement throughout the development and assessment of agency goals and priorities in a variety of ways and provided DRS with valued input and recommendations. DRS executive managers, representatives of SRC, the West Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), and the Client Assistance Program (CAP) were invited to discuss DRS goals and priorities for carrying out the VR and supported employment programs. The Executive Directors of the SRC and SILC attend monthly DRS Executive Management Group (EMG) meetings to discuss various ongoing issues affecting the agency and are privy to the current goals, objectives, and strategies pertaining to specific agency issues. Additional involvement occurs through DRS staff members attending SRC and SILC meetings to share information regarding agency performance, needs assessment, and State Plan activities. All SRC members were provided draft copies of the PY 2016/FY 2017 State Plan for review. Additionally, the SRC formed a subcommittee on needs assessment and the State Plan. The SRC members discuss DRS activities at regularly scheduled meetings and provide input to DRS.

2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS.

The workforce development system (WDS) of West Virginia has identified the following goals for Program Years 2016—2019:

Goal 1: Workforce Development System Integration

In order for WIOA to be successful, a seamless one—stop delivery system must be created. As resources become more and more limited, partners in the workforce development system must work together in order to provide maximum benefit to our customers.

Goal 2: Customer—Driven Approach (Individual & Employer)

We will create an approach based on the needs of the job seekers as well as the needs of the employer. Our workforce development system must examine the needs of the employer, assess the skills and skills gaps of the workforce, and then create solutions to ensure maximum benefit to both customer groups.

Goal 3: Career Pathways Development

It is imperative that the workforce development system provide education and/or training for skills that lead to quality employment in high—demand jobs or entry—level occupations that lead to high demand jobs. Career pathways must be diverse with multiple entry and exit points allowing individuals of varying abilities, including low—skilled adults and youth with multiple barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities, to have realistic access to pathways. The State will support career pathways that help adults and youth enter the labor force and/or advance among multiple occupations, advance within an occupation, or move to a new occupation that has similar skills to a previous occupation.

Goal 4: Increase Opportunities for Youth

Unemployment rates for older youth and young adults remain substantially higher than those for the population as a whole. The likelihood of employment is highly correlated with educational levels; rates of employment and labor market participation for individuals with secondary credentials or less are substantially lower than for those with postsecondary credentials. For these reasons, the workforce development system must recognize the employment challenges faced by youth, particularly those without postsecondary credentials. Partners must work together to alleviate barriers and create opportunities for our youth.

DRS is fully committed to coordinate its activity and services with core and community partners to ensure successful completion of the aforementioned goals. The following goals highlight specific focus areas for DRS that will also contribute to the overall goals of the West Virginia WDS:

DRS Goal 1 — Provide integrated vocational rehabilitation services to West Virginians with disabilities to enable them to attain a high school education or greater. Compared to the national average of 28.8%, West Virginia has a much lower percentage of individuals 25 years and older having attained a bachelor's degree (18.8%; from http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/ 54000.html). For individuals with disabilities, the percentage is much lower, at 8.10%. While a majority (69.4%) of West Virginians with disabilities age 25 or over have a high school education or higher, nearly a third (30.6%) of this population does not, compared to only 10.9% of the State's population of 25 or older without a disability. Close relationships with the WV Adult Education Program (Adult Ed) and the WV Higher Education Policy Commission, as well as State and Local Education Agencies, will help to close this education gap.

DRS Goal 2 — Provide Pre—Employment Transition Services (PETS) to students with disabilities. Pursuant to requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and findings from the 2015 CSNA, DRS will, in cooperation with State and Local Education Agencies, provide Pre—Employment Transition Services (PETS) to students with disabilities, focusing on students 21 years or younger while still in high school. The provision of PETS offers students with disabilities information about careers, career opportunities, education and training programs, and self—advocacy. This information and

work—based experiences can lead to more well—informed career decision making and can empower students with disabilities to become more educated and skilled, moving toward a career that meets their needs. Activities under this DRS goal are provided in conjunction with those of the West Virginia Department of Education's Graduation 20/20 project. This initiative focuses on improving the graduation rate for West Virginia high school students with disabilities. In 2014, only 70.27% of students with a disability in West Virginia graduated from high school with a regular diploma. By 2018, Graduation 20/20 has a target increased graduation rate (with a regular diploma) of 81.44% for students with disabilities.

DRS Goal 3 — Provide integrated vocational rehabilitation services to West Virginians with disabilities to enable them to obtain competitive employment, especially in occupations and careers within emerging industries statewide. From a Bureau of Labor Statistics' December 2014 report, West Virginia had the lowest workforce participation rate (all individuals, with and without disabilities) among all the states and the District of Columbia, with 52.8% compared to the national average of 62.7%. Individuals with barriers to employment, including those with disabilities, have lower employment/workforce participation rates. Labor force participation among persons with disabilities in West Virginia has been steadily declining in recent years. Since 2010, labor force participation among these individuals is estimated to have fallen from 31.7% (63,609) to 29.1% (57,785) in 2013. As of 2013, labor force participation for persons with disabilities in West Virginia was almost 12 percentage points below the national rate of 41.0%. West Virginia has a high poverty rate, with 17.9% of residents below the poverty level compared to 15.4% nationally (http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/54000.html). The poverty rate is especially high for individuals with disabilities, with estimates that 24.9 % of persons with disabilities above the age of 18 (86,250 of 346,903) were living in poverty in 2013. Even among those employed, there are still significant numbers of West Virginians who earn below the poverty line.

Workforce WV expects the largest numeric change in employment growth (from 2012 to 2022) to occur in the industries of Health Care and Social Assistance (+23,142; 33.50%), Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation (+5,594; 35.39%), Government (+5,322; 14.22%), Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (+3,951; 34.18%), and Retail Trade (+3,561; 8.92%).

Findings from the 2015 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) indicated the need to improve vocational rehabilitation (VR) services in specific ways to warrant the creation of two additional DRS goals.

DRS Goal 4 — Improve access and availability of transportation options at the community level for DRS consumers who need transportation assistance to achieve or maintain competitive, integrated employment. FY 2015 CSNA findings from field staff surveys and Consumer Affairs Conference (CAC) attendee surveys indicate a need for continued efforts to increase the availability of transportation throughout the state. Based on responses by stakeholders across the state, transportation continues to be an issue and a perceived barrier to employment/training. DRS continues to implement several initiatives to help alleviate the need for transportation while taking into account the wide array of circumstances that West Virginians with disabilities experience. DRS has authorized the direct purchasing of cars for qualified consumers as well as the creation of the Vendor Travel Reimbursement for community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) who provide

transportation for consumers; counselors also encourage consumers' family members to assist with reimbursable transportation. DRS will continue to make sure that consumers are aware of these options and continue to identify targeted solutions to the varied transportation issues for West Virginians with disabilities, focusing specifically on individualized transportation solutions.

DRS Goal 5 — Continue to build collaborative relationships with community providers (including CRPs, Independent Living, and other community providers) to enhance the availability of services to DRS consumers. VR consumers require specialized services provided by CRPs statewide to achieve an integrated, competitive employment outcome. Responses from the CSNA indicate there still is a need for DRS to continue to improve collaborative relationships with all community providers. Findings from the CSNA point to a need to focus efforts on specific geographic areas within the state where miscommunication between community providers and DRS counselors continues.

3. ENSURE THAT THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES ARE BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

For the development of agency goals and priorities, DRS followed WIOA guidance in the development of the Unified State Plan. DRS worked closely with the WIOA core partners including WorkForce WV and WV Adult Education. The DRS goals and priorities were developed to support the overall state goals and priorities in achieving a well—integrated workforce development system that provided customer—focused services to job seekers in West Virginia.

The West Virginia State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) maintained involvement throughout the development and assessment of agency goals and priorities in a variety of ways and provided DRS with valued input and recommendations. DRS executive managers, representatives of SRC, the West Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), and the Client Assistance Program (CAP) were invited to discuss DRS goals and priorities for carrying out the VR and supported employment programs. The Executive Directors of the SRC and SILC attend monthly DRS Executive Management Group (EMG) meetings to discuss various ongoing issues affecting the agency and are privy to the current goals, objectives, and strategies pertaining to specific agency issues. Additional involvement occurs through DRS staff members attending SRC and SILC meetings to share information regarding agency performance, needs assessment, and State Plan activities. All SRC members were provided draft copies of the PY 2016/FY 2017 State Plan for review. Additionally, the SRC formed a subcommittee on needs assessment and the State Plan. The SRC members discuss DRS activities at regularly scheduled meetings and provide input to DRS.

A. THE MOST RECENT COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT, INCLUDING ANY UPDATES;

Findings from the 2015 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) indicated the need to improve vocational rehabilitation (VR) services in specific ways to warrant the creation of two additional DRS goals.

DRS Goal 4 — Improve access and availability of transportation options at the community level for DRS consumers who need transportation assistance to achieve or maintain competitive, integrated employment. FY 2015 CSNA findings from field staff surveys and

Consumer Affairs Conference (CAC) attendee surveys indicate a need for continued efforts to increase the availability of transportation throughout the state. Based on responses by stakeholders across the state, transportation continues to be an issue and a perceived barrier to employment/training. DRS continues to implement several initiatives to help alleviate the need for transportation while taking into account the wide array of circumstances that West Virginians with disabilities experience. DRS has authorized the direct purchasing of cars for qualified consumers as well as the creation of the Vendor Travel Reimbursement for community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) who provide transportation for consumers; counselors also encourage consumers' family members to assist with reimbursable transportation. DRS will continue to make sure that consumers are aware of these options and continue to identify targeted solutions to the varied transportation issues for West Virginians with disabilities, focusing specifically on individualized transportation solutions.

DRS Goal 5 — Continue to build collaborative relationships with community providers (including CRPs, Independent Living, and other community providers) to enhance the availability of services to DRS consumers. VR consumers require specialized services provided by CRPs statewide to achieve an integrated, competitive employment outcome. Responses from the CSNA indicate there still is a need for DRS to continue to improve collaborative relationships with all community providers. Findings from the CSNA point to a need to focus efforts on specific geographic areas within the state where miscommunication between community providers and DRS counselors continues.

B. THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

DRS acknowledges the legal requirement to report on the performance accountability indicators under Section 116 of WIOA. However, data collection on the performance accountability indicators is only beginning, making a report of DRS performance impossible at this time. As DRS moves forward in its task to place individuals with disabilities into competitive, integrated employment in program year (PY) 2016, it will collect and monitor participant data in order to generate reports on:

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

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

—The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;

—The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program;

—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

—The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers.

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.

For the development of agency goals and priorities, DRS followed WIOA guidance in the development of the Unified State Plan. DRS worked closely with the WIOA core partners including WorkForce WV and the WV Adult Education. The DRS goals and priorities were developed to support the overall state goals and priorities in achieving a well—integrated workforce development system that provided customer—focused services to job seekers in West Virginia.

The West Virginia State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) maintained involvement throughout the development and assessment of agency goals and priorities in a variety of ways and provided DRS with valued input and recommendations. DRS executive managers, representatives of SRC, the West Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), and the Client Assistance Program (CAP) were invited to discuss DRS goals and priorities for carrying out the VR and supported employment programs. The Executive Directors of the SRC and SILC attend monthly DRS Executive Management Group (EMG) meetings to discuss various ongoing issues affecting the agency and are privy to the current goals, objectives, and strategies pertaining to specific agency issues. Additional involvement occurs through DRS staff members attending SRC and SILC meetings to share information regarding agency performance, needs assessment, and State Plan activities. All SRC members were provided draft copies of the PY 2016/FY 2017 State Plan for review. Additionally, the SRC formed a subcommittee on needs assessment and the State Plan. The SRC members discuss DRS activities at regularly scheduled meetings and provide input to DRS.

M. ORDER OF SELECTION

Describe:

1. WHETHER THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL IMPLEMENT AND ORDER OF SELECTION. IF SO, DESCRIBE:

A. THE ORDER TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES.

The Division's Director will determine whether resources will be available to provide vocational rehabilitation services to all eligible individuals throughout the program year. If not, consistent with state and federal laws and regulations, the Director will establish restrictions regarding priority categories for selecting the order in which otherwise eligible individuals may be served. Only the Director may establish an order of selection.

In Program Year (PY) 2018, the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) will be operating under an order of selection (OS), as there will not be adequate resources to provide services to all eligible consumers. DRS will continue to place eligible applicants with non—significant disabilities (OS priority categories 3 and 4) and eligible applicants with significant disabilities (OS priority category 2) on the waiting list in PY 2018. DRS has not elected to serve eligible individuals regardless of any established order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment.

Description of Priority categories

Priority Categories

Following are the order of selection categories currently applicable to the Division's vocational rehabilitation program:

Category 1: Eligible applicants with the most significant disabilities.

Category 2: Eligible applicants with significant disabilities.

Category 3: Eligible applicants with non—significant disabilities comprised of individuals with a permanent disability and whose service provision will be completed in less than nine months.

Category 4: Eligible applicants with non—significant disabilities comprised of individuals with a non—permanent disability.

The Counselor will determine the significance of an individual's disability after conducting a diagnostic study that allows for assessing the permanency of the disability, the number of functional capacities limited by the disability, the number of vocational rehabilitation services needed, and the time in service required to complete those services. These criteria are used when determining whether the individual's disability is non—significant, significant, or most significant.

Definitions

Individual with a Most Significant Disability (MSD).

An individual who:

a. Has a permanent physical or mental impairment which seriously limits three or more functional capacities (mobility, communication, self—care, self—direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerances, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome;

b. Will require two or more vocational rehabilitation services in addition to counseling and assessment; and

c. Those services will require more than twelve months.

Alternatively, any individual who will be receiving services under an individualized supported employment plan for employment will be determined to be MSD.

Individual with Significant Disability (SD).

An individual who:

a. Has a permanent physical or mental impairment which seriously limits one or more functional capacities (mobility, communication, self—care, self—direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerances, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome;

b. Will require one or more vocational rehabilitation services in addition to counseling and assessment; and

c. Those services will require nine months or more.

Individual with Non—Significant Disability.

An individual who:

a. Has a non—permanent disability, or

b. Has a permanent disability whose service provision will be completed in less than nine months.

Time in Service

For the purpose of determining significance of disability, "time in service" is considered to begin upon implementation of the Individualized Plan for Employment and end upon entering Status 22 (in employment).

Automatic Classification as an Individual with Significant Disability

An individual who is a Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiary or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipient will be coded automatically as SD. However, if the individual meets MSD criteria, that designation will apply.

Recertification

An individual may be recertified from SD to MSD if all MSD criteria are met. In such instances, the Counselor will note appropriate circumstances in the Action Statement/Details section of the consumer's case record.

DRS Responsibilities when Implementing an Order of Selection

An OS has no impact on the DRS obligation for case finding and referrals. DRS has a continuing responsibility to make the public and referral sources aware of the services it has to offer individuals with disabilities, especially those with the most significant disabilities. Furthermore, DRS shall ensure its funding arrangements for providing services, including third party arrangements and establishment grants, are consistent with the OS. Any funding arrangements that are inconsistent with the OS will be renegotiated.

Priority of categories to receive VR services under the order

OS Administration Process

DRS will continue to place eligible applicants with non—significant disabilities (OS priority categories 3 and 4) and eligible applicants with significant disabilities (OS priority category 2) on the waiting list in PY 2018.

Services necessary for determination of eligibility and assessment of rehabilitation needs are exempted from the Division's order of selection. Any individual notified by the Counselor of classification as a member of an open priority category shall be exempted should that category later be closed.

Plan for Implementing the Order of Selection

DRS will strictly adhere to federal regulations in administering its OS. DRS will continue to: (1) implement the order on a statewide basis; (2) notify all eligible persons of their assignment to a particular priority category and their right to appeal this assignment; (3) assure continuity of services to all persons who were receiving services under an

Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) prior to the effective date of the closure order; and (4) assure that funding arrangements are consistent with the OS [34 CFR 361.36(e)].

When the order of selection is implemented, DRS will continue to ensure that an eligible individual who is not assigned to an open OS category has access to services provided under the information and referral system [Section 101(a)(5)(D) of the Act]. Information and referral services include: (1) providing VR information and guidance to assist the individual to achieve employment and (2) appropriately referring the individual to other federal and state programs, including other statewide workforce development programs, that are best suited to meet the individual's specific employment needs [Section 101(a)(20)(A) of the Act].

When making a referral, DRS will provide the individual with:

—a notice of the referral;

—information about a specific point of contact within the program to which the individual is being referred; and

—information and advice about the most suitable service for assisting the individual to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment [Section 101(a)(20)(B)(ii) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.37(b)(2)].

DRS will continue to maintain the individual's service record to include documentation on the nature and scope of the information and referral services it provides to the individual and documentation on the referral itself [34 CFR 361.47(a)(13)].

DRS will open and close priority categories as needed in PY 2018, so long as the order of the categories is maintained and continuity of services to all individuals selected for services is assured.

DRS will use the individual's date of application to rank individuals within a priority category. This equitable and reasonable factor provides a method of selecting individuals from a waiting list when DRS has enough resources to serve some, but not all, individuals in that OS priority category.

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER.

In PY 2018, DRS will be operating under an order of selection (OS), as there will not be adequate resources to provide services to all eligible consumers.

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS.

In PY 2018, the agency plans to serve 8,133 individuals with an expected outcome goal of 1,229 rehabilitants within a service time frame of 6 and 28 months and at a cost of $12,561,095 for all priority categories.

D. THE TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER.

In PY 2018, it is projected that:

—5,551 individuals in OS Category 1 will be served. Approximately 566 individuals in this OS Category will exit with employment after receiving services. Approximately 513

individuals in this OS Category will exit without employment after receiving services. The time within which the goal of employment is to be achieved for individuals in this OS Category is estimated to be 28 months. The cost of services for all individuals in this OS Category is estimated to be $8,693,198.

—2,579 individuals in OS Category 2 will be served. Approximately 660individuals in this OS Category will exit with employment after receiving services. Approximately 526 individuals in this OS Category will exit without employment after receiving services. The time within which the goal of employment is to be achieved for individuals in this OS Category is estimated to be 22 months. The cost of services for all individuals in this OS Category is estimated to be $3,864,635.

—3 individuals in OS Category 3 will be served. Approximately 3 individuals in this OS Category will exit with employment after receiving services. Approximately 0 individuals in this OS Category will exit without employment after receiving services. The time within which the goal of employment is to be achieved for individuals in this OS Category is estimated to be 6 months. The cost of services for all individuals in this OS Category is estimated to be $3,262.

—0 individuals in OS Category 4 will be served. Approximately 0 individuals in this OS Category will exit with employment after receiving services. Approximately 0 individuals in this OS Category will exit without employment after receiving services. The time within which the goal of employment is to be achieved for individuals in this OS Category is estimated to be 0 months. The cost of services for all individuals in this OS Category is estimated to be $0.

E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES; AND

DRS' Client Services Manual clearly outlines OS Categories to ensure priority services for persons with MSD throughout the state. Furthermore, DRS has budgeted sufficient resources to serve all consumers with disabilities in all open OS Categories with priority given to persons with MSD. DRS utilizes data and caseload management reports to monitor and ensure services to OS Category 1, persons with MSD, are maintained through the PY.

DRS will reopen OS Categories as resources become available. DRS will assess the agency's resources and ability to maintain continuous VR services prior to opening up each OS Category. DRS will ensure that individuals with MSD are being served, with no individuals with MSD on the waitlist prior to opening the next OS Category.

When a closed category is reopened for services, individuals in that category will be notified in writing by DRS that they can now receive services. DRS will ensure all individuals selected for services will continue to receive those services without interruption.

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.

DRS has not elected to serve eligible individuals regardless of any established order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment.

N. GOALS AND PLANS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS.

1. SPECIFY THE STATE'S GOALS AND PRIORITIES FOR FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER SECTION 603 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES.

The methodology of the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) for distribution of Title VI—B funds is based exclusively on a fee—for—service authorization process with approved vendors of supported employment (SE) services. DRS uses no Title VI—B funds for administrative costs. Utilizing the DRS fee schedule for SE services, rehabilitation counselors utilize Title VI—B and Title I funds to provide needed SE services for eligible individuals with the most significant disabilities.

DRS established a statewide fee—for—service funding approach for job development services for SE—eligible individuals. This structure provides vendors an effective and efficient way of meeting the costs of this critical element of the job placement process. The process provides reimbursement for employment outcomes and brings increased energy and vendor resources to support job development activities.

In FY 2015, DRS exhausted the $300,000.00 of the Title VI—B funds to serve individuals with the most significant disabilities in its SE program through community rehabilitation program (CRP) services. When Title VI—B funds ($300,000 total per year with $150,000 set aside for youth with disabilities) are exhausted, DRS defrays supported employment program service costs with Title I funds for individuals who require the services or who qualify and have not yet been served under the supported employment program. In FY 2015, DRS authorized $474,215.67 SE services for 151 youth with disabilities and $254,054.95 in SE services for 109 adults with disabilities.

DRS plans to continue using three prevalent models of supported employment services: individual placement, mobile work crews, and enclaves. Additionally, DRS will encourage and support development of affirmative industries that integrate workers with disabilities and workers without disabilities throughout the CRP network.

DRS policies defining competitive employment settings promote linking CRPs with federal and state work contracts that may exist within the community. Such links expand job opportunities for individuals receiving SE, particularly those who reside in rural locations. This approach also directs Title VI—B and Title I funds into placement—related services and activities.

2. DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES TO BE CONDUCTED, WITH FUNDS RESERVED PURSUANT TO SECTION 603(D), FOR YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING:

A. THE PROVISION OF EXTENDED SERVICES FOR A PERIOD NOT TO EXCEED 4 YEARS; AND

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) continues to strongly promote and support training and support services for youth with disabilities, especially those with the most significant disabilities. DRS uses its fiscal and case management systems to continuously monitor resources (especially reserved funds to be used with youth with the

most significant disabilities) being used for Extended Supported Employment Services (e.g., job coaching for supported employment).

DRS does not use Title VI—b funds for administrative costs in the provision of SE services. When Title VI—B funds ($300,000 total, with a minimum of $150,000 set aside for youth with disabilities under the age of 24) are exhausted, DRS defrays supported employment program service costs with Title I funds for individuals who require the services or who qualify and have not yet been served under the supported employment program. If Title VI-B funds set aside for youth are not exhausted, they may be used for the provision of extended services for youth under the age of 24. Please see the next section for additional information regarding extended services for youth.

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.

Through a combined effort with other disability organizations, $100,000 was appropriated by the West Virginia Legislature for supported employment follow—along services (extended supported employment services). DRS serves as the fiscal agent for these funds. DRS has created program guidelines governing the use of state—appropriated funds for extended services under the supported employment program created by state statute in 1993. The sole use of the state funds attached to this program is to provide extended services for individuals not eligible from any other funding source. All providers of supported employment services may access these funds for individuals who are eligible under the guidelines. At the end of FY 2015, DRS had sponsored 67 individuals in the extended supported employment program so they could maintain and retain their jobs within the community. This figure represents the cooperative efforts of 13 CRPs.

As appropriate, the DRS will use the State funds allocated ($100,000) for Extended Supported Employment Services (ESES) to expand employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities (MSD). DRS will continue to educate legislature regarding ESES for youth with MSD to ensure continued funding for ESES.

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.

DRS Goal 1 — Provide integrated vocational rehabilitation services to West Virginians with disabilities to enable them to attain a high school education or greater.

DRS will continue to monitor the educational achievement of all of its consumers, especially those in the transition youth (TY) population. Youth have become a primary focus in vocational rehabilitation and DRS will work closely and diligently with State and Local

Education Agencies to ensure that its TY population receives the services that it needs, including pre-employment transition services for high school students with disabilities. Each high school in WV has a DRS counselor assigned to it to guarantee the service provision of students with disabilities. A greater emphasis is now being placed for counselors to do outreach with these students and their parents/guardians during their sophomore year (rather than their junior year, as was formerly practiced) in order to maximize the counseling opportunities.

DRS counselors will continue to take part in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) development of students with disabilities when they are invited to do so. Counselors will also stay in contact with educators to discuss and resolve educational difficulties as they arise. DRS will also work closely with WV Adult Education, referring consumers as needed, to ensure that individuals with disabilities have an adequate opportunity to obtain a completed high school level education.

DRS Goal 2 - Provide Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) to students with disabilities.

The 2015 comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA) indicated that job exploration counseling was the most frequently reported pre-employment transition service need. In accordance with this, and per the requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), DRS has recently restructured its field services unit, creating a subdivision of counselors that focus solely on providing services, including Pre-employment Transition Services (PETS), to students with disabilities. DRS counselors in high schools will provide PETS to students with disabilities, especially job exploration counseling, in order to give students with disabilities and their parents/guardians a better understanding of labor market conditions, current and emerging career opportunities, and the necessary education and training requirements related to those opportunities.

In addition to ongoing program activities, DRS will host a one week summer workshop for transition students who are juniors entering into their senior year of high school. The workshop will be held in seven areas across the state. DRS staff participating include the PETS Counselor, Employment Specialist, and RSA assigned to the PETS territory. Class will start at 9:00am and end at 4:00pm. Class size for each of the seven workshops will be approximately 30 students. Students will earn minimum wage for the time that they attend. DRS is also requesting WorkForce WV and WV Adult Education to participate in the workshops to provide additional information to the students.

Topics to be covered:

-Career planning

-Career preparation

-SSI/SSDI Information

-Understanding the importance of necessary personal documents, e.g., social security card, driver's license, birth certificate, pay stubs.

-Communication

-Conflict Management

-Employer Expectations

--Attendance and Punctuality

--Timeliness of task completion

--Be able to work without supervision

--Positive work ethic

--Manage multiple tasks

-High-growth Jobs

-Personal Brand

-Job Hunting Tools- resumes, cover letters, interviews, and digital profiles

In 2016, DRS will partner with Community Access, Incorporated to implement a program to support the design and implementation of programming and outreach while addressing the new direction mandated by WIOA. Specifically, the program will address the five mandated PETS for high school students with disabilities through an expansion of the Student Transition to Employment Program (STEP). The program will assist school districts by offering training and technical assistance in setting up community-based work experience programs for students with disabilities. The project will help level the playing field between resource-rich metropolitan areas and isolated rural settings that often have few services available. In addition, a strong statewide outreach to teachers, parents, students, and other VR stakeholders will be a component of the project. A concerted effort will be made to include historically under-served groups including students in the foster care system, those returning from out-of-state placements, and those students on the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) track. The project has the following goals:

1. To assist school districts in setting up community-based Work Exploration programs.

2. To develop statewide parent training network utilizing the Parent Community Resource Centers.

3. To develop a network of specialists to work with DRS, WorkForce WV, and WV Department of Education (WVDOE) staff.

4. To develop a statewide cross-sector outreach program with a strong emphasis on traditionally underserved populations.

DRS Goal 3 — Provide integrated vocational rehabilitation services to West Virginians with disabilities to enable them to obtain competitive employment, especially in occupations and careers within emerging industries statewide.

Collaboration with WorkForce WV

DRS will maintain regular communication with WorkForce WV to stay abreast of trends in employment, including changes in education and training requirements. This will be accomplished through regular meetings of the workforce development system (WDS), written communications, teleconferences, and other media, as appropriate. DRS, particularly through its employment specialists, will also stay informed of emerging careers and occupations via WorkForce WV's Labor Market Information website. DRS employment

specialists continuously collect employment information from their business contacts. This information is shared within the WDS.

Use of DRS Employment Specialists

DRS will continue to use its employment specialists to gather information regarding employers at the local level, including information regarding job placements for individuals with disabilities and regarding current and expected employer needs.

DRS has an in-house Employer Services Section that specializes in providing employers with disability-related information, services, and pre-screened job seekers. The DRS Employer Services Section has 12 employment specialists that cover all 55 counties in West Virginia. DRS' team of employment specialists provide business owners and employers with critical business options and assistance in staffing, employee retention strategies, education on disability-related issues, job accommodations, and information about financial incentives for employers who hire individuals with disabilities.

Direct contact with employers is a key strategy to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities for vocational rehabilitation (VR) consumers, including students with disabilities. Employment specialists therefore contact employers directly to identify current and future job openings. To facilitate this, DRS utilizes labor market information provided by WorkForce WV to identify the top employers in each county; contact is always made with the top ten employers in each county. When meeting with employers, employment specialists provide valuable information, including the DRS Employer Resource Guide. The resource guide provides the following information:

-Staffing services

-Training programs and incentives for hiring people with disabilities

-Financial incentives

-Accessibility assessments

-Accommodating employees with disabilities

-Basic disability etiquette

-Attitudinal barriers

-Americans with Disabilities Act

-Locating a DRS office

-Where to find additional resources

The Employer Services Section maintains a database of each DRS-employer interaction with VR employment specialists. The information collected includes the business name, contact person, and current job openings by occupation. If needed, a referral to the DRS Rehabilitation Technology Unit is made to address workplace accommodations. This list is distributed to field staff to potentially match a job-ready VR consumer with a current job opening. Through positive working relationships, 19 employers, including some of the largest in the state, now send job postings directly to DRS' Employer Services Section.

The Employer Services Section also works with employers to better serve transitioning youth with disabilities, including providing career exploration opportunities for students with disabilities. In 2015, DRS debuted the Positive Outcomes within Education and Rehabilitation (POWER) program. POWER is a job shadowing program that offers transitioning students, who may be having a difficult time choosing a career path, the opportunity to experience an occupation by spending time with a professional working in the students' vocational goal/career field of interest. The POWER program allows the student the opportunity to experience an occupation prior to committing to training. It guides the student to take a serious, realistic look at the occupation, allowing the student to make a more informed choice.

Assistive Technology

DRS will continue to provide rehabilitation technology solutions to individuals with disabilities as needed so that those individuals can become employed or maintain employment. DRS has developed working relationships and agreements for the coordination of activities with the West Virginia Assistive Technology System (WVATS) of the West Virginia University Center for Excellence in Disabilities. The WVATS' role is to provide access to and help with the acquisition of assistive technology (AT) devices and services for individuals with disabilities. WVATS also provides device demonstrations, device loans, training, AT information, and technical assistance.

DRS has a rehabilitation technology unit, with two locations (in Nitro, covering the southern half of the state and in Morgantown, covering the North), which provides AT consultations and solutions to eligible VR consumers with AT needs statewide. With the coordination of services between DRS and WVATS, assurances are made that needed AT solutions can be provided to individuals with disabilities.

DRS Goal 4 — Improve access and availability of transportation options at the community level for DRS consumers who need transportation assistance to achieve or maintain competitive, integrated employment.

Transportation is an ongoing issue for West Virginians with disabilities, due to the rural nature of the state. A large proportion of the State's inhabitants live far away from jobs, agency offices, and other resources. DRS continues its commitment to reduce transportation barriers for consumers with disabilities and focuses on individual transportation solutions (ITS) to satisfy immediate transportation needs. To help reduce these barriers, DRS counselors will encourage planning for transportation needs early in the development of a consumer's rehabilitation program. At application, counselors will identify transportation issues and focus on finding solutions to include in the consumer's Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). This will ensure that the ability of consumers to reach their vocational goal is not impeded by preventable transportation barriers. Transportation issues also will be addressed by the standard instrument prescribed for routine use by supervisors and quality assurance staff in case reviews. Beyond ITS, DRS will continue to assign responsibility to a staff member in each branch office to maintain a list and working knowledge of local transportation options and will continue to participate in local and state initiatives to coordinate and expand transportation resources.

DRS Goal 5 — Continue to build collaborative relationships with community providers [including community rehabilitation programs (CRPs), Independent Living, and other

community providers] to enhance the availability of services to DRS consumers. A large amount of the success that DRS has in its mission to enable and empower individuals with disabilities to work and to live independently hinges on its relationships with CRPs. In general, DRS has good working relationships with the various CRPs throughout the State. However, CSNA results suggest that improvements can be made, particularly in specific geographic areas. To facilitate this improvement, DRS has established a number of strategies to put into action:

- Continue to educate field staff, especially the new counselors, about CRPs and their services. Use of the new 'CRP Locator' tool (a web-based, user-friendly vendor guide) and counselor CRP site visits will increase awareness of available service options, which will help to maintain collaborative relationships with CRPs and enhance the availability of services to DRS consumers.

- Continue to maintain regular communications between DRS and community providers in each district and at the state level. Each DRS district will continue to host joint meetings with DRS district and branch office staff and CRPs in those districts to provide opportunities for CRP representatives and DRS personnel to discuss local service needs of DRS consumers. Subsequent to each meeting, the local DRS office will be required to send a brief report to the CRP Program Manager. This process will allow all parties involved in the expansion of community-based services to be kept informed of progress and issues. The Division will continue to examine the information and recommendations collected from various meetings between CRP and DRS staff members.

Progress on communication will continue to be made as the Division acquires more understanding of the issues and barriers facing the CRP and DRS staff members in their service provision to persons with significant disabilities in WV. Ongoing communication activities with CRPs also will include:

a. An e-mail list-serv with all current vendors that will be updated periodically and utilized to send out training opportunities, policy changes, and general updates when needed.

b. DRS counselors in each district will continue to be assigned as liaisons to each CRP and will continue to be required to complete a monthly update regarding the CRP. They will collect this information by visits and/or phone calls. Having CRP liaisons that regularly discuss service-related issues specific to the local service area(s) will aid in maintaining collaborative working relationships and enhancing the availability of services to consumers.

c. Two rehabilitation specialists covering all districts in the state will provide technical assistance to CRPs and DRS staff. They will make site visits to CRP and DRS district and branch offices. During these visits, they will provide technical assistance and schedule training and other meetings that need to occur. They will serve as a communication link when issues arise and make themselves available to attend the communication meetings and transition team meetings. - Conduct site visits to ensure that community providers continue to meet DRS standards and requirements.

- Increase the service provision of acknowledged vendors and work with community providers to expand their service areas to enhance the availability of community services within needed areas.

- Continue to conduct Transition Team meetings at the district level with DRS, WV Department of Education, and CRP staff members. The meetings will be held to promote interagency collaboration by allowing staff from each agency/CRP to become familiar with the different eligibility requirements and service definitions across agencies. - Continue to conduct cross training and face-to-face meetings with community partners at the local level.

- Continue to assign liaison responsibilities to staff members and provide them guidance about the purpose of DRS participation in community events.

- Monitor the DRS counselors/supervisors/managers' perception of the quality of CRP services through a survey instrument.

- Monitor and assess the impact of the Quality Assurance unit on the counselor's case management practices by using data generated from the quality assurance specialists' review of cases.

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.

DRS will continue to provide rehabilitation technology solutions to individuals with disabilities as needed so that those individuals can become employed or maintain employment. DRS has developed working relationships and agreements for the coordination of activities with the West Virginia Assistive Technology System (WVATS) of the West Virginia University Center for Excellence in Disabilities. The WVATS' role is to provide access to and help with the acquisition of assistive technology (AT) devices and services for individuals with disabilities. WVATS also provides device demonstrations, device loans, training, AT information, and technical assistance.

DRS has a rehabilitation technology unit, with two locations (in Nitro, covering the southern half of the state and in Morgantown, covering the North), which provides AT consultations and solutions to eligible VR consumers with AT needs statewide. With the coordination of services between DRS and WVATS, assurances are made that needed AT solutions can be provided to individuals with disabilities.

3. THE OUTREACH PROCEDURES THAT WILL BE USED TO IDENTIFY AND SERVE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE MINORITIES, INCLUDING THOSE WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, AS WELL AS THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM.

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) has made improvements in minority access to vocational rehabilitation (VR) services, as indicated by successfully exceeding the RSA requirement for Indicator 2.1 (equal access). In FY 2015, the ratio of minority service rate over non—minority service rate was 0.883. The 88.3% service rate ratio is above the RSA benchmark of 80%.

The agency's branch office locations represent statewide coverage. These offices are able to serve individuals with disabilities, including those individuals from minority backgrounds, in all areas of the state. Many cities within WV which have a relatively high proportion of

minorities in the population (e.g., Charleston, Huntington, and Beckley) have a DRS branch office located within.

Additionally, DRS will continue to utilize tools and techniques which have allowed the agency to have success in its outreach to minority populations, such as:

—DRS will continue to use geographic information systems (GIS), as appropriate, to pinpoint geographic locations with potentially underserved minority populations in the State. This will allow for more effective and efficient outreach to those populations.

—DRS will continue to depend on local outreach efforts by branch office field staff to bring individuals with disabilities, including those individuals from minority backgrounds, into the VR system.

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).

DRS Goal 1 — Provide integrated vocational rehabilitation services to West Virginians with disabilities to enable them to attain a high school education or greater.

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) will continue to monitor the educational achievement of all of its consumers, especially those in the transition youth (TY) population. Youth have become a primary focus in vocational rehabilitation and DRS will work closely and diligently with State and Local Education Agencies to ensure that its TY population receives the services that it needs, including pre—employment transition services for high school students with disabilities. Each high school in WV has a DRS counselor assigned to it to guarantee the service provision of students with disabilities. A greater emphasis is now being placed for counselors to do outreach with these students and their parents/guardians during their sophomore year (rather than their junior year, as was formerly practiced) in order to maximize the counseling opportunities.

DRS counselors will continue to take part in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) development of students with disabilities when they are invited to do so. Counselors will also stay in contact with educators to discuss and resolve educational difficulties as they arise. DRS will also work closely with WV Adult Education, referring consumers as needed, to ensure that individuals with disabilities have an adequate opportunity to obtain a completed high school level education.

DRS Goal 2 — Provide Pre—Employment Transition Services (PETS) to students with disabilities. The 2015 comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA) indicated that job exploration counseling was the most frequently reported pre—employment transition service need. In accordance with this, and per the requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), DRS has recently restructured its field services unit, creating a subdivision of counselors that focus solely on providing services, including Pre—employment Transition Services (PETS), to students with disabilities. DRS counselors in high schools will provide PETS to students with disabilities, especially job exploration

counseling, in order to give students with disabilities and their parents/guardians a better understanding of labor market conditions, current and emerging career opportunities, and the necessary education and training requirements related to those opportunities.

In addition to ongoing program activities, DRS will host a one week summer workshop for transition students who are juniors entering into their senior year of high school. The workshop will be held in seven areas across the state. DRS staff participating include the PETS Counselor, Employment Specialist, and RSA assigned to the PETS territory. Class will start at 9:00am and end at 4:00pm. Class size for each of the seven workshops will be approximately 30 students. Students will earn minimum wage for the time that they attend. DRS is also requesting WorkForce WV and WV Adult Education to participate in the workshops to provide additional information to the students.

Topics to be covered:

—Career planning

—Career preparation

—SSI/SSDI Information

—Understanding the importance of necessary personal documents, e.g., social security card, driver's license, birth certificate, pay stubs.

—Communication

—Conflict Management

—Employer Expectations

——Attendance and Punctuality

——Timeliness of task completion

——Be able to work without supervision

——Positive work ethic

——Manage multiple tasks

—High—growth Jobs

—Personal Brand

—Job Hunting Tools— resumes, cover letters, interviews, and digital profiles

In 2016, DRS will partner with Community Access, Incorporated to implement a program to support the design and implementation of programming and outreach while addressing the new direction mandated by WIOA. Specifically, the program will address the five mandated PETS for high school students with disabilities through an expansion of the Student Transition to Employment Program (STEP). The program will assist school districts by offering training and technical assistance in setting up community—based work experience programs for students with disabilities. The project will help level the playing field between resource—rich metropolitan areas and isolated rural settings that often have few services available. In addition, a strong statewide outreach to teachers, parents, students, and other

VR stakeholders will be a component of the project. A concerted effort will be made to include historically under—served groups including students in the foster care system, those returning from out—of—state placements, and those students on the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) track. The project has the following goals:

1. To assist school districts in setting up community—based Work Exploration programs.

2. To develop statewide parent training network utilizing the Parent Community Resource Centers.

3. To develop a network of specialists to work with DRS, WorkForce WV, and WV Department of Education (WVDOE) staff.

4. To develop a statewide cross—sector outreach program with a strong emphasis on traditionally underserved populations.

5. IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE.

A large amount of the success that DRS has in its mission to enable and empower individuals with disabilities to work and to live independently hinges on its relationships with CRPs. In general, DRS has good working relationships with the various CRPs throughout the State. However, CSNA results suggest that improvements can be made, particularly in specific geographic areas. To facilitate this improvement, DRS has established a number of strategies to put into action:

— Continue to educate field staff, especially the new counselors, about CRPs and their services. Use of the new 'CRP Locator' tool (a web—based, user—friendly vendor guide) and counselor CRP site visits will increase awareness of available service options, which will help to maintain collaborative relationships with CRPs and enhance the availability of services to DRS consumers.

— Continue to maintain regular communications between DRS and community providers in each district and at the state level. Each DRS district will continue to host joint meetings with DRS district and branch office staff and CRPs in those districts to provide opportunities for CRP representatives and DRS personnel to discuss local service needs of DRS consumers. Subsequent to each meeting, the local DRS office will be required to send a brief report to the CRP Program Manager. This process will allow all parties involved in the expansion of community—based services to be kept informed of progress and issues. The Division will continue to examine the information and recommendations collected from various meetings between CRP and DRS staff members.

Progress on communication will continue to be made as the Division acquires more understanding of the issues and barriers facing the CRP and DRS staff members in their service provision to persons with significant disabilities in WV. Ongoing communication activities with CRPs also will include:

a. An e—mail list—serv with all current vendors that will be updated periodically and utilized to send out training opportunities, policy changes, and general updates when needed.

b. DRS counselors in each district will continue to be assigned as liaisons to each CRP and will continue to be required to complete a monthly update regarding the CRP. They will collect this information by visits and/or phone calls. Having CRP liaisons that regularly discuss service—related issues specific to the local service area(s) will aid in maintaining collaborative working relationships and enhancing the availability of services to consumers.

c. Two rehabilitation specialists covering all districts in the state will provide technical assistance to CRPs and DRS staff. They will make site visits to CRP and DRS district and branch offices. During these visits, they will provide technical assistance and schedule training and other meetings that need to occur. They will serve as a communication link when issues arise and make themselves available to attend the communication meetings and transition team meetings.

— Conduct site visits to ensure that community providers continue to meet DRS standards and requirements.

— Increase the service provision of acknowledged vendors and work with community providers to expand their service areas to enhance the availability of community services within needed areas.

— Continue to conduct Transition Team meetings at the district level with DRS, WV Department of Education, and CRP staff members. The meetings will be held to promote interagency collaboration by allowing staff from each agency/CRP to become familiar with the different eligibility requirements and service definitions across agencies.

— Continue to conduct cross training and face—to—face meetings with community partners at the local level.

— Continue to assign liaison responsibilities to staff members and provide them guidance about the purpose of DRS participation in community events.

— Monitor the DRS counselors/supervisors/managers' perception of the quality of CRP services through a survey instrument.

— Monitor and assess the impact of the Quality Assurance unit on the counselor's case management practices by using data generated from the quality assurance specialists' review of cases.

6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.

DRS acknowledges the legal requirement to report on the performance accountability indicators under Section 116 of WIOA. However, data collection on the performance accountability indicators is only beginning, making a report of DRS performance impossible at this time. As DRS moves forward in its task to place individuals with disabilities into competitive, integrated employment in program year (PY) 2016, it will collect and monitor participant data in order to generate reports on:

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

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

—The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;

—The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program;

—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

—The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers.

7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

Collaboration with WorkForce WV

DRS will maintain regular communication with WorkForce WV to stay abreast of trends in employment, including changes in education and training requirements. This will be accomplished through regular meetings of the workforce development system (WDS), written communications, teleconferences, and other media, as appropriate. DRS, particularly through its employment specialists, will also stay informed of emerging careers and occupations via WorkForce WV's Labor Market Information website. DRS employment specialists continuously collect employment information from their business contacts. This information is shared within the WDS.

Use of DRS Employment Specialists

DRS will continue to use its employment specialists to gather information regarding employers at the local level, including information regarding job placements for individuals with disabilities and regarding current and expected employer needs.

DRS has an in—house Employer Services Section that specializes in providing employers with disability—related information, services, and pre—screened job seekers. The DRS Employer Services Section has 12 employment specialists that cover all 55 counties in West Virginia. DRS' team of employment specialists provide business owners and employers with critical business options and assistance in staffing, employee retention strategies, education on disability—related issues, job accommodations, and information about financial incentives for employers who hire individuals with disabilities.

Direct contact with employers is a key strategy to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities for vocational rehabilitation (VR) consumers, including students with disabilities. Employment specialists therefore contact employers directly to identify current and future job openings. To facilitate this, DRS utilizes labor market information provided by WorkForce WV to identify the top employers in each county; contact is always made with the top ten employers in each county. When meeting

with employers, employment specialists provide valuable information, including the DRS Employer Resource Guide. The resource guide provides the following information:

—Staffing services

—Training programs and incentives for hiring people with disabilities

—Financial incentives

—Accessibility assessments

—Accommodating employees with disabilities

—Basic disability etiquette

—Attitudinal barriers

—Americans with Disabilities Act

—Locating a DRS office

—Where to find additional resources

The Employer Services Section maintains a database of each DRS—employer interaction with VR employment specialists. The information collected includes the business name, contact person, and current job openings by occupation. If needed, a referral to the DRS Rehabilitation Technology Unit is made to address workplace accommodations. This list is distributed to field staff to potentially match a job—ready VR consumer with a current job opening. Through positive working relationships, 19 employers, including some of the largest in the state, now send job postings directly to DRS' Employer Services Section.

The Employer Services Section also works with employers to better serve transitioning youth with disabilities, including providing career exploration opportunities for students with disabilities. In 2015, DRS debuted the Positive Outcomes within Education and Rehabilitation (POWER) program. POWER is a job shadowing program that offers transitioning students, who may be having a difficult time choosing a career path, the opportunity to experience an occupation by spending time with a professional working in the students' vocational goal/career field of interest. The POWER program allows the student the opportunity to experience an occupation prior to committing to training. It guides the student to take a serious, realistic look at the occupation, allowing the student to make a more informed choice.

8. HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

DRS Goal 1 — Provide integrated vocational rehabilitation services to West Virginians with disabilities to enable them to attain a high school education or greater.

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) will continue to monitor the educational achievement of all of its consumers, especially those in the transition youth (TY) population. Youth have become a primary focus in vocational rehabilitation and DRS will work closely and diligently with State and Local Education Agencies to ensure that its

TY population receives the services that it needs, including pre—employment transition services for high school students with disabilities. Each high school in WV has a DRS counselor assigned to it to guarantee the service provision of students with disabilities. A greater emphasis is now being placed for counselors to do outreach with these students and their parents/guardians during their sophomore year (rather than their junior year, as was formerly practiced) in order to maximize the counseling opportunities.

DRS counselors will continue to take part in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) development of students with disabilities when they are invited to do so. Counselors will also stay in contact with educators to discuss and resolve educational difficulties as they arise. DRS will also work closely with WV Adult Education, referring consumers as needed, to ensure that individuals with disabilities have an adequate opportunity to obtain a completed high school level education.

DRS Goal 2 — Provide Pre—Employment Transition Services (PETS) to students with disabilities.

The 2015 comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA) indicated that job exploration counseling was the most frequently reported pre—employment transition service need. In accordance with this, and per the requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), DRS has recently restructured its field services unit, creating a subdivision of counselors that focus solely on providing services, including Pre—employment Transition Services (PETS), to students with disabilities. DRS counselors in high schools will provide PETS to students with disabilities, especially job exploration counseling, in order to give students with disabilities and their parents/guardians a better understanding of labor market conditions, current and emerging career opportunities, and the necessary education and training requirements related to those opportunities.

In addition to ongoing program activities, DRS will host a one week summer workshop for transition students who are juniors entering into their senior year of high school. The workshop will be held in seven areas across the state. DRS staff participating include the PETS Counselor, Employment Specialist, and RSA assigned to the PETS territory. Class will start at 9:00am and end at 4:00pm. Class size for each of the seven workshops will be approximately 30 students. Students will earn minimum wage for the time that they attend. DRS is also requesting WorkForce WV and WV Adult Education to participate in the workshops to provide additional information to the students.

Topics to be covered:

—Career planning

—Career preparation

—SSI/SSDI Information

—Understanding the importance of necessary personal documents, e.g., social security card, driver's license, birth certificate, pay stubs.

—Communication

—Conflict Management

—Employer Expectations

——Attendance and Punctuality

——Timeliness of task completion

——Be able to work without supervision

——Positive work ethic

——Manage multiple tasks

—High—growth Jobs

—Personal Brand

—Job Hunting Tools— resumes, cover letters, interviews, and digital profiles

In 2016, DRS will partner with Community Access, Incorporated to implement a program to support the design and implementation of programming and outreach while addressing the new direction mandated by WIOA. Specifically, the program will address the five mandated PETS for high school students with disabilities through an expansion of the Student Transition to Employment Program (STEP). The program will assist school districts by offering training and technical assistance in setting up community—based work experience programs for students with disabilities. The project will help level the playing field between resource—rich metropolitan areas and isolated rural settings that often have few services available. In addition, a strong statewide outreach to teachers, parents, students, and other VR stakeholders will be a component of the project. A concerted effort will be made to include historically under—served groups including students in the foster care system, those returning from out—of—state placements, and those students on the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) track. The project has the following goals:

1. To assist school districts in setting up community—based Work Exploration programs.

2. To develop statewide parent training network utilizing the Parent Community Resource Centers.

3. To develop a network of specialists to work with DRS, WorkForce WV, and WV Department of Education (WVDOE) staff.

4. To develop a statewide cross—sector outreach program with a strong emphasis on traditionally underserved populations.

DRS Goal 3 — Provide integrated vocational rehabilitation services to West Virginians with disabilities to enable them to obtain competitive employment, especially in occupations and careers within emerging industries statewide.

Collaboration with WorkForce WV

DRS will maintain regular communication with WorkForce WV to stay abreast of trends in employment, including changes in education and training requirements. This will be accomplished through regular meetings of the workforce development system (WDS), written communications, teleconferences, and other media, as appropriate. DRS, particularly through its employment specialists, will also stay informed of emerging careers and occupations via WorkForce WV's Labor Market Information website. DRS employment

specialists continuously collect employment information from their business contacts. This information is shared within the WDS.

Use of DRS Employment Specialists

DRS will continue to use its employment specialists to gather information regarding employers at the local level, including information regarding job placements for individuals with disabilities and regarding current and expected employer needs.

DRS has an in—house Employer Services Section that specializes in providing employers with disability—related information, services, and pre—screened job seekers. The DRS Employer Services Section has 12 employment specialists that cover all 55 counties in West Virginia. DRS' team of employment specialists provide business owners and employers with critical business options and assistance in staffing, employee retention strategies, education on disability—related issues, job accommodations, and information about financial incentives for employers who hire individuals with disabilities.

Direct contact with employers is a key strategy to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities for vocational rehabilitation (VR) consumers, including students with disabilities. Employment specialists therefore contact employers directly to identify current and future job openings. To facilitate this, DRS utilizes labor market information provided by WorkForce WV to identify the top employers in each county; contact is always made with the top ten employers in each county. When meeting with employers, employment specialists provide valuable information, including the DRS Employer Resource Guide. The resource guide provides the following information:

—Staffing services

—Training programs and incentives for hiring people with disabilities

—Financial incentives

—Accessibility assessments

—Accommodating employees with disabilities

—Basic disability etiquette

—Attitudinal barriers

—Americans with Disabilities Act

—Locating a DRS office

—Where to find additional resources

The Employer Services Section maintains a database of each DRS—employer interaction with VR employment specialists. The information collected includes the business name, contact person, and current job openings by occupation. If needed, a referral to the DRS Rehabilitation Technology Unit is made to address workplace accommodations. This list is distributed to field staff to potentially match a job—ready VR consumer with a current job opening. Through positive working relationships, 19 employers, including some of the largest in the state, now send job postings directly to DRS' Employer Services Section.

The Employer Services Section also works with employers to better serve transitioning youth with disabilities, including providing career exploration opportunities for students with disabilities. In 2015, DRS debuted the Positive Outcomes within Education and Rehabilitation (POWER) program. POWER is a job shadowing program that offers transitioning students, who may be having a difficult time choosing a career path, the opportunity to experience an occupation by spending time with a professional working in the students' vocational goal/career field of interest. The POWER program allows the student the opportunity to experience an occupation prior to committing to training. It guides the student to take a serious, realistic look at the occupation, allowing the student to make a more informed choice.

Assistive Technology

DRS will continue to provide rehabilitation technology solutions to individuals with disabilities as needed so that those individuals can become employed or maintain employment. DRS has developed working relationships and agreements for the coordination of activities with the West Virginia Assistive Technology System (WVATS) of the West Virginia University Center for Excellence in Disabilities. The WVATS' role is to provide access to and help with the acquisition of assistive technology (AT) devices and services for individuals with disabilities. WVATS also provides device demonstrations, device loans, training, AT information, and technical assistance.

DRS has a rehabilitation technology unit, with two locations (in Nitro, covering the southern half of the state and in Morgantown, covering the North), which provides AT consultations and solutions to eligible VR consumers with AT needs statewide. With the coordination of services between DRS and WVATS, assurances are made that needed AT solutions can be provided to individuals with disabilities.

DRS Goal 4 — Improve access and availability of transportation options at the community level for DRS consumers who need transportation assistance to achieve or maintain competitive, integrated employment.

Transportation is an ongoing issue for West Virginians with disabilities, due to the rural nature of the state. A large proportion of the State's inhabitants live far away from jobs, agency offices, and other resources. DRS continues its commitment to reduce transportation barriers for consumers with disabilities and focuses on individual transportation solutions (ITS) to satisfy immediate transportation needs. To help reduce these barriers, DRS counselors will encourage planning for transportation needs early in the development of a consumer's rehabilitation program. At application, counselors will identify transportation issues and focus on finding solutions to include in the consumer's Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). This will ensure that the ability of consumers to reach their vocational goal is not impeded by preventable transportation barriers. Transportation issues also will be addressed by the standard instrument prescribed for routine use by supervisors and quality assurance staff in case reviews. Beyond ITS, DRS will continue to assign responsibility to a staff member in each branch office to maintain a list and working knowledge of local transportation options and will continue to participate in local and state initiatives to coordinate and expand transportation resources.

DRS Goal 5 — Continue to build collaborative relationships with community providers [including community rehabilitation programs (CRPs), Independent Living, and other community providers] to enhance the availability of services to DRS consumers.

A large amount of the success that DRS has in its mission to enable and empower individuals with disabilities to work and to live independently hinges on its relationships with CRPs. In general, DRS has good working relationships with the various CRPs throughout the State. However, CSNA results suggest that improvements can be made, particularly in specific geographic areas. To facilitate this improvement, DRS has established a number of strategies to put into action:

— Continue to educate field staff, especially the new counselors, about CRPs and their services. Use of the new 'CRP Locator' tool (a web—based, user—friendly vendor guide) and counselor CRP site visits will increase awareness of available service options, which will help to maintain collaborative relationships with CRPs and enhance the availability of services to DRS consumers.

— Continue to maintain regular communications between DRS and community providers in each district and at the state level. Each DRS district will continue to host joint meetings with DRS district and branch office staff and CRPs in those districts to provide opportunities for CRP representatives and DRS personnel to discuss local service needs of DRS consumers. Subsequent to each meeting, the local DRS office will be required to send a brief report to the CRP Program Manager. This process will allow all parties involved in the expansion of community—based services to be kept informed of progress and issues. The Division will continue to examine the information and recommendations collected from various meetings between CRP and DRS staff members.

Progress on communication will continue to be made as the Division acquires more understanding of the issues and barriers facing the CRP and DRS staff members in their service provision to persons with significant disabilities in WV. Ongoing communication activities with CRPs also will include:

a. An e—mail list—serv with all current vendors that will be updated periodically and utilized to send out training opportunities, policy changes, and general updates when needed.

b. DRS counselors in each district will continue to be assigned as liaisons to each CRP and will continue to be required to complete a monthly update regarding the CRP. They will collect this information by visits and/or phone calls. Having CRP liaisons that regularly discuss service—related issues specific to the local service area(s) will aid in maintaining collaborative working relationships and enhancing the availability of services to consumers.

c. Two rehabilitation specialists covering all districts in the state will provide technical assistance to CRPs and DRS staff. They will make site visits to CRP and DRS district and branch offices. During these visits, they will provide technical assistance and schedule training and other meetings that need to occur. They will serve as a communication link when issues arise and make themselves available to attend the communication meetings and transition team meetings.

— Conduct site visits to ensure that community providers continue to meet DRS standards and requirements.

— Increase the service provision of acknowledged vendors and work with community providers to expand their service areas to enhance the availability of community services within needed areas.

— Continue to conduct Transition Team meetings at the district level with DRS, WV Department of Education, and CRP staff members. The meetings will be held to promote interagency collaboration by allowing staff from each agency/CRP to become familiar with the different eligibility requirements and service definitions across agencies.

— Continue to conduct cross training and face—to—face meetings with community partners at the local level.

— Continue to assign liaison responsibilities to staff members and provide them guidance about the purpose of DRS participation in community events.

— Monitor the DRS counselors/supervisors/managers' perception of the quality of CRP services through a survey instrument.

— Monitor and assess the impact of the Quality Assurance unit on the counselor's case management practices by using data generated from the quality assurance specialists' review of cases.

B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

To foster a customer—focused approach to vocational rehabilitation (VR) services, the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) works with the WV State Rehabilitation Council and Statewide Independent Living Council and uses innovation and expansion (I&E) resources to support the activities of these groups. As appropriate, DRS will continue to use I&E funds to discover, generate, and improve upon service delivery processes to individuals with disabilities. Additionally, with the emphasis on pre—employment transition services to students with disabilities now in place by WIOA, there are significant opportunities for discoveries that can be made using I&E resources.

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 West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) has made improvements in minority access to vocational rehabilitation (VR) services, as indicated by successfully exceeding the RSA requirement for Indicator 2.1 (equal access). In FY 2015, the ratio of minority service rate over non—minority service rate was 0.883. The 88.3% service rate ratio is above the RSA benchmark of 80%.

The agency's branch office locations represent statewide coverage. These offices are able to serve individuals with disabilities, including those individuals from minority backgrounds, in all areas of the state. Many cities within WV which have a relatively high proportion of minorities in the population (e.g., Charleston, Huntington, and Beckley) have a DRS branch office located within.

DRS also has a significant presence in state colleges and high schools with significant minority populations in all 55 counties of WV.

Due to the rural nature of the state, support for transportation is very important for access to VR services by individuals with disabilities. DRS continues to recognize this barrier as a challenge to VR service delivery statewide. DRS is committed to continuing it pursuit of individualized transportation solutions for its consumers, including those from minority backgrounds.

Additionally, DRS will continue to utilize tools and techniques which have allowed the agency to have success in its outreach to minority populations, such as:

—DRS will continue to use geographic information systems (GIS), as appropriate, to pinpoint geographic locations with potentially underserved minority populations in the State. This will allow for more effective and efficient outreach to those populations.

—DRS will continue to depend on local outreach efforts by branch office field staff to bring individuals with disabilities, including those individuals from minority backgrounds, into the VR system.

P. EVALUATION AND REPORTS OF PROGRESS: VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT GOALS

Describe:

1. AN EVALUATION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE VR PROGRAM GOALS DESCRIBED IN THE APPROVED VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN FOR THE MOST RECENTLY COMPLETED PROGRAM YEAR WERE ACHIEVED. THE EVALUATION MUST:

A. IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS.

The following description includes progress in the achievement of the goals for the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS).

DRS Goal 1 — Provide integrated vocational rehabilitation services to West Virginians with disabilities to enable them to attain a high school education or greater.

Since the implementation of the Unified State Plan, DRS has witnessed an increasing shift, among rehabilitated consumers, from a pre-high school diploma education at application to a post-high school diploma education at closure. In federal fiscal year (FY) 2015, the percentage of rehabilitated consumers with less than a high school diploma dropped 24.7 percentage points (from 31.3% at application to 6.6% at closure) over the course of their program participation. Likewise, the percentage of rehabilitated consumers with a high school diploma or more education increased 25.9 percentage points (from 63.8% at application to 89.7% at closure). This shift increased in FY 2017, with the percentage of rehabilitated consumers with less than a high school diploma dropping 25.5 percentage points (from 30.4% at application to 4.9% at closure) over the course of their program participation. Meanwhile, the percentage of rehabilitated consumers with a high school diploma or further education increased 28.2 percentage points (from 63.9% at application to 92.1% at closure).

DRS monitored the educational achievement of all of its consumers, especially those in the transition youth (TY) population. DRS worked closely and diligently with State and Local

Education Agencies to ensure that its TY population receives the services that it needs, including pre-employment transition services for high school students with disabilities. DRS assigned a counselor to each high school in WV to enhance the service provision of students with disabilities. A greater emphasis is now being placed for counselors to do outreach with these students and their parents/guardians during their sophomore year (rather than their junior year, as was formerly practiced) in order to maximize the counseling opportunities.

DRS counselors took part in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) development of students with disabilities when invited to do so. Counselors stayed in contact with educators to discuss and resolve educational difficulties as needed. DRS also worked closely with WV Adult Education, referring consumers as needed, to ensure that individuals with disabilities have an adequate opportunity to obtain a completed high school level education. DRS will continue to conduct these activities as part of its progress toward achievement of this goal.

DRS Goal 2 — Provide Pre—Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students with disabilities.

The 2015 comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA) indicated that job exploration counseling was the most frequently reported pre-employment transition service need. DRS counselors provided Pre-ETS to students with disabilities, especially job exploration counseling, in order to give students with disabilities and their parents/guardians a better understanding of labor market conditions, current and emerging career opportunities, and the necessary education and training requirements related to those opportunities. In program year (PY) 2016, DRS provided Pre-ETS to 2,185 students with disabilities in WV.

In addition to ongoing program activities, DRS hosted summer workshops [Career Exploration Opportunity (CEO) Summits] for transition students entering into their senior year of high school. In 2016, the CEO Summits were held in 7 areas across the state; in 2017, the Summits were held in 11 areas. DRS staff participating included the Pre-ETS Counselor, Employment Specialist, and Rehabilitation Service Associates (RSAs) assigned to the Pre-ETS territory. Class size for each of the workshops was approximately 30 students. Students earned minimum wage for the time that they attend. DRS also included representatives from WorkForce WV and WV Adult Education to participate in the workshops to provide additional information to the students. A concerted effort was made to introduce Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) to students in the CEO Summits.

Topics covered included career planning, career preparation, SSI/SSDI Information, understanding the importance of necessary personal documents, communication, conflict management, employer expectations, attendance and punctuality, timeliness of task completion, being able to work without supervision, positive work ethic, managing multiple tasks, high-growth jobs, personal brand, and job hunting tools such as resumes, cover letters, interviews, and digital profiles.

Throughout the academic year, DRS Employment Specialists also provided Pre-ETS at the local high schools. The Employment Specialists conducted mock interviewing, career exploration, and other employment related topics. The Providing Opportunities Within Education and Rehabilitation (POWER) program provides students that ability to job shadow careers that they are interested in. The Employment Specialists have worked to

identify a vast array of employers located throughout the State. There are currently 81 employers involved in the POWER Program.

In 2016 and 2017, DRS partnered with Community Access, Incorporated (CAI) to implement a program, entitled "Pathways to the Future," to support the design and implementation of programming and outreach while addressing the new direction mandated by WIOA. Specifically, the program addressed the five required Pre-ETS for high school students with disabilities through an expansion of the Student Transition to Employment Program (STEP). The program assisted school districts by offering training and technical assistance in setting up community-based work experience programs for students with disabilities. The project helped level the playing field between resource-rich metropolitan areas and isolated rural settings that often have few services available. In addition, a strong statewide outreach to teachers, parents, students, and other VR stakeholders was a component of the project. The project had the following goals:

1. To assist school districts in setting up community-based Work Exploration programs.

2. To develop statewide parent training network utilizing the Parent Community Resource Centers.

3. To develop a network of specialists to work with DRS, WorkForce WV, and WV Department of Education (WVDOE) staff.

4. To develop a statewide cross-sector outreach program with a strong emphasis on traditionally underserved populations.

In conjunction with CAI, DRS enlisted the services of Terzetto Creative to create a "Pathways to the Future" website (www.pathwayswv.org), which serves as a self-service resource for students with disabilities statewide to receive Pre-ETS. The website provides valuable information and tools regarding career planning, education planning, independent living, self-determination, and work-based learning. The website was bolstered by banners that were placed in high schools in all 55 counties of the state. Additionally, several pages of the College Foundation of West Virginia's website (www.cfwv.com) have links to the Pathways website. These banners and links directed students with disabilities to the website and its resources.

DRS Goal 3 — Provide integrated vocational rehabilitation services to West Virginians with disabilities to enable them to obtain competitive employment, especially in occupations and careers within emerging industries statewide.

Collaboration with WorkForce WV

DRS has maintained regular communication with WorkForce WV to stay abreast of trends in employment, including changes in education and training requirements. This has been accomplished through regular meetings of the workforce development system (WDS), written communications, teleconferences, and other media. DRS, particularly through its Employment Specialists, stayed informed of emerging careers and occupations via WorkForce WV's Labor Market Information website. DRS Employment Specialists have also continuously collected employment information from their business contacts. This information is shared within the WDS. DRS registers its job-ready consumers with

WorkForce WV in order to better serve employers by providing them with a base of potential employees.

Collaboration with Local Workforce Development Boards

DRS maintained and continues to maintain a presence with each of West Virginia's seven Local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs): Region 1 WDB; Region 2 — South Western WV WDB, Inc.; Region 3 — WDB of Kanawha County, Inc.; Region 4 Mid-Ohio Valley WDB; Region 5 — Northern Panhandle WDB; Region 6 WDB, and Region 7 WDB. DRS has signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFAs) with each board. Each Local WDB has a DRS representative who is active in the Board's activities and decision-making process.

Use of DRS Employment Specialists

DRS used its Employment Specialists to gather information regarding employers at the local level, including information regarding job placements for individuals with disabilities and regarding current and expected employer needs.

DRS has an in-house Employer Services Section that specializes in providing employers with disability-related information, services, and pre-screened job seekers. The DRS Employer Services Section has 11 Employment Specialists that cover all 55 counties in West Virginia. Each Employment Specialist has a unique understanding of local labor market information (LMI) including what jobs are available, what jobs are in demand or decline, and employer networks.

DRS' team of Employment Specialists provided business owners and employers with critical business options and assistance in staffing, employee retention strategies, education on disability-related issues, job accommodations, and information about financial incentives for employers who hire individuals with disabilities.

Direct contact with employers is a key strategy to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities for vocational rehabilitation (VR) consumers, including students with disabilities. Employment Specialists therefore contact employers directly to identify current and future job openings. To facilitate this, DRS utilizes labor market information provided by WorkForce WV to identify the top employers in each county; contact is always made with the top ten employers in each county. When meeting with employers, Employment Specialists provide valuable information, including the DRS Employer Resource Guide. The resource guide provides information regarding staffing services, training programs and incentives for hiring people with disabilities, financial incentives, accessibility assessments, accommodating employees with disabilities, basic disability etiquette, attitudinal barriers, the Americans with Disabilities Act, locating a DRS office, and where to find additional resources. DRS Employment Specialists conducted over 1,000 employer visits with more than 800 employers in both FYs 2016 and 2017.

The Employer Services Section maintains a database of each DRS-employer interaction with VR employment specialists. The information collected includes the business name, contact person, and current job openings by occupation. If needed, a referral to the DRS Rehabilitation Technology Unit is made to address workplace accommodations. This list is distributed to Counselors to potentially match a job-ready VR consumer with a current job

opening. Through positive working relationships, 19 employers, including some of the largest in the state, now send job postings directly to DRS' Employer Services Section.

The Employer Services Section also worked with employers to better serve transitioning youth with disabilities, including providing career exploration opportunities for students with disabilities through the Positive Outcomes within Education and Rehabilitation (POWER) program. POWER is a job shadowing program that offers transitioning students, who may be having a difficult time choosing a career path, the opportunity to experience an occupation by spending time with a professional working in the students' vocational goal/career field of interest. The POWER program allows the student the opportunity to experience an occupation prior to committing to training. It guides the student to take a serious, realistic look at the occupation, allowing the student to make a more informed choice. Currently, there are 81 employers statewide that participate in the POWER program.

Assistive Technology

DRS provided rehabilitation technology solutions to individuals with disabilities as needed so that those individuals could become employed or maintain employment. DRS has developed working relationships and agreements for the coordination of activities with the West Virginia Assistive Technology System (WVATS) of the West Virginia University Center for Excellence in Disabilities. The WVATS' role is to provide access to and help with the acquisition of assistive technology (AT) devices and services for individuals with disabilities. WVATS also provides device demonstrations, device loans, training, AT information, and technical assistance.

DRS has a rehabilitation technology unit, with two locations (in Nitro, covering the southern half of the state and in Morgantown, covering the North), which provided AT consultations and solutions to eligible VR consumers with AT needs statewide. With the coordination of services between DRS and WVATS, assurances are made that needed AT solutions can be provided to individuals with disabilities.

DRS Goal 4 — Improve access and availability of transportation options at the community level for DRS consumers who need transportation assistance to achieve or maintain competitive, integrated employment.

Transportation is an ongoing issue for West Virginians with disabilities, due to the rural nature of the state. A large proportion of the State's inhabitants live far away from jobs, agency offices, and other resources. DRS continued its commitment to reduce transportation barriers for consumers with disabilities and focused on individual transportation solutions (ITS) to satisfy immediate transportation needs. To help reduce these barriers, DRS counselors encouraged planning for transportation needs early in the development of a consumer's rehabilitation program. At application, counselors identified transportation issues and focused on finding solutions to include in the consumer's Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). This ensured that the ability of consumers to reach their vocational goal was not impeded by preventable transportation barriers. Transportation issues were also addressed by the standard instrument prescribed for routine use by supervisors and quality assurance staff in case reviews. Beyond ITS, DRS continued to assign responsibility to a staff member in each branch office to maintain a list and working knowledge of local transportation options and continued to participate in local and state initiatives to coordinate and expand transportation resources. These activities will

be ongoing as DRS strives to accomplish transportation access for all of its consumers in need.

DRS Goal 5 — Continue to build collaborative relationships with community providers (including CRPs, Independent Living, and other community providers) to enhance the availability of services to DRS consumers.

From FY 2016 to FY 2017, DRS witnessed an increase in consumers served by CRPs (from 1,264 to 1,584), as well as authorized dollars spent on CRP services (from $3,023,989 to $3,680,197).

DRS continued to educate field staff, especially new counselors, about CRPs and their services. Use of the new 'CRP Locator' tool (a web-based, user-friendly vendor guide) and counselor CRP site visits increased awareness of available service options, which helped to maintain collaborative relationships with CRPs and enhance the availability of services to DRS consumers. DRS continued to maintain regular communications with community providers in each district and at the state level. Progress on communication will continue to be made as the Division acquires more understanding of the issues and barriers facing the CRP and DRS staff members in their service provision to persons with significant disabilities in WV.

Ongoing communication activities with CRPs also includes:

a. An e-mail list-serv with all current vendors that is updated periodically and utilized to send out training opportunities, policy changes, and general updates when needed.

b. DRS counselors in each district continue to be assigned as liaisons to each CRP and continue to be required to complete a monthly update regarding the CRP. They collect this information by visits and/or phone calls. Having CRP liaisons that regularly discuss service-related issues specific to the local service area(s) aids in maintaining collaborative working relationships and enhancing the availability of services to consumers.

c. Two Rehabilitation Specialists covering all districts in the state provide technical assistance to CRPs and DRS staff. They make site visits to CRP and DRS district and branch offices to ensure that community providers continue to meet DRS standards and requirements. During these visits, they provide technical assistance and schedule training and other meetings that need to occur. They serve as a communication link when issues arise and make themselves available to attend the communication meetings and transition team meetings.

Additionally, the agency works to:

- Increase the service provision of acknowledged vendors and work with community providers to expand their service areas to enhance the availability of community services within needed areas;

- Conduct Transition Team meetings at the district level with DRS, WV Department of Education, and CRP staff members. The meetings are held to promote interagency collaboration by allowing staff from each agency/CRP to become familiar with the different eligibility requirements and service definitions across agencies;

- Conduct cross training and face-to-face meetings with community partners at the local level;

- Assign liaison responsibilities to staff members and provide guidance about the purpose of DRS participation in community events;

- Monitor the DRS counselors/supervisors/managers' perception of the quality of CRP services through a survey instrument; and - Monitor and assess the impact of the Quality Assurance unit on the counselor's case management practices by using data generated from the quality assurance specialists' review of cases.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES.

DRS continued to be successful in achieving the agency's goals and priorities. However, a high turnover rate of DRS staff, including VR counselors, presents a barrier to the full achievement of all goals and priorities. Because of this barrier, DRS will continue to maintain its goals and priorities relating to CRPs, transportation, and serving youth with disabilities until the desired outcomes are achieved.

The main impact of high turnover is the need to continually train and educate new staff members. Newly hired staff do not have a full understanding of available resources in their local area, including transportation and CRP services. This knowledge gap effects many areas of DRS activities and may unfortunately lead to lower levels of CRP utilization, local transportation options, and consumer satisfaction, especially among youth. However, DRS has worked and will continue working to mitigate these impediments to achieving its goals and priorities.

The high turnover rate, not just among DRS staff, but CRP staff as well, can negatively impact CRP service delivery and capacity across the state. For these reasons, DRS has maintained goals and priorities associated with improving the working relationships between DRS and CRP staff in addition to increasing the availability of CRP services within the community.

To combat transportation issues, DRS has continued its commitment to reduce transportation barriers for consumers with disabilities and its focus on individual transportation solutions (ITS) to satisfy immediate transportation needs. DRS also encouraged planning for transportation needs early in the development of the consumer's rehabilitation program. At application, DRS counselors identified transportation issues and focused on finding solutions to include in the consumer's Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). This ensured that the ability of consumers to reach their vocational goal was not impeded by preventable transportation barriers. Transportation issues were also addressed by the standard instrument prescribed for routine use by supervisors and quality assurance staff in case reviews.

DRS is successfully moving forward, despite the barriers faced by the agency, and will continue to work toward successfully achieving all goals and priorities.

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.

PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT (SE) GOALS

The total authorized dollars for CRP supported employment services in FY 2017 was $703,389.53 for 184 consumers with most significant disabilities. This is an increase from FY 2016, when 216 consumers were served and $686,015.47 were authorized for CRP SE services.

As previously addressed in the discussion of DRS Goal 5, DRS continued to promote the expansion community rehabilitation programs to expand their services into potentially unserved or underserved areas. DRS identified new community rehabilitation programs to increase the availability of supported employment services (i.e., job coaching) for West Virginians with significant disabilities. In FY 2015, DRS identified 91 CRPs to serve West Virginians with disabilities. As of the beginning of 2018, the agency has identified 101 CRPs. The agency also emphasized job coaching for DRS consumers who are not in the supported employment program.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES.

PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT (SE) GOALS

The total authorized dollars for CRP supported employment services in FY 2017 was $703,389.53 for 184 consumers with most significant disabilities. This is an increase from FY 2016, when 216 consumers were served and $686,015.47 were authorized for CRP SE services.

As previously addressed in the discussion of DRS Goal 5, DRS continued to promote the expansion community rehabilitation programs to expand their services into potentially unserved or underserved areas. DRS identified new community rehabilitation programs to increase the availability of supported employment services (i.e., job coaching) for West Virginians with significant disabilities. In FY 2015, DRS identified 91 CRPs to serve West Virginians with disabilities. As of the beginning of 2018, the agency has identified 101 CRPs. The agency also emphasized job coaching for DRS consumers who are not in the supported employment program.

3. THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.

DRS acknowledges the legal requirement to report on the performance accountability indicators under Section 116 of WIOA. However, data collection on the performance accountability indicators is only beginning, making a report of DRS performance impossible at this time. As DRS moves forward in its task to place individuals with disabilities into competitive, integrated employment in program year (PY) 2018, it will collect and monitor participant data in order to generate reports on:

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

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

—The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;

—The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program;

—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

—The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers.

4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED.

UTILIZATION OF TITLE I FUNDS FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES

I&E FUNDS FOR THE WEST VIRGINIA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL AND WEST VIRGINIA STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL

DRS fully embraces the Congressional intent that individuals with disabilities and their advocates are full partners in the state rehabilitation program. Therefore, DRS has established a goal to improve its service delivery system through involvement of consumers and their advocates to increase the ease of access to, timeliness of, and quality of rehabilitation services and ultimately to improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. The Division's concentration of I&E efforts on consumer partnerships demonstrates its commitment to enhanced consumer involvement.

Success in working with consumers and their advocates is fundamentally important in developing and using innovative approaches to achieve long—term success in expanding and improving rehabilitation services, including supported employment. DRS pursues that work primarily through partnership initiatives with the West Virginia State Rehabilitation Council and the West Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council.

DRS believes that the activities of these councils provide a promising foundation for the kind of partnership envisioned by the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998. If that partnership is to achieve its full potential, however, it must receive the necessary support.

Therefore, DRS annually allocates I&E funds to support general operations of the West Virginia State Rehabilitation Council and the West Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council.

FY 2017 highlights for each appear below.

WEST VIRGINIA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

I&E funds support operations and activities undertaken by members of the WVSRC. DRS allocated $103,500 for WVSRC in FY 2017.

As required by the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998, WVSRC assists DRS by conducting a survey of consumer satisfaction for DRS consumers whose VR cases have been closed. Surveys were mailed to over 5,000 individuals in FY 2017. WVSRC uses I&E funds to share costs of contracting an independent consultant to compile a report of survey results.

I&E funding assists WVSRC to prepare, publish, and distribute its annual report.

WVSRC also participates in development and establishment of DRS goals and priorities outlined in this state plan. I&E funds are used for travel costs as necessary.

WEST VIRGINIA STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL

In combination with Title VII money, I&E funds help support operations and activities undertaken by the WVSILC. DRS allocated $256,665 for WVSILC in FY 2017.

WVSILC, in partnership with DRS, is responsible jointly developed and submitted the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) for FY 2017-2019. WVSILC continues to monitor and evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the SPIL. In conjunction with DRS, WVSILC prepares and submits the 704 Report for West Virginia.

WVSILC members and/or employees collaborate with and/or participate in activities of the WV Centers for Independent Living (WVCIL), WV Developmental Disabilities Council, WVSRC, WV Olmstead Council, WV Mental Health Consumers Association, WV American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), Medley Hartley Advocacy Project Advisory Council, WV Transportation Alliance, and the Fair Shake Network. WVSILC also coordinates activities with the WVSRC including joint meetings and training sessions with these other organizations. Training for service providers on sexual victimization of individuals with disabilities has been scheduled.

WVSILC conducts a survey of consumer satisfaction for consumers who received independent living services. WVSILC uses I&E funds to share costs with DRS and WVCIL for distribution of the survey and contracting an independent consultant to compile survey results and prepare an annual report of findings.

WVSILC ensures that all meetings are open to the public and provides notice through the WV Secretary of State's Office as well as through statewide media at least two weeks prior to the meetings.

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.

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) vendor acknowledgment process includes an in—service training session for prospective new vendors and training updates as requested. During the training session, participants receive a Service Provider

Guide and an introduction to the DRS process for providing supported employment (SE) services. DRS also loans SE training books and materials at no cost.

The quality of SE services is directly tied to the competency of the personnel performing job development and community based training services. DRS encourages and supports the provision of a broad range of in—service training programs for personnel directly involved in SE service delivery.

DRS is committed to ensuring the availability of SE services throughout West Virginia as reflected in progress toward DRS Goal 5 {Continue to build collaborative relationships with community providers [including community rehabilitation programs (CRPs), Independent Living, and other community providers] to enhance the availability of services to DRS consumers}. There are currently 63 DRS—acknowledged SE vendors from all districts across the state. These vendors make SE services available to an increasing number of individuals with the most significant disabilities.

In accordance with federal regulations, the SE services that may be provided to individuals and youth with disabilities placed in SE include:

1. Evaluation of rehabilitation potential for SE to supplement the comprehensive assessment conducted under the Title I program;

2. Job development;

3. Job placement;

4. Intensive on—the—job training provided by skilled job coaches/employment specialists;

5. Case management services;

6. Job monitoring, whether performed on—site or off—site, that includes regular contact with employees, employers, parents, guardians, and other professionals to reinforce and maintain the job placement;

7. Rehabilitation technology assessment and services as appropriate; and

8. Post—employment services (following transition to extended SE services) that are available from the extended service provider and that are needed to maintain the SE job placement.

As appropriate, youth with disabilities placed in SE may also receive transition services and pre—employment transition services (PETS) that include:

1. Job exploration counseling;

2. Work—based learning experiences, which may include in—school or after school opportunities, or experience outside the traditional school setting (including internships), that is provided in an integrated environment to the maximum extent possible;

3. Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institutions of higher education;

4. Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living;

5. Instruction in self—advocacy, which may include peer mentoring.

The demand and need for SE services continues to be significant, particularly in rural areas, as well as for those individuals who are transitioning from school to the workforce. DRS continues its commitment to expanding the statewide capacity for SE services.

DRS will continue to provide SE services to its consumers and will acknowledge additional SE service providers where needed. The Division will continue to consider non—traditional approaches to SE service delivery and will increasingly emphasize the development of natural supports wherever possible. DRS anticipates that more individuals will receive services with the increased number of approved SE providers.

DRS authorized SE services to 259 individuals in FY 2015.

While SE services may be expected to vary in scope and duration from individual to individual, core services that may be provided to individuals and youth with disabilities placed in SE can include:

1. Assessment of the individual's environmental circumstances;

2. Job analysis and job development;

3. Rehabilitation technology assessment;

4. Job placement following appropriate match of job/consumer characteristics identified in during assessment, job analysis, and job development (services 1 and 2 above);

5. Intensive, one—on—one, on—the—job training;

6. Job stabilization, job coach fading as much as possible; and

7. Extended Supported Employment Services (ESES), optimally including natural supports.

In order to ensure that priority of resources is given to those individuals with the most significant disabilities, DRS will continue to implement an order of selection (OS) in FY 2017, where applicants meeting the criteria for OS priority categories 3 and 4 will be placed on a waiting list.

2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES.

DRS receives state funds earmarked to provide Extended Supported Employment Services (ESES) for SE clients closed as successfully rehabilitated who, after an assessment of their progress and continuing needs for services, are found to require ongoing job coaching to maintain employment and are not eligible for services through other funding sources. The consumer's Individualized Plan for Employment includes an estimate of the time needed for transition to extended services. Provision of ESES (job coaching) to all eligible SE clients, including youth with the most significant disabilities, in accordance with an approved IPE will not exceed 4 years, as required by federal regulations. Consumers in SE placement are eligible to receive any services traditionally available through the DRS Title I program.

CERTIFICATIONS

Name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate **West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services**

Name of designated State agency **West Virginia Department of Education and the Arts (The West Virginia Department of Commerce will be the DSA effective July 1, 2018)**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Marijane K. Waldron**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Director, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services**

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; No

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

_____

Certification 1 Footnotes

* Public Law 113-128.

** Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA, signed into law on July 22, 2014.

Certification 2 Footnotes

* All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

** No funds under title 1 of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

*** Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76,77,79,81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3485; and the State VR Services Program regulations.

Certification 3 Footnotes

* No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

** Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in *** under Certification 2 footnotes

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON THE CERTIFICATIONS FROM THE STATE

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING — VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative

agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

STATEMENT FOR LOAN GUARANTEES AND LOAN INSURANCE

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:
If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

Applicant's Organization **West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Marijane K. Waldron**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Director**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable) (http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html). If applicable, please print, sign, and email to MAT_OCTAE@ed.gov

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING — SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a

Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

STATEMENT FOR LOAN GUARANTEES AND LOAN INSURANCE

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:
If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, ''Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,'' in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than $10,000 and not more than $100,000 for each such failure.

Applicant's Organization **West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Marijane K. Waldron**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Director**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable)
(http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html).

ASSURANCES

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and

its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances:**The State Plan must provide assurances that:**

1. PUBLIC COMMENT ON POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.

2. SUBMISSION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT:

The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN:

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:

A. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(2) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF EITHER A STATE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION OR STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(21) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable **(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council**

C. CONSULTATIONS REGARDING THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(16)(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

D. THE FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION BY THE STATE, OR IF THE STATE SO ELECTS, BY THE STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES, TO PROVIDE THE AMOUNT OF THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE OF THE COST OF CARRYING OUT THE VR PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(3).

E. THE LOCAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(2)(A) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

The designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds **No**

F. THE SHARED FUNDING AND ADMINISTRATION OF JOINT PROGRAMS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(2)(A)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

The designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs: **No**

G. STATEWIDENESS AND WAIVERS OF STATEWIDENESS REQUIREMENTS, AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 101(A)(4) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

Is the designated State agency requesting or maintaining a waiver of statewideness for one or more services provided under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan? See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan. **No**

H. THE DESCRIPTIONS FOR COOPERATION, COLLABORATION, AND COORDINATION, AS REQUIRED BY SECTIONS 101(A)(11) AND (24)(B); AND 606(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

I. ALL REQUIRED METHODS OF ADMINISTRATION, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(6) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT .

J. THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT, AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 101(A)(7) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

K. THE COMPILATION AND SUBMISSION TO THE COMMISSIONER OF STATEWIDE ASSESSMENTS, ESTIMATES, STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES, STRATEGIES, AND PROGRESS REPORTS, AS APPROPRIATE, AND AS REQUIRED BY SECTIONS 101(A)(15), 105(C)(2), AND 606(B)(8) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

L. THE RESERVATION AND USE OF A PORTION OF THE FUNDS ALLOTTED TO THE STATE UNDER SECTION 110 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES, PARTICULARLY INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES.

M. THE SUBMISSION OF REPORTS AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(10) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

4. ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES:

The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:

A. COMPLY WITH ALL REQUIREMENTS REGARDING INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTIONS 101(A)(5)(D) AND (20) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. IMPOSE NO DURATION OF RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT AS PART OF DETERMINING AN INDIVIDUAL'S ELIGIBILITY FOR VR SERVICES OR THAT EXCLUDES FROM SERVICES UNDER THE PLAN ANY INDIVIDUAL WHO IS PRESENT IN THE STATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(12) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT .

C. PROVIDE THE FULL RANGE OF SERVICES LISTED IN SECTION 103(A) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT AS APPROPRIATE, TO ALL ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE WHO APPLY FOR SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(5) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT?

Agency will provide the full range of services described above **Yes**

D. DETERMINE WHETHER COMPARABLE SERVICES AND BENEFITS ARE AVAILABLE TO THE INDIVIDUAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(8) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

E. COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 102(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

F. COMPLY WITH REQUIREMENTS REGARDING THE PROVISIONS OF INFORMED CHOICE FOR ALL APPLICANTS AND ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 102(D) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

G. PROVIDE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES TO AMERICAN INDIANS WHO ARE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING IN THE STATE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(13) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

H. COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONDUCT OF SEMIANNUAL OR ANNUAL REVIEWS, AS APPROPRIATE, FOR INDIVIDUALS EMPLOYED EITHER IN AN EXTENDED EMPLOYMENT SETTING IN A COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAM OR ANY OTHER EMPLOYMENT UNDER SECTION 14(C) OF THE FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT OF 1938, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(14)OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

I. MEET THE REQUIREMENTS IN SECTIONS 101(A)(17) AND 103(B)(2) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT IF THE STATE ELECTS TO CONSTRUCT, UNDER SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, FACILITIES FOR COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

J. WITH RESPECT TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, THE STATE,

XLIII. HAS DEVELOPED AND WILL IMPLEMENT,

A. STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS IDENTIFIED IN THE ASSESSMENTS; AND

B. STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED BY THE STATE, TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON A STATEWIDE BASIS; AND

XLIV. HAS DEVELOPED AND WILL IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES TO PROVIDE PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES (SECTIONS 101(A)(15) AND 101(A)(25)).

5. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION FOR THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT TITLE VI SUPPLEMENT:

A. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT ASSURES THAT IT WILL INCLUDE IN THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN ALL INFORMATION REQUIRED BY SECTION 606 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY ASSURES THAT IT WILL SUBMIT REPORTS IN SUCH FORM AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUCH PROCEDURES AS THE COMMISSIONER MAY REQUIRE AND COLLECTS THE INFORMATION REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(10) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT SEPARATELY FOR INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES UNDER TITLE I AND INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

C. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL COORDINATE ACTIVITIES WITH ANY OTHER STATE AGENCY THAT IS FUNCTIONING AS AN EMPLOYMENT NETWORK UNDER THE TICKET TO WORK AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM UNDER SECTION 1148 OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT.

6. FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM:

A. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY ASSURES THAT IT WILL EXPEND NO MORE THAN 2.5 PERCENT OF THE STATE'S ALLOTMENT UNDER TITLE VI FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS OF CARRYING OUT THIS PROGRAM; AND, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR AGENCIES WILL PROVIDE, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY THROUGH PUBLIC OR PRIVATE ENTITIES, NON-FEDERAL CONTRIBUTIONS IN AN AMOUNT THAT IS NOT LESS THAN 10 PERCENT OF THE COSTS OF CARRYING OUT SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROVIDED TO YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES WITH THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR SUCH PURPOSE UNDER SECTION 603(D) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 606(B)(7)(G) AND (H) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY ASSURES THAT IT WILL USE FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT ONLY TO PROVIDE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING EXTENDED SERVICES TO YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, WHO ARE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE SUCH SERVICES; AND, THAT SUCH FUNDS ARE USED ONLY TO SUPPLEMENT AND NOT SUPPLANT THE FUNDS PROVIDED UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, WHEN PROVIDING SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES SPECIFIED IN THE INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 606(B)(7)(A) AND (D), OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

7. PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES:

A. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY ASSURES THAT IT WILL PROVIDE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AS DEFINED IN SECTION 7(39) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY ASSURES THAT:

XLV. 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

XLVI. AN INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT THAT MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 102(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT , WHICH IS DEVELOPED AND UPDATED WITH TITLE I FUNDS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTIONS 102(B)(3)(F) AND 606(B)(6)(C) AND (E) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON THE ASSURANCES FROM THE STATE

VII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS

States choosing to submit a Combined State Plan must provide information concerning the six core programs—the Adult Program, Dislocated Worker Program, Youth Program, Wagner-Peyser Act Program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Program— and also submit relevant information for any of the eleven partner programs it includes in its Combined State Plan. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program.* If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the "common planning elements" in Sections II and III of that document, where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program (available on www.regulations.gov for public comment). The requirements that a State must address for any of the partner programs it includes in its Combined State Plan are provided in this separate supplemental document. The Departments are not seeking comments on these program-specific requirements, which exist under separate OMB control numbers and do not represent requirements under WIOA. For further details on this overall collection, access the Federal eRulemaking Portal at http://www.regulations.gov by selecting Docket ID number ETA-2015-0006.

---

* States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) and 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 that are included would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

APPENDIX 1. PERFORMANCE GOALS FOR THE CORE PROGRAMS

Each State submitting a Unified or Combined Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the two years covered by the plan. The State is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education on state adjusted levels of performance for the indicators for each of the two years of the plan. States will only have one year of data available under the performance accountability system in Section 116 of the WIOA; therefore, the Departments will continue to use the transition authority under WIOA sec. 503(a) to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators in the first plan submission. A "baseline" indicator is one for which States will not propose an expected level of performance in the plan submission and will not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance. "Baseline" indicators will not be used in the end of the year performance calculations and will not be used to determine failure to achieve adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The selection of primary indicators for the designation as a baseline indicator is made based on the likelihood of a state having adequate data on which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance and such a designation will vary across core programs.

States are expected to collect and report on all indicators, including those that that have been designated as "baseline". The actual performance data reported by States for indicators designated as "baseline" in the first two years of the Unified or Combined Plan will serve as baseline data in future years.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for each indicator, except for those indicators that are listed as "baseline" indicators below.

For this Plan, the Departments will work with States during the negotiation process to establish the negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs.

Baseline Indicators for the First Two Years of the Plan

Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth):

- Measurable Skill Gains
- Effectiveness in Serving Employers

Title II programs (Adult Education):

- Employment in the 2nd quarter
- Employment in the 4th quarter
- Median Earnings
- Credential Attainment
- Effectiveness in Serving Employers

Title III programs (Wagner-Peyser):

- Effectiveness in Serving Employers

Title IV programs (Vocational Rehabilitation):

- Employment in the 2nd quarter
- Employment in the 4th quarter
- Median Earnings
- Credential Attainment
- Measurable Skill Gains
- Effectiveness in Serving Employers

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

TABLE 1. EMPLOYMENT (SECOND QUARTER AFTER EXIT)

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Adults	72.00	75.00	72.00	75.00
Dislocated Workers	71.00	78.00	71.00	78.00
Youth	65.00	65.00	61.00	65.00
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	50.00	59.00	52.00	59.00
Vocational Rehabilitation	45.00	Baseline	45.00	45.00

User remarks on Table 1

TABLE 2. EMPLOYMENT (FOURTH QUARTER AFTER EXIT)

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Adults	72.00	73.00	72.00	73.00
Dislocated Workers	76.00	78.00	76.00	78.00
Youth	Baseline	50.00	43.00	50.00
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	71.00	71.00	65.00	71.00
Vocational Rehabilitation	40.00	Baseline	40.00	Baseline

User remarks on Table 2

TABLE 3. MEDIAN EARNINGS (SECOND QUARTER AFTER EXIT)

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Adults	11,596.00	5,890.00	5,890.00	5,890.00
Dislocated Workers	15,400.00	8,320.00	8,320.00	8,320.00

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	12,030.00	4,600.00	4,500.00	4,600.00
Vocational Rehabilitation	2,287.00	Baseline	2,287.00	Baseline

User remarks on Table 3

TABLE 4. CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT RATE

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Adults	Baseline	73.00	73.00	73.00
Dislocated Workers	Baseline	74.00	74.00	74.00
Youth	70.00	70.00	69.00	70.00
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Wagner-Peyser	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Vocational Rehabilitation	36.00	Baseline	36.00	Baseline

User remarks on Table 4

TABLE 5. MEASUREABLE SKILL GAINS

Program	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Adults	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Dislocated Workers	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Youth	49.00	Baseline	49.00	Baseline
Adult Education	60.00	53.00	61.00	54.00
Wagner-Peyser	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Vocational Rehabilitation	36.00	Baseline	36.00	Baseline

User remarks on Table 5

TABLE 6. EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING EMPLOYERS

Measure	PY 2018 Expected Level	PY 2018 Negotiated Level	PY 2019 Expected Level	PY 2019 Negotiated Level
Line 1 (enter the measure information in the comments below)				
Line 2				
Line 3				
Line 4				
Line 5				
Line 6				

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)

Organizational Chart
http://lmi.workforcewv.org/State_Plan/West_Virginia_Organizational_Chart_2016.pdf

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSURANCES

Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

Recipients of WIOA funds will maintain sound Fiscal Control and Fund Accounting Procedures to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds through the allotments made under WIOA.

Adherence to Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) which prohibits discrimination against all individuals in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, transgender status and gender identity), national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States or participation in any WIA Title I-financially assisted program or activity. By assuring adherence to Section 188 of WIOA, also assures acceptance to Title VI and title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; The Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

Adherence to the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, which prohibits the exclusion, on the basis of disability, from participation in or denial of the benefits of services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any public entity.

Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (29 CFR, Subtitle A, Appendix C to Part 98): WIOA funded grantees certify that it will prove a drug-free workplace by notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace and specifying the actions taken against employees for violation of such prohibition. Grantees certify that it will make a good faith effort to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), and (f) of 28 CFR Subtitle A, Appendix C to Part 98.

Certification Regarding Debarment and Suspension (29 CFR, Subtitle A, Appendix A to Part 98): WIOA funded grantees certify to the best of its knowledge that it is not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared Ineligible, or voluntarily excluded by any Federal department or agency. (a) Have not within a three-year period preceding this period been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, or attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, or Local) transaction or contract under a public transaction. (b) Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State, or Local) with the commission of any fraud or criminal offences in obtaining or attempting to obtain, or performing a public transaction under a public contract. (c) Have not within three years preceding this period had one or more public transactions (Federal, State, or Local) terminated for cause or default.

Certification Regarding Lobbying (29 CFR, Subtitle A, Appendix A to Part 93): WIOA funded grantees certify to the best of its knowledge that no Federal 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, loan, cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.