



WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA) COMBINED STATE PLAN

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Tom Wolf
Governor

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Section I – Strategic Planning Elements

Governor Wolf’s Strategic Vision for Workforce Development in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Description of state’s strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment) and for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers, including goals relating to performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A), in order to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency, and of how the state will assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce investment system.

Describe the strategies the State will implement, including sector strategies and career pathways.

On July 22, 2014, President Obama signed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) providing a framework for Governors and states to make changes to their workforce systems. The federal law sets the parameters for the workforce system which is an integral part of the commonwealth’s ability to serve job seekers and employers. WIOA will enable the commonwealth to align workforce priorities across multiple partners, training providers, employers and others to ensure we are creating a skilled workforce for today and the future.

An effective workforce development system will be built on a foundation of alignment, innovation, employer engagement, accountability structures and improved data. Pennsylvania will look beyond WIOA to set broad goals for a comprehensive workforce development system that increases the number of “jobs that pay,” expands the number of “schools that teach” the skills necessary to succeed in college and careers, and is a model of “government that works.” We will do this by designing and implementing a workforce development system that addresses three core challenges facing the workforce system:

- The workforce system in general, and education and training providers in particular, are not well aligned with the needs of employers who provide jobs that pay.
- Too many workforce programs operate in their own individual silos rather than being integrated into an overall system that allows leveraging multiple funds to better serve employers, job seekers and incumbent workers.
- The workforce system lacks a support structure of training programs and employer peer-learning opportunities, including apprenticeship programs and Industry Partnerships, which enables and encourages more employers to invest in their workers and implement best organizational practices that create more jobs that pay.

Pennsylvania will provide the highest quality of service to job seekers, incumbent workers and employers by addressing these challenges through well-coordinated approaches at the state and local levels. System access will be enhanced through the use of technology and creative partnerships with community organizations and other service providers. While access will be improved for all job seekers and incumbent workers, the provision of services and training will be focused on those most in need and hardest to serve.

Our five broad goals for the commonwealth's workforce development system are:

- Establish career pathways as the primary model for skill, credential and degree attainment and provide all Pennsylvanians, with an emphasis on Pennsylvanians with barriers to employment, an opportunity to obtain a job that pays.
- Expand public-private investment in the state's pipeline of workers and in incumbent workers for targeted industry sectors from entry-level skills to middle skills through Industry Partnerships, WEDnetPA, and other innovative strategies.
- Increase opportunities for all youth to participate in work based learning through summer employment, pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, internships and other similar experiences.
- Engage employers through multi-employer workforce partnerships to improve the connection and responsiveness of workforce programs to the demand side of the labor market, increase public-private investment in critical skills, and support the spread of employer practices that create jobs that pay.
- Strengthen data sharing across state agencies and workforce development partners to better understand education and employment outcomes and rely more effectively on data to improve and target our efforts.

A key factor in accomplishing our five broad goals will be to boost interagency cooperation on workforce issues to achieve a team effort to implement this WIOA plan and to amend it if and when necessary. The development of this WIOA State Plan is the starting point for an unprecedented effort in Pennsylvania to transcend the fragmentation of workforce programs. Overcoming silos and promoting program integration are easy goals to talk about but very difficult to achieve. In Pennsylvania today, however, the commitment to achieving these goals – to getting all workforce agencies and programs pulling toward unified goals and better outcomes for job seekers, incumbent workers, employers, and all Pennsylvanians – starts at the very top, with Governor Wolf. State agencies will work together to leverage resources, both federal and other, to achieve Governor Wolf's Strategic Vision.

Goal 1: Establish Career Pathways

It is imperative that the workforce development system provide training for skills that lead to employment in [High Priority Occupations \(HPOs\)](#) or entry-level occupations that lead to HPOs. Career pathways must be diverse with multiple entry and exit points allowing individuals of varying abilities, including low-skilled adults and youth with multiple barriers to employment, to have realistic access to pathways. The commonwealth will look to 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. The strategies outlined below will support the establishment and promotion of career pathways, with an emphasis on providing access to those with substantial barriers to employment.

- 1.1** The commonwealth adopts the WIOA Section 3(7) definition of career pathways as listed in [Appendix I](#).
- 1.2** Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) will develop career pathway programs meeting the requirements of WIOA. Career pathway programs will include adult basic education (literacy and numeracy, English-as-Second Language, and high school equivalency instruction) and will permit participants to enter at any of these levels in addition to entering at the postsecondary level.

- 1.3** The commonwealth will create a comprehensive career pathway system that combines education, training, counseling, and support services from multiple programs, including secondary and postsecondary career and technical education, adult and literacy education, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training, and higher education financial assistance, in addition to core programs of WIOA.
- 1.4** The commonwealth will encourage cross-program funding and programmatic integration of workforce preparation activities to develop soft-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.
- 1.5** The commonwealth will mainstream job seekers with barriers to employment 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.
- 1.6** The commonwealth will promote and support the creation of pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship programs, particularly in non-traditional occupations and for non-traditional populations, as part of relevant career pathway models. The commonwealth will add apprenticeship opportunities to the JobGateway® and Commonwealth Workforce Development Systems (CWDS) and will promote them as job/training options to job seekers.
- 1.7** The commonwealth will continue to refine the High Priority Occupation (HPO) [process](#) and [list](#) to ensure career pathways are aligned to occupations that are in-demand, have higher skill needs and are likely to pay family-sustaining wages. The commonwealth will consult with LWDBs and engaged employers to accomplish this goal. The commonwealth will also support placement of individuals with barriers to employment into quality entry-level jobs that provide the work experience and non-technical skills necessary to lead to employment in HPOs, and we will consult with LWDBs and engaged employers to identify the career pathways for which such quality entry-level jobs can serve as “on ramps.”
- 1.8** The commonwealth will maintain a robust [Eligible Training Provider List](#) (ETPL) to include performance data for all students receiving training in all programs, regardless of the funding source for those students’ training. This will allow for informed customer choice in selecting training programs and training providers. The commonwealth will ensure that there are a sufficient number of training providers serving individuals with barriers to employment on the ETPL.

- 1.9** The commonwealth 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 “soft skills” through workforce preparation activities. The commonwealth 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.
- 1.10** The commonwealth will require On-the-Job Training (OJT) and incumbent worker training, whether provided through WIOA core programs or the Industry Partnership program, to be tied to a career pathway.
- 1.11** The commonwealth will enhance career guidance and navigation services to guide individuals, particularly individuals with barriers to employment and education, into programs and services that will provide them with an effective pathway to their career goals. The commonwealth will add information to JobGateway®, CWDS and the workforce development website regarding career pathways and will enhance information provided by the Department of Education around initiatives such as [Students Occupationally and Academically Ready \(SOAR\)](#). SOAR programs lead students into career pathways that align secondary education courses to postsecondary programs to complete a degree or certificate.

Goal 2: Invest in Talent and Skills for Targeted Industries in Strategic Partnership with Employers and Educational Institutions

The commonwealth 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. Today, it is estimated that just 48 percent of Pennsylvanians have a college credential or industry-recognized certification. By 2025, it is projected that fully 60 percent of good-paying, reliable Pennsylvania jobs will require these credentials. Governor Wolf has established a goal of 60 percent of Pennsylvanians in the labor force will have postsecondary credentials or certificates by 2025 in order to meet expected demand. Concerted efforts will be made to ensure that individuals with barriers to employment are among those obtaining postsecondary credentials and certificates. The governor has also targeted that at least 85,000 individuals per year will be trained through Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) and Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) training programs. Additional strategies and initiatives to grow the talent pool include:

- 2.1** The commonwealth will establish benchmarks for how much WIOA Title I funding must be used for training by local areas to include a set-aside to be used for new and innovative approaches. In Program Year (PY) 2016, at least 30 percent of Title I funding must be used on training, of which 50 percent must be spent on low income individuals and individuals with other barriers to employment. In PY 2017, at least 40 percent of Title I funding must be used on training, of which 60 percent must be spent on low income individuals and individuals with other barriers to employment. In PY 2018 and thereafter, at least 50 percent of Title I funding must be used on training, of which 70 percent must be spent on low income individuals and individuals with other barriers to employment. LWDBs may use other sources of funding, including Industry Partnership funding, to count toward and offset the Title I training targets. The commonwealth will establish a technical assistance group to

support local areas and their service providers in meeting the benchmarks and allow for the sharing of best practices.

- 2.2** The commonwealth will direct state workforce dollars through the Reemployment Fund and other sources, and will seek federal discretionary grants, to support program innovation to better meet the needs of the hardest to serve populations.
- 2.3** The commonwealth will promote and develop sector strategies based on labor market information and employer need. This includes supporting the growth and expansion of the Industry Partnership program through increased state investment.
- 2.4** The commonwealth will expand access for adult workers to skill certifications via incumbent worker training programs such as those provided by Industry Partnerships (IPs) and WEDnetPA. The IP and WEDnetPA programs will be more closely aligned and coordinated to ensure the commonwealth is adequately serving entry-level workers and workers with more advanced training needs to support their upward mobility along career pathways.
- 2.5** The commonwealth will expand access to online education and training programs that result in industry-recognized credentials.
- 2.6** The commonwealth will work with employer partnerships, community colleges, secondary schools and LWDBs to establish micro-credentials that demonstrate job readiness, the attainment of “soft skills,” and measurable skill gains aligned to career pathways for individuals with barriers to employment. A component of this effort will include sharing best practices with the intent of scaling the effort statewide. This work will be supported by a Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) grant received from the U.S. Department of Labor.
- 2.7** The commonwealth will promote the development of Registered Apprenticeship programs, with a focus on non-traditional industries and occupations through state grant funds. The grant 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.
- 2.8** The commonwealth will continue to foster relationships between the workforce development and 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.
- 2.9** The commonwealth will provide priority of service to veterans and eligible spouses, recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient as mandated by WIOA. Per federal guidance in [Training and Employment Guidance Letter 03-15](#), veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, low income or basic skills deficient will receive first priority, non-veterans who are recipients of public assistance, low-income or basic skills deficient will receive second

priority, veterans and eligible spouses not included in priority groups will receive third priority and all other individuals will receive last priority. Priority means the right to take precedence over non-covered persons in obtaining services. Depending on the type of service or resources being provided, taking precedence means: the covered person receives access to the service or resource earlier in time than the non-covered person; or, if the service or resource is limited, the covered person receives access to the service or resource instead of or before the non-covered person. Providing priority of service also entails affirmative outreach to the priority populations, identifying covered individuals at entry and informing them of their priority status. The commonwealth will also focus efforts on those with barriers to employment, including those with the following barriers as defined in WIOA: displaced homemakers; Indians, Alaskan Natives and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities including youth with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals with low levels of literacy and individuals facing cultural barriers; eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers; individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under TANF; single parents to include single pregnant women; and long-term unemployed individuals. The commonwealth will seek to obtain grants to assist in serving individuals entitled to priority of service and will additionally make discretionary state funds available to support the serving of these target populations.

2.10 “Employment First” will be the policy of all commonwealth executive branch agencies under the jurisdiction of the governor in serving persons with disabilities. This policy reflects the Governor’s goal of making the commonwealth a model state when it comes to creating a climate hospitable to workers with disabilities. The definition of Employment First is that competitive integrated employment is the first consideration and preferred outcome of publicly-funded services for all working-age Pennsylvanians with a disability. Career, training and supportive services will be used, as necessary, to support the placement of individuals with disabilities into competitive integrated employment.

2.11 The commonwealth will 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.

Goal 3: Increase Work-Based Learning Opportunities for Youth

Unemployment rates for older youth and young adults remain substantially higher than those for the population as a whole. For example, although Pennsylvania’s overall unemployment rate has fallen to a seasonally adjusted 5.1 percent (as of October 2015), the rate for 20-24 year-olds stands at 11.1 percent, and at 13.4 percent for 16-19 year-olds. Further, because 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.

Recognizing the employment challenges faced by older youth and young adults, particularly those without postsecondary credentials, Congress and the Obama Administration prioritized WIOA employment, education and training services for 16-24 year-old out-of-school youth (OSY), establishing an expenditure floor of 75 percent, reducing the burdens of income determination, and extending automatic eligibility for services to a range of high-risk populations.

Appreciating the importance of preparing all Pennsylvanians for active and productive citizenship, the Wolf Administration will lead and support efforts by the commonwealth's local boards to expand services to these high-risk young people. In particular, consistent with provisions of the statute and the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, the commonwealth will place a strong emphasis on ensuring that eligible OSY have access to a full range of services across core programs, as appropriate. To ensure a strong and continuing focus on youth employment within each local workforce area, the commonwealth will also require local areas to have youth standing committees. In addition, the commonwealth will work closely with each LWDB to negotiate levels of performance that reflect the needs and challenges of the new service population. In this way, local areas will not be penalized for enrolling high-need and difficult to serve individuals who are the focus of WIOA youth activities.

The commonwealth will further support local efforts by ensuring that state agencies overseeing local and regional programs that focus on high-risk young people, including those who are in foster care and/or juvenile justice systems, are homeless, or are pregnant or parenting, will work together to build coordinated approaches that support local areas' efforts to enroll and retain these young people. Furthermore, the commonwealth will support training activities that help to equip PA CareerLink® staff with the information and skills they need to meet the needs of eligible youth.

WIOA also places a new emphasis on providing eligible youth with high-quality work experience, requiring that at least 20 percent of youth funding be dedicated to this activity. This requirement is consistent with a growing body of research which demonstrates that young people who have access to jobs in their teens tend to graduate from high school, earn secondary and postsecondary credentials and earn at higher levels than their peers who do not work. However, research also shows that young people in low-income families have much more limited access to employment than their more affluent peers. Therefore, the WIOA work experience requirement represents a powerful tool to help lower-income youth, particularly those with barriers to employment, to gain invaluable and potentially life-changing experience in work places. In support of this priority, the commonwealth will work closely with LWDBs to encourage employers to provide access to high-quality work experiences for eligible youth, including internships, workplace learning, transitional jobs, pre-apprenticeships, and summer jobs, with particular emphasis on OSY. These opportunities will be targeted to OSY as required by WIOA. Additional efforts will be made around career exploration strategies to provide students and their parents' access to key information in making decisions about secondary and postsecondary education options and employment goals.

Specific initiatives to support opportunities for youth are as follows:

- 3.1** Recognizing the new priority on OSY, the commonwealth 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.
- 3.2** The commonwealth 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.

- 3.3** The commonwealth has established a Youth Committee as a standing committee of the State Workforce Development Board, comprised of individuals with expertise in youth workforce and education issues, which will advise on statewide youth policy and programs and provide technical assistance to LWDBs and their youth standing committees.
- 3.4** To ensure that OSY have access to career pathways, the commonwealth 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.
- 3.5** The commonwealth 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 commonwealth and in each local area.
- 3.6** The commonwealth will support the development of low-literacy tools and models for OSY who are basic skills deficient and far from proficiency in reading and math.
- 3.7** The commonwealth may use a portion of the governor's set-aside funds to identify and replicate proven models for high-risk OSY, including models that incorporate demand-driven strategies and Industry Partnerships and other multi-employer workforce partnerships.
- 3.8** The commonwealth 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 commonwealth 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 commonwealth 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.
- 3.9** In recognition of the focus of federal funds on OSY, the commonwealth will leverage state resources to increase summer employment opportunities for in-school youth. The commonwealth invested nearly \$1.1 million to allow the Learn and Earn program in Allegheny County to pilot STEM initiatives in the fields of Video Game Production, Digital Manufacturing, Website Production and Agile Robotics. An additional \$2.3 million was provided to Philadelphia to enhance its WorkReady Philadelphia Summer Employment programs and serve an additional 529 youth. The expansion is aligned with President Barack Obama's My Brother's Keeper initiative and Philadelphia's My Brother's Keeper Challenge.
- 3.10** The commonwealth will expand opportunities for youth to acquire post-high school 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 Labor & Industry will work cooperatively to explore and develop appropriate connections between WIOA youth activities and Perkins postsecondary and state-funded programming.

- 3.11** The Department of Education (PDE) will make additional funds available to support the transformation and modernization of career and technical education (CTE) and align CTE with the career pathways recognized by the commonwealth.
- 3.12** The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) will continue to support initiatives serving transition-age youth with disabilities, such as: the Early Reach initiative designed to reach youth with disabilities earlier in their secondary school enrollment and make them aware of OVR services and how they can leverage general and special education programming to assist in transitioning from secondary education to employment and postsecondary education; the Access College – Employment Success grant awarded to D.R.E.A.M. Partnership to create college-based certificate programs for young adults with intellectual disabilities; Project SEARCH, a work-readiness program for secondary school youth providing on-the-job work experience through rotational internships; the Promoting Academic Success (PAS) program, a one-credit college course for students with disabilities to help them see if postsecondary education is an appropriate goal; and the Summer Academy, a three-week intensive training on the Penn State University campus for students who are blind or visually impaired who plan to attend college. Additionally, OVR will collaborate with employers to provide opportunities to students and youth with disabilities for career exploration that would lead to competitive, integrated employment. Students and youth with disabilities will also be given opportunities to complete work-based learning experiences to develop soft skills and work-related skills and experience.
- 3.13** The commonwealth will use the Office of Apprenticeship to promote apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities to youth.
- 3.14** The commonwealth will support LWDB collaboration with YouthBuild, JobCorps, and AmeriCorps sites and will require inclusion of those partnerships in local plans.

Goal 4: Engage Employers to Strengthen the Connection of Education and Training and the Economy, Increase Investment in Critical Skills and Increase Jobs that Pay

Employers must be partners in the education and workforce system, not just end-users. It is critical for employers to be at the table to offer insights into current and future skill and occupational needs and provide feedback on proposed and implemented career pathways, sector strategies and training programs. It is also imperative that the workforce development system engage the right employers – those offering jobs with reasonable wages, benefits, full-time stable employment, ongoing training and advancement opportunities, paid sick days, family leave and medical leave, and predictable schedules to balance family needs. Low-quality jobs have high turnover rates and limited opportunity for advancement, bringing into question the return on investment of limited WIOA resources. In addition, by engaging employers that provide good jobs by the standards of their sector, the commonwealth can support formal training, and formal and informal peer learning, that grow these companies and increase the number of other employers that adopt good human resource practices.

It is also critical that the commonwealth support employers who want to come together to address their training and human resource challenges in a more efficient, multi-employer way. The fragmentation of employers when it comes to workforce issues – recruitment, training, curricula, credentialing, career pathways – makes it more difficult for workforce services to align their programs with the common

needs of employers. Pennsylvania is already ahead of other states in strengthening the voice of groups of employers in workforce development through its national leadership in building Industry Partnerships as well as its extensive investment in multi-employer apprenticeships. The commonwealth will build on its past experiences in order to improve employer engagement with the workforce system.

The commonwealth will measure employer engagement through the yet to be defined federal measure and will also consider additional state specific measures, such as market penetration (the number of employers actively using the public workforce system) or the number and total employment of employers engaged with active Industry Partnerships, apprenticeship programs, or other multi-employer workforce partnerships.

- 4.1** The commonwealth will critically consider job quality in engaging employers and will require LWDBs to prioritize funds to be used for business services activities, on-the-job training and incumbent worker training to those employers offering high quality jobs. The commonwealth will seek to include model criteria for considering job quality in the standardized On-the-Job Training (OJT) contract described in paragraph 4.9 below. The commonwealth will also use these criteria to target Industry Partnerships and similar state-funded workforce partnerships to employers that offer high-quality jobs or jobs that are likely to lead to high-quality jobs.
- 4.2** The commonwealth will seek to identify sustainable public and private funding, in addition to the annual state appropriation, for high-quality industry-driven sectoral workforce intermediaries, including Industry Partnerships and apprenticeship programs, to lock in on a permanent basis a strong connection between education and training programs and the demand side of the labor market.
- 4.3** The commonwealth will implement a program of capacity building, peer learning, and evaluation to support Industry Partnerships, apprenticeship programs, and other multi-employer workforce intermediaries in delivering greater value to employers; job seekers; incumbent workers and new hires, including young people and rehired dislocated workers; adults and youth participating in work-based learning at the companies and/or hired by the companies; and to their industry and regional economies. The commonwealth will consider establishing a formal certification program for Industry Partnerships.
- 4.4** The commonwealth will specifically require LWDBs to provide funding to Industry Partnerships and other multi-employer workforce intermediaries that serve employers with common skill needs in their local workforce areas.
- 4.5** The commonwealth will set new standards for providing products and services to employers through enhanced agency coordination in providing business services and expanded partnerships with economic development providers, local chambers of commerce and other associations serving the needs of employers. State agencies may act as intermediaries for organizing outreach to employers on a wider geographical basis than local regions. WIOA Regional Plans will be required to include strategies for collaborating with economic development and employer partners.

- 4.6** The commonwealth will continue to encourage employers to participate in Business-Education Partnerships. These partnerships connect schools, employers, and youth-serving community organizations with students and 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.
- 4.7** The commonwealth will 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 commonwealth 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.
- 4.8** The commonwealth will rely on partnerships of employers to validate the credentials developed as part of state and regional lists of recognized credentials, career pathways, and other statewide efforts.
- 4.9** The commonwealth will streamline and standardize On-the-Job Training (OJT) contracts to provide greater consistency across LWDBs for employers hiring in multiple areas.
- 4.10** The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation will continue to provide leadership for accessibility standards, disability talent recruitment, on-boarding expertise and disability etiquette training for employers.
- 4.11** The commonwealth has recently partnered with the PA Chamber of Business and Industry (Chamber) which administers a workforce development survey sent to Pennsylvania employers. The commonwealth will foster this relationship in order to gain new and enhanced insights into workforce challenges and needs of Chamber members. As a complement to this Chamber partnership, the commonwealth 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.
- 4.12** Governor's Office and agency executives will regularly meet with business leaders around the state through efforts like the Jobs that Pay Tour to solicit feedback and ideas from employers.

Goal 5: Strengthen Data Sharing and More Effectively Use Data

Investments in workforce development programs will be made based on data and return-on-investment analysis. Use of rich data will allow for continuous improvement of programs. The sharing of program information, to include common measures and other outcome data, will allow for more informed customer choice in considering programs. The governor, in consultation with the state Workforce Development Board (WDB), will establish additional performance measures which will allow for

assessment of the system to drive improvement and outcomes. The commonwealth will also work with federal agencies and local boards to ensure that negotiated performance levels reflect the populations being served, particularly with regard to OSY and other high-risk youth and adults with barriers to employment. The WDB will develop a dashboard to track progress and success on State Plan goals and implementation.

- 5.1** The commonwealth will expand upon Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) efforts to add additional state agencies and data sets to the database, with particular focus on PDE longitudinal educational data and agencies such as the Department of Transportation, Department of Corrections and Department of Revenue, who can assist in validation of data.
- 5.2** The commonwealth will make efforts to use WDQI as the common performance measurement reporting tool across all core programs.
- 5.3** The commonwealth will embark on a comprehensive upgrade of the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) and JobGateway® to provide for better job seeker and employer experiences and allow staff greater case management and performance accountability functionality within and across core programs. To the degree possible, the commonwealth will also look at ways to integrate CWDS with the case management systems of other partner programs.
- 5.4** The commonwealth will regularly conduct formal evaluations of the state's workforce development system, including the system's effectiveness in meeting employer skill needs and increasing the educational attainment, employment and earnings of program participants.
- 5.5** The commonwealth will evaluate available data including how it is presented and released, to ensure that job seekers, employers and workforce development professionals have the information necessary to make informed decisions.
- 5.6** The commonwealth will seek to find ways to identify supply/demand gaps to further inform workforce policies.
- 5.7** The commonwealth will collaborate with the State WDB to develop a dashboard to track progress on the implementation of the WIOA State Plan and achievement of the plan's goals. This dashboard will aim to focus attention on the plan's big-picture, long term goals. Some measures under consideration for inclusion in the dashboard are the share of the working-age population with postsecondary credentials or certificates, employer investment in skills, and the overall Pennsylvania labor turnover rate. The first is a priority of Governor Wolf and a measure on which Pennsylvania historically ranks poorly (between 43rd and 49th in the last dozen years). The last two measures would measure the effectiveness of the state's WIOA plan at identifying and spreading best practices that help employers increase the number of jobs that pay.

The work of local workforce development boards will support and further the governor's five goals for the workforce development system. In recognition that many system innovations originate at a local level, the commonwealth made available state discretionary funds, through a Strategic Innovation Grant

opportunity, providing broad latitude for LWDBs to propose creative and innovative strategies to support the five goals outlined in the Combined State Plan.

Economic Analysis

Existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations. Employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed in those industries and occupations. Analysis of the current workforce, employment and unemployment data, labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment (including individuals with disabilities).

The Current State of the Pennsylvania Labor Market

Pennsylvania's future depends upon the development of a workforce able to compete in today's global economy. To remain economically competitive, an understanding of the current labor market and future workforce needs of employers is necessary when developing policies and strategies for Pennsylvania.

The commonwealth has a diversified economy as demonstrated by its industry clusters, which are further examined in the Sector Strategies section. Pennsylvania also presents an increasingly-skilled workforce in alignment with changing employer expectations. The commonwealth's capacity to provide an educated workforce is evidenced by over 400 postsecondary educational institutions which collectively enrolled nearly one million students in 2012-13. An eclectic mix of urban, suburban and rural areas draws people with wide-ranging interests to the state for many reasons. Proximity to nearly one-half of the nation's population and strongest job markets makes Pennsylvania an ideal location for businesses and families. While these characteristics of the commonwealth's labor market contribute to its economic strength, they add workforce complexities due to varied employer demands and evolving skill expectations.

The availability and analysis of labor market information and trends is essential to the creation of effective workforce and economic development strategies and policies. By utilizing information about the population, labor force, industry mix and employment outlook, the state can enhance its existing sector strategies and ensure they align with the current and expected labor market demands.

According to IHS Global Insight's 2014-2024 Population Projections, over the next 10 years, Pennsylvania's population is projected to grow by only 1.7 percent. In comparison, the nation's population growth over the same time period is projected to be 8.2 percent. While the state's overall population growth will be relatively low in the years to come, the change in age distribution will be more dramatic.

Simply stated, Pennsylvania's population is growing older. The number of Pennsylvanians age 65 and over was 2.1 million in 2014. The state's percentage of those aged 65 and over is the sixth highest in the nation (16.7 percent) – only Florida (19.1 percent), Maine (18.3 percent), West Virginia (17.8 percent), Vermont (17.0 percent) and Montana (16.7 percent) are higher. This is largely a by-product of the aging of the population born during the Baby Boom period after World War II (1946 to 1964).

Pennsylvania also has a growing immigrant population. According to American Community Survey 2010-2014 five-year estimates and Census 2000, Pennsylvania's immigrant population has grown by 53.9 percent since 2000 and now numbers 782,103 people, including 439,786 workers.

While the overall population will increase modestly, the labor force will shrink barring a substantial immigration of workers. Workers from the front-end of the baby-boom generation are moving into their 60s and, beginning in 2011, were expected to retire from the workforce in large numbers. Due to the

recent economic conditions, many chose to remain employed, thus complicating job opportunities for younger workers. Inevitably, baby-boomers will leave the workforce in large numbers very soon, taking with them knowledge and experience that kept industry growing and prosperous.

Education must play a vital role in preparing the workforce for the future demands of the economy. According to the American Community Survey, during the 2009-2013 period, Pennsylvania ranked 44th among states in the share of adults (age 25 and up) with more than a high school diploma. Pennsylvania's low ranking for postsecondary education share reflects its second-place ranking for working-age adults with *exactly* a high-school degree and its 49th-place ranking for the share of such adults with "some college." These rankings reflect historical and cultural factors including the fact that a high-school education enabled men to obtain family-sustaining jobs for more than a generation after World War II. They also reflect the state's lack of a community college infrastructure in rural parts of the state.

Currently, 52.3 percent of Pennsylvanians have participated in some level of postsecondary education. Another 38.5 percent are high school graduates with no postsecondary experience and about nine percent have less than a high school diploma. Strategies focused on these individuals are paramount to meeting the future demands of employers and achieving Governor Wolf's goal of 60 percent of Pennsylvanians holding a college or industry-recognized credential by 2025.

Workforce strategies must also take into account the skills and abilities of individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities, veterans, ex-offenders, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients and those who do not speak English well or at all, to meet present workforce needs and future demand. In 2014, there were about 1.4 million working age individuals with disabilities living in Pennsylvania. They account for 13.4 percent of the state's working age population compared to 11.8 percent nationally. Pennsylvania's veterans numbered more than 880,000 in 2014 or 8.9 percent of the working age population. Approximately 1 out of every 66 Pennsylvanians has been incarcerated in a state prison, a figure that does not include those who have served time in county jails or juvenile offenders. In 2014, there were 43,600 TANF recipients. In 2013 there were approximately 171,200 individuals who did not speak English well or at all.

While the commonwealth will focus workforce development activity on growing the pipeline of new talent, efforts will also be made to support older workers who wish to remain in the labor force. According to Current Population Survey (CPS) figures from 2013, 31.8 percent of Pennsylvanians ages 65 to 69 are currently in the workforce (employed or looking for work). A 2015 study from Bank of America/Merrill Lynch found that 47 percent of current retirees say they either have worked or plan to work during their retirement. More striking, 72 percent of those 50 or older who have not yet retired say they want to keep working after they retire. The study finds this phenomenon to be driven by four forces: increasing life expectancy; elimination of pensions for most workers; recent economic uncertainty; and a re-visioning of later life, as new generations seek greater purpose, stimulation, social engagement and fulfillment in retirement. Employers often desire to hire older workers, who are generally viewed as reliable, loyal and ethical with well-established critical thinking, leadership, teamwork and communication skills.

Current State of the PA Labor Market

The National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) declared that a national economic recession began in December 2007 and ended in June 2009. As labor markets tend to lag behind output markets,

Pennsylvania's peak monthly unemployment rate since the recession began (8.7 percent) occurred in February and March of 2010. The unemployment rate in Pennsylvania during this period also peaked at an annual average of 8.5 percent in 2010, which was its highest level since 1984. Also in 2010, the average number of unemployed residents peaked at 540,000 and average employment dropped to 5,841,000, its lowest level since 2003.

Since 2010, Pennsylvania's labor market has shown signs of recovery. The state's average employment rose to 6,009,000 in 2014, an increase of 45,000 from 2013, and an increase of 168,000 from 2010. Despite these increases, employment levels are still below the average 2007 pre-recession level of 6,064,000. The average unemployment rate in 2014 was 5.8 percent, or 1.6 percentage points lower than in 2013. Effective workforce and economic development strategies are needed to ensure continued progress and the attainment of sustainable employment for Pennsylvania's unemployed.

Below is a summary of Pennsylvania's labor force for 2014 including data for veterans and persons with disabilities. For comparison, similar data is provided for the U.S.

	Pennsylvania			United States		
	Total	Persons with Disabilities	Veterans	Total	Persons with Disabilities	Veterans
Labor Force (LF)*	6,378.0	272.3	409.8	155,922.0	5,687.8	10,744.0
Employment*	6,009.0	228.6	390.4	146,305.0	4,974.4	10,171.0
Unemployment*	370.0	43.7	19.5	9,616.0	713.4	573.0
Unemployment Rate	5.8%	16.0%	4.7%	6.2%	12.5%	5.3%
LF Participation Rate	62.4%	19.9%	46.5%	62.9%	19.5%	50.6%

* Reported in thousands

Source: Current Population Survey

Among the unemployed, the hardest to serve are the long-term unemployed (those unemployed 27 weeks or more). From 2007 to 2010, the number of long-term unemployed in Pennsylvania and in the U.S. increased more than 500 percent. In Pennsylvania, both the number and percent of the long-term unemployed remained elevated through 2013, but decreased by 77,800 (40.1 percent) during 2014, to 116,400. The share of those unemployed long-term dropped to 31.9 percent of the total unemployed population. By comparison, the U.S. long-term unemployment level decreased 25.3 percent to 3,218,000 from 2013 to 2014 and constituted 33.4 percent of the nation's unemployed population.

Another indicator of an economy's strength is the employment/population ratio. In 2014, the average employment/population ratio in Pennsylvania, as shown in the table below, was 58.8 percent as compared to 61.7 percent in 2007. Overall, the nation experienced a similar drop in this ratio over this period, falling from 63.0 percent in 2007 to 59.0 percent in 2014. The employment/population ratio is affected by demographic and secular trends as well as the economic environment. African-American males and individuals with only a high school diploma posted the largest percentage point decline over this period.

	2007			2014		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Overall	61.7%	67.9%	56.0%	58.8%	63.9%	54.2%
White	62.4%	68.7%	56.5%	60.1%	65.3%	55.4%
African-American	55.4%	57.5%	53.8%	51.2%	51.6%	50.7%
Hispanic	58.9%	67.0%	49.1%	55.1%	63.8%	48.3%
Less than a HS diploma	32.7%	N/A	N/A	33.3%	N/A	N/A
HS graduate, no college	58.6%	N/A	N/A	53.3%	N/A	N/A
Some college or Associate degree	69.9%	N/A	N/A	66.0%	N/A	N/A
Bachelor's degree and higher	78.0%	N/A	N/A	73.3%	N/A	N/A

Source: Current Population Survey

From December 2013 to December 2014, non-farm jobs increased by 70,900 (1.2 percent) in Pennsylvania. During the same timeframe, US non-farm jobs increased 3.1 million jobs (2.3 percent) to 140.6 million. A glance at the chart below shows that Pennsylvania is currently in a jobs expansion period, following the job recovery period which began in early 2010. The job recovery and expansion in the state as well as the nation has occurred only in private sector jobs, while government jobs in each decreased over the last year and are still below their pre-recession levels.

	Jobs Dec. 2014	Change from Dec. 2013	PA Change from December 2007		U.S. Change from December 2007
			Volume	Percent	Percent
Total Nonfarm Jobs	5,825,500	70,900	10,900	0.2%	1.6%
Total Private Jobs	5,117,100	78,700	57,100	1.1%	2.3%
Government	708,400	-7,800	-46,200	-6.1%	-2.1%

Sources: Pennsylvania and U.S. Current Employment Statistics

In December 2014, goods-producing jobs in Pennsylvania were up 17,400 from December 2013. All three goods producing super-sectors grew over the year with Construction experiencing the highest increase (4.9 percent). Mining & Logging posted a 3.9 percent increase over this period, while Manufacturing experienced modest growth at 0.9 percent.

Pennsylvania's economy continues to shift from goods-producing to service-providing. Accordingly, service-providing jobs in December 2014 were up 53,500 from one year prior. Over the same period, Pennsylvania's best performing service-providing industry sectors (measured by percent increase) were Transportation & Utilities (4.3 percent), Educational Services (2.7 percent), Professional, Scientific & Technical Services (2.7 percent) and Accommodation & Food Services (1.8 percent). Identifying and meeting the workforce needs of expanding industries is paramount to the continued success of the state's economy.

Future of PA's Labor Market

From 2012-2022, Pennsylvania's total employment is expected to increase by 468,000 (7.7 percent) to a level in excess of 6.5 million. This growth rate is higher than previous growth rates for the state but still less than the 2012-2022 growth rate projected for the nation (10.8 percent). The demographics of Pennsylvania are a key factor in limiting employment growth.

Employment activity in all sectors highlights the dynamics of an aging population's need for more health care, transition of baby-boomers from worker to retiree, constant technological changes, and continued transformation of the state's economy from that of a goods-producer to a service-provider. Growth will be greatest in the Construction, Professional & Business Services, and Education & Health Services sectors.

With an increase of more than 189,000, Education & Health Services is projected to add the most employment by 2022. Professional & Business Services is also projected to increase employment by nearly 116,000. It is also important, however, to look at growth rates in addition to volume growth. The Construction sector is projected to have very robust growth rates in the state (19.1 percent) and is expected to finally surpass pre-recession employment levels. Conversely, driven largely by the contraction of the postal service, Government is expected to decrease employment by more than 7,600 (2.0 percent). Together, Manufacturing and Information are projected to see a similarly sized employment decrease. However, it is important to note that the 2012-2022 projections were begun shortly after the end of the recession and reflect economic assumptions that may no longer be valid. For example, manufacturing employment in Pennsylvania has risen slowly since 2010 after experiencing a large decline during the previous decade.

The need for workers in specific occupations can exist regardless of whether or not the industry sector is growing or declining due to replacement needs. Modest economic growth coupled with an aging workforce will create opportunities for job seekers in all major occupational groups.

Seven of the 13 occupational groups are projected to have growth rates above the statewide overall growth rate of 7.7 percent. Healthcare Practitioners, Technicians & Support Workers will increase employment the fastest at a rate of 17.3 percent (nearly 100,000 employees). The Construction & Extraction group will add less employment, about 37,000, but at the second-fastest rate (14.3 percent). Only one occupational group – Farming, Fishing & Forestry – is projected to experience an employment decline through 2022 with a total employment loss of only 750 (-1.5 percent)

Employment growth is only one component in determining the annual need, or openings, for workers in a given occupation. Each year, Pennsylvania is expected to have more than 193,000 annual openings across all occupational groups. In reality, only 26 percent of all annual openings are due to growth. Annual need, or openings, also includes an estimate to replace workers who leave the occupation and/or retire. Some occupational groups with low growth rates, like Office & Administrative Support, have a very large amount of annual openings (26,150). The need for workers in occupational groups with minimal growth or even a decline, such as Production (9,900 openings), can still outpace the overall need for workers in groups with strong growth, such as Computer, Engineering & Science (9,563 openings) or Construction (8,224 openings).

It is important to consider the information from all angles to fully understand Pennsylvania's emerging workforce needs. Occupations with the largest employment growth by volume are often

traditional occupations with a large employment base and a consistent need for workers, while occupations with the fastest employment growth rates, are often emerging occupations. Looking at occupations with the most annual openings provides yet another set of occupations to focus on. These are primarily entry-level jobs that have a sizable need to replace workers regularly and often do not pay family-sustaining wages.

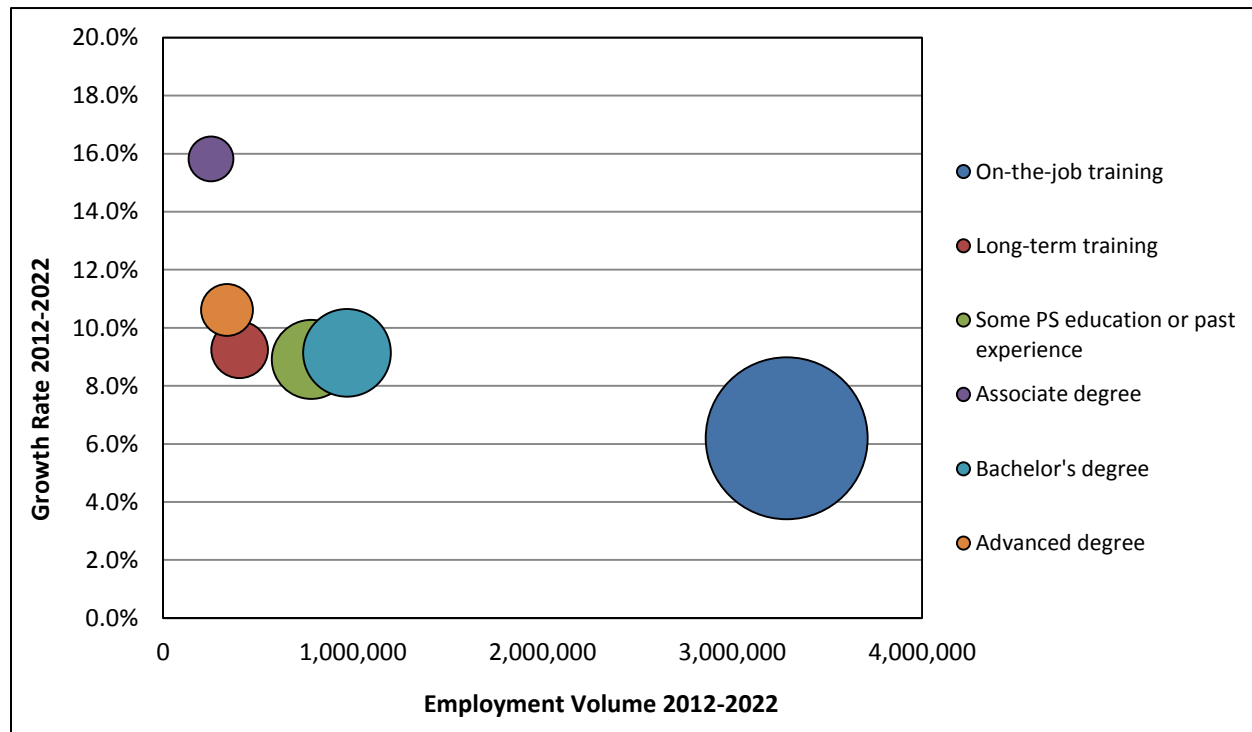
It is also important to remember that occupations with a large number of annual openings are not always attractive targets for workforce development. If high turnover rates are the main reason for a large number of openings in an occupation, then the more appropriate policy response may be to find ways to reduce turnover rather than to train more workers to fill the available openings.

By Volume Growth:	By Percent Growth:	By Annual Openings:
Registered Nurses	Physical Therapist Aides	Retail Salespersons
Home Health Aides	Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	Cashiers
Personal Care Aides	Home Health Aides	Combined Food Prep/Serving Workers
Combined Food Prep/Serving Workers	Information Security Analysts	Registered Nurses
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	Personal Care Aides	Waiters & Waitresses
Laborers & Material Movers	Meeting, Convention & Event Planners	Laborers & Material Movers
Secretaries	Market Research Analysts	Customer Service Representatives
Carpenters	Physical Therapist Assistants	Office Clerks, General
Customer Service Representatives	Cardiovascular Technicians	Home Health Aides
Nursing Assistants	Occupational Therapy Assistants	Janitors & Cleaners

Source: Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, *Long-Term Employment Projections (2012-22)*

Through 2022, industry credentials, postsecondary education and college degrees will become more important. Pennsylvania, with over 400 postsecondary educational institutions, is well positioned to effectively meet the needs of the future workforce. Educational requirements of occupations will shift away from short-term and moderate-term on-the-job training lasting no more than one year towards long-term training and some amount of formal education. All educational categories are projected to experience growth, as shown in the chart that follows.

Employment Volume and Growth by Educational Levels



Source: Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, Long-Term Employment Projections (2012-22)

Occupations requiring an Associate degree have the highest growth rate (15.8 percent) but employ the smallest number of people (about 253,000). Conversely, most employment is found in the on-the-job training category (3.3 million) but that category will have the slowest growth rate (6.2 percent). This shift from on-the-job training to some postsecondary education or an Associate degree is strongly connected with growth in Healthcare, Transportation, and Construction jobs.

Sector Strategies

Pennsylvania has been engaged in sector-driven workforce activities for more than a decade. Industry clusters have been defined to enable data-driven workforce development policies.

An industry cluster consists of a group of industries that are closely linked by common product markets, labor pools, similar technologies, supplier chains, and/or other economic ties. Clusters can take on strategic importance because activities that benefit one group member will generally have positive effects on other members of the cluster. They are used to:

- Create a consistent definition that allows for workforce comparison across regions.
- Identify major employers for building Industry Partnerships.
- Provide a basis for occupational and skills analysis of shared workforce needs.
- Direct resource allocation for jobs in demand that will offer family-sustaining wages.

Currently the commonwealth concentrates workforce strategies around 12 industry clusters. These clusters account for nearly 82 percent of all employment in the commonwealth. Along with employment

trends and average wages, the strength of a cluster is often evaluated using a location quotient (LQ) which compares a cluster's share of local employment with its share of national employment. A LQ greater than one implies a competitive advantage in an area. While the table looks at statewide LQs, many industries are highly regionalized and may have LQs well above statewide averages. Regional and local plans will pick up on this fact as actors develop local and regional priorities.

Cluster (or sub-cluster) Name		2014 Annual Average		
		Employment	National LQ	Wages
Advanced Manufacturing (AM)		442,723	1.04	\$54,890
	AM - Chemicals, Rubber & Plastics (AM - CRP)	74,101	1.16	\$55,378
	AM - Electronics (AM - E)	65,725	0.81	\$60,236
	AM - Metals (AM - M)	137,619	1.46	\$59,832
	AM - Vehicles & Vehicle Equipment (AM - VVE)	165,278	0.89	\$48,432
Agriculture & Food Productions (AFP)		170,139	0.84	\$43,739
Bio-Medical (BM)		73,585	1.14	\$99,226
Building & Construction (BC)		341,984	0.96	\$53,298
Business Services (BSV)		709,118	0.99	\$79,327
	BSV - Media, Advertising & Marketing (BSV - MAM)	128,132	0.89	\$80,183
	BSV - Operational Services (BSV - OPER)	222,302	0.94	\$47,874
	BSV - Professional & Consulting Services (BSV - P&C)	358,684	1.07	\$98,515
Education (ED)		555,857	1.01	\$47,679
Energy (ENGY)		142,832	1.13	\$77,083
Health Care (HC)		997,646	1.21	\$50,495
Hospitality, Leisure & Entertainment (HLE)		588,413	0.87	\$19,391
Logistics & Transportation (LT)		217,353	1.13	\$46,959
Real Estate, Finance & Insurance (REFI)		293,301	0.95	\$79,296
Wood, Wood Products & Publishing (WWP)		107,746	1.23	\$49,527

Equally important to Pennsylvania's sector strategy is the identification of occupations that are critical to the success and growth of the clusters and a policy to enable Pennsylvanians to acquire the necessary skills for those careers. The High Priority Occupation (HPO) policy establishes a process to identify those occupations that are in demand by employers, pay a family-sustaining wage and have higher skill requirements. Entry-level jobs that serve as an "on-ramp" to high-quality occupations may be considered as HPOs if the career pathway to existing HPOs is clearly documented. This innovative approach combines labor market data with regional stakeholder input allowing for a more complete picture of the actual workforce needs across the commonwealth. HPOs guide the allocation of training dollars for WIOA programs and select community college initiatives and equipment grants for career and technical education programs.

Industry clusters have also served as the basis for the creation of Industry Partnerships (IPs) – employer/worker consortiums that bring together companies with similar products, markets and human resource needs. The intent of IPs, through prudent investments, is for Pennsylvania to develop the

human capital necessary for greater productivity, thereby helping these industries flourish while creating career opportunities for its workforce.

Pennsylvania was among the first states to extend training and career-building efforts beyond individual companies to networks of companies in specific industries. IPs foster industry collaboration on incumbent worker training, school-to-career and other workforce pipeline initiatives, career pathways, recruitment and retention, and other human resource challenges. These types of collaboration can help alleviate skill gaps in businesses, increase entry-level employment opportunities, and lead to the creation of more high-paying jobs.

Pennsylvania's HPO and IP processes have also served as a method of evaluating occupational workforce needs. Employer input received through regional stakeholders provides insight into potential skills mismatches. Some employers continue to struggle to fill critical workforce positions while some individuals remain unemployed for extended periods of time or have difficulty finding employment. Many of the skills today's workers need are expected to be obtained through advanced education and training, resulting in relevant credentials that are valued by employers. However, feedback from many employers suggests that candidates lack the soft skills necessary to gain and/or maintain employment.

Workforce Development System - Analysis

Analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training), including an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such activities and the capacity of state entities to provide such activities, in order to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce and employment needs of employers.

Implementation of WIOA provided the commonwealth a new opportunity to fully evaluate the workforce development system and establish new policies, procedures and strategies to better meet the skill needs of the workforce and the talent needs of employers. The evaluation also allowed for the identification of strengths and weaknesses at a state level.

Identified areas of strength include:

- Strong relationships among agency executive leadership allowing for collaboration on numerous initiatives and grant applications and frequent sharing of information and best practices.
- Diverse secondary and postsecondary education and training opportunities in the state.
- A decade of experience working with sector strategies through programs like the Industry Partnership program, which has trained over 100,000 employees since its inception and has been modeled by numerous other states.
- A history of successfully applying for and administering competitive federal grants.
- Ample data through the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA) and other sources to inform decisions and strategies.

Identified areas for improvement include:

- Increasing the share of working-age adults who have postsecondary education or industry-recognized credentials.
- Increasing the quantity and quality of online, self-service PA CareerLink® options, along with direct customer access to live-person assistance via phone, Internet coaches and access points in recognition of an increasingly tech-savvy society and limited funding which makes it difficult to maintain the existing physical one-stop presence.
- Refining the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS), the system of record used by the commonwealth to collect participant data and report performance outcomes, to allow for more effective case management for job seekers, employers and agency and partner staff. This will include attempts to integrate CWDS with the case management systems of other partner programs.
- Integration and alignment of educational services, especially adult basic education services, with the workforce development system, including through co-enrollment of participants in Titles I and II. Development and utilization of contextualized literacy programs are crucial to helping TANF/SNAP Able Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWD) clients and will be a component of alignment of educational services.
- Integration and alignment of workforce programs designed to serve specific populations and administered by other state agencies (e.g., programs for TANF and SNAP recipients operated by the Department of Human Services) with workforce programs administered by the Department of Labor and Industry.

The state will make significant investments in technology to improve service delivery and allow for collection of information necessary to support WIOA implementation. Multiple focus groups are in place to drive technology investment decisions.

Workforce Development System – Alignment Strategy

Taking into account analyses described in (b)(1)(A-C), a strategy for aligning the core programs, as well as other resources available to the state, to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in (b)(1)(D)

The commonwealth strives to consistently provide excellent service to workforce development customers, both individuals and businesses, in the 23 workforce development areas across the state. To that end, the commonwealth will establish minimum requirements for PA CareerLink® career services orientation, minimum requirements for PA CareerLink® basic career services customer flow, a customizable initial intake form, and a customizable template for developing Individual Employment Plans. In addition to ensuring a level of consistency across regions, these minimum requirements and standard forms will also support alignment of services across programs by reducing duplicate data collections and allowing partners to all work from the same basic customer information.

The commonwealth will also foster program and resource alignment by requiring each local workforce development area to establish local Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) among, at minimum, the core programs, specifying how program eligibility will be determined and identifying what partners will

deliver what basic and individualized career services. This will ensure there are clearly defined roles and responsibilities among the partner programs.

Another key aspect of cross-program alignment is well-trained staff. The commonwealth will support improved and more frequent customer service and cross-program staff training to increase staff knowledge and allow for better service delivery.

Desired Outcomes

WIOA Performance Goals for Core Programs

	Projected Baseline	PY 2016/ FY2017 Proposed	Negotiated	PY 2017/ FY2018 Proposed	Negotiated
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)					
Adult	73.3%	59.0%	<i>TBD</i>	61.0%	<i>TBD</i>
DW	77.6%	67.0%	<i>TBD</i>	69.0%	<i>TBD</i>
Youth	69.2%	58.0%	<i>TBD</i>	59.0%	<i>TBD</i>
W-P	61.7%	56.0%	<i>TBD</i>	57.0%	<i>TBD</i>
Adult Basic Ed	47.7%	48.0%	<i>TBD</i>	49.0%	<i>TBD</i>
Voc Rehab	76.3%	70.0%	<i>TBD</i>	72.0%	<i>TBD</i>
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)					
Adult	72.4%	58.0%	<i>TBD</i>	60.0%	<i>TBD</i>
DW	76.9%	63.0%	<i>TBD</i>	65.0%	<i>TBD</i>
Youth	68.7%	57.0%	<i>TBD</i>	58.0%	<i>TBD</i>
Wagner-Peyser	62.6%	57.0%	<i>TBD</i>	58.0%	<i>TBD</i>
Adult Basic Ed	45.5%	46.0%	<i>TBD</i>	47.0%	<i>TBD</i>
Voc Rehab	73.3%	65.0%	<i>TBD</i>	67.0%	<i>TBD</i>
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)					
Adult	\$5,557	\$5,000	<i>TBD</i>	\$5,300	<i>TBD</i>
DW	\$7,046	\$6,300	<i>TBD</i>	\$6,500	<i>TBD</i>
Youth	\$2,200	\$2,100	<i>TBD</i>	\$2,300	<i>TBD</i>
W-P	\$5,000	\$4,700	<i>TBD</i>	\$4,900	<i>TBD</i>
Adult Basic Ed	\$3,461	\$3,500	<i>TBD</i>	\$3,550	<i>TBD</i>
Voc Rehab	\$4,395	\$4,000	<i>TBD</i>	\$4,250	<i>TBD</i>
Credential Attainment Rate					
Adult	70.8%	68.0%	<i>TBD</i>	69.0%	<i>TBD</i>
DW	72.7%	71.0%	<i>TBD</i>	72.0%	<i>TBD</i>
Youth	62.3%	60.0%	<i>TBD</i>	61.0%	<i>TBD</i>
W-P					
Adult Basic Ed	4.6%	5.0%	<i>TBD</i>	5.5%	<i>TBD</i>
Voc Rehab	33.4%	33.0%	<i>TBD</i>	34.0%	<i>TBD</i>

	Projected Baseline	PY 2016/ FY2017 Proposed	Negotiated	PY 2017/ FY2018 Proposed	Negotiated
Measurable Skill Gains					
Adult	50.0%	48.0%	<i>TBD</i>	48.0%	<i>TBD</i>
DW	50.0%	48.0%	<i>TBD</i>	48.0%	<i>TBD</i>
Youth	50.0%	48.0%	<i>TBD</i>	48.0%	<i>TBD</i>
W-P					
Adult Basic Ed	47.3%	48.0%	<i>TBD</i>	50.0%	<i>TBD</i>
Voc Rehab	61.7%	62.0%	<i>TBD</i>	64.0%	<i>TBD</i>
Effectiveness in Serving Employers					
Adult	29.0%	25.0%	<i>TBD</i>	27.0%	<i>TBD</i>
DW	29.0%	25.0%	<i>TBD</i>	27.0%	<i>TBD</i>
Youth	29.0%	25.0%	<i>TBD</i>	27.0%	<i>TBD</i>
W-P	29.0%	25.0%	<i>TBD</i>	27.0%	<i>TBD</i>
Adult Basic Ed	29.0%	25.0%	<i>TBD</i>	27.0%	<i>TBD</i>
Voc Rehab	29.0%	25.0%	<i>TBD</i>	27.0%	<i>TBD</i>

Section II – Operational Planning Elements

WIOA is designed to help all job seekers access employment, education, training, and supportive services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. Pennsylvania's effective workforce development system ([Appendix II](#)) will be built on a foundation of alignment, innovation, employer engagement, accountability structures and improved data. This strong foundation will aid in achieving Governor Wolf's overarching goals of jobs that pay, schools that teach and government that works.

The commonwealth recognizes that it is only through the collective efforts of the various agencies that touch workforce development that optimal outcomes can be achieved. Coordination, communication, leveraging of resources, and partnerships are stressed throughout the Operational Planning section. The commonwealth will develop PowerPoint presentations and training curricula for workforce agency and program staff on the state's new WIOA plan to include the specific roles and opportunities for cross-agency collaboration and how each program can help achieve overall success. One goal of these presentations and curricula will be to diffuse the vision guiding Pennsylvania's new WIOA plan, based on the assumption that shared excitement around a common vision is a critical ingredient for breaking down agency silos. In partnership with the State WDB, the commonwealth will conduct a comprehensive assessment of programs in other states that promote the formal integration of workforce programs (such as those in New Jersey, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin) and/or deeper interagency cooperation. This assessment will lead to recommendations for Pennsylvania by the end of 2016.

The commonwealth will focus resources on those individuals defined in WIOA to be provided priority of service as well as those individuals with barriers to employment. This will be accomplished through the establishment of minimum spending requirements of Title I training funds on those with barriers to employment, interagency collaboration in serving target populations and seeking of discretionary grant funds that can be used to serve those most in need. State agencies will work together to leverage resources, both federal and other, to achieve the Governor Wolf's Strategic Vision. Best practices in serving target populations will be compiled and shared amongst LWDBs.

The Operational Planning section also includes information about policies, operating systems and procedures, both from a system-wide and program-specific perspective. There is recognition among all partner agencies that policies and procedures need to be better coordinated to ensure program changes in one area do not produce unintended consequences elsewhere. Additionally, efforts will be made to better integrate data systems and case management systems in order to better evaluate programs and better serve system customers.

State Board Functions

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

The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board (PA WDB) is the governor's employer-driven workforce development advisor for programs and policies under WIOA, and serves in an advisory capacity for the implementation of the governor's workforce strategy.

The PA WDB is governed by bylaws. Members serve three-year, staggered terms. Standing and ad hoc committees are formed as necessary. The bylaws require members to accept the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Provide advice, ideas and support on the development and implementation of the commonwealth's workforce goals and associated initiatives.
2. Assist in preparation and planning efforts to effectively coordinate and integrate resources to achieve workforce and economic development goals. This plan will be developed jointly with the state departments which administer Pennsylvania's core training and education programs.
3. Actively participate on one or more of the board's standing or ad hoc committees.
4. Be available to visit with the executives of companies new to Pennsylvania in an effort to help them understand and become familiar with the resources of Pennsylvania's workforce and educational system.
5. Be available to meet with business executives, legislative leaders, labor representatives and economic development officials to emphasize the importance of smart investments in human capital.
6. Be generally familiar with Pennsylvania's federal and state workforce programs and the laws that govern them.
7. Attend at least two of the three annual meetings of the board.
8. Provide, as requested, critical feedback on the board's initiatives.
9. Encourage the involvement of businesses, organized labor, educational institutions and foundations in the commonwealth's workforce initiatives.
10. Be willing to provide the information required by the Pennsylvania Financial Disclosure and State Ethics forms. This is required annually of all board members.
11. Recuse themselves from their official board duties if there is a conflict of interest.
12. Advise the board of any potential conflicts of interest.
13. Ask the board for an opinion if they have any doubts that a specific situation involves a conflict of interest.

Official actions of the board, with the exception of bylaw amendments, must be supported by a majority of members. In the event of a quorum, all action will be taken by a vote of a majority of the members present. At meetings without a quorum, the board shall present and second a desired motion. After the meeting, a vote on the motion shall take place electronically. Should the motion pass, it shall be announced at the subsequent meeting. Amendments to the bylaws must be supported by a super-majority (three-quarters) of board members.

Core Program Alignment

The activities that will be funded by the entities carrying out the respective core programs to implement the strategy and how such activities will be aligned across the programs and among the entities administering the programs, including using co-enrollment and other strategies

The core programs – Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Basic Education, Wagner-Peyser and VR – will work in concert to effectively serve job seekers and employers across the commonwealth. Strategies will be informed by robust labor market information gathered, analyzed and provided by CWIA and other sources. While each program has clearly defined activities to carry-out, as defined by law, it is through leveraging services and resources that optimum outcomes can be achieved.

The commonwealth’s alignment of core programs will include establishing effective career pathways that combine guidance, education, training and support services that prepare individuals for careers. The pathway system will include coaches that help guide individuals to appropriate programs and services given their needs and career goals. The commonwealth will promote co-enrollment to align services and will encourage shared roles for guidance and support services within each career pathway program to prevent duplication of services among the core programs.



PA CareerLink® offices are the physical locations where, at a minimum, the services associated with each WIOA-mandated partner's core programs are provided. In addition, many partner program services, such as post-secondary recipients required under Pennsylvania's Perkins plan and TANF and SNAP programs, can also be accessed through the PA CareerLink® offices. Integration of PA CareerLink® service delivery is critical for effective and efficient service to customers. All partners have itemized the types and availability of services to be provided in the PA CareerLink® Partner Agreement.

Within the PA CareerLink®, program staff is aligned functionally, rather than by program. Aligned functions include: welcome function to include the greeting and initial intake and assessment of customers; skill and career development function to include the provision of career and training services; and business services function to include building relationships with employers through regional initiatives, including but not limited to sector partnerships, business alliances and identifying opportunities to address the human resource needs of employers. This alignment offers direct access to a broader range of services that can be adapted and leveraged to address each customer's unique needs.

Comprehensive PA CareerLink® offices use a triage approach to service delivery. Persons seeking assistance through the system can access services online or in person. Staff is available to provide direct assistance to customers in both group and individual settings, and self-service resources are available in Career Resource Areas.

As discussed in the strategic section of the plan, the commonwealth will establish minimum requirements for PA CareerLink® career services orientation, minimum requirements for PA CareerLink® basic career services customer flow, a customizable initial intake/assessment/triage form, and a customizable template for developing Individual Employment Plans. The state also held statewide meetings to discuss operation of the PA CareerLink® centers and has arrived at processes for providing and aligning services including Perkins postsecondary partners and additional workforce programs. This will ensure a level of consistency across regions and support alignment of services across programs by reducing duplicate data collections and allowing partners to all work from the same basic customer information.

A brief discussion of the activities to be funded by each of the core programs and alignment strategies follows.

WIOA Adult

The Adult program is one of three Title I core programs authorized under WIOA designed to assist participants to attain employment. The Adult program is specifically targeted toward participants, age 18 or older, who are in need of employment or career advancement. Priority of service is given to participants deemed to be recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient; if the participant is also found to be an eligible Veteran or spouse of a Veteran (Covered Person) the priority of service will be extended to the covered person.

Generally, two groups of services are made available through the Adult program (as well as the WIOA Dislocated Worker program). The first group of services is known collectively as career services and the second is training services. A participant who, after an interview, evaluation, or assessment, and career planning, is determined to be unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment which leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment,

may be in need of training services. The participant must have the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected training program and be eligible in accordance with the priority of service system.

WIOA Dislocated Worker

Dislocated Worker programs assist workers before or after layoff in identifying basic skills training, on-the-job or customized training programs and apprenticeship opportunities to help facilitate rapid reemployment. Dislocated workers are triaged at the point of entry to identify potential program eligibility. This initial intake and triage allows for the development of a streamlined service strategy that maximizes the funding of all entities in carrying out core reemployment activities. Job search and relocation allowances help eligible individuals to look for and obtain suitable employment outside of their normal commuting area when suitable employment is not available within their normal commuting area.

WIOA Youth

Youth programming is designed to serve eligible youth and young adults through high-quality case management support toward educational attainment that includes career guidance and exploration, the provision of summer and/or year-round work experience opportunities such as internships and pre-apprenticeships, and skills training along a career pathway for in-demand industries and occupations, along with any necessary supportive services. The ultimate goal for program participants is either advancement into post-secondary education or the attainment of employment with a family-sustaining or self-sustaining wage. Youth program services are prioritized for out-of-school youth (OSY) and youth with significant barriers to success, such as youth with a disability, pregnant or parenting youth, or those youth subject to the juvenile/adult justice system.

Wagner-Peyser

Wagner-Peyser staff provides employment services to job seekers and employers in PA CareerLink® centers. Services to job seekers include, but are not limited to: job search and job placement assistance; career counseling; needs and interest assessments; proficiency testing; workshops; development of an individual employment plan; and case management. Services to employers include assistance in developing and posting job orders, referral of qualified job seekers to job openings and organizing job fairs. Both job seekers and employers are also provided with robust labor market information to help inform their activities.

Adult Basic Education

Adult basic education is a critical partner in establishing career pathways for adults who are deficient in basic skills. Funded programs provide a full range of adult basic education services from beginning level literacy through high adult secondary and transition activities to support college and career readiness; these services include English language acquisition activities where needed. Programs provide basic skills instruction in the context of work readiness and incorporate workplace preparation activities and career awareness and planning in instruction and services. Programs provide case management services to their students in two key areas: 1) helping students address barriers to participation in adult basic education programming and 2) helping students prepare and plan for entry onto a career pathway through employment and/or postsecondary education/training. Case managers connect students with social services to address needs such as child care, transportation, housing, health care and others. They also provide information on employment and postsecondary education/training opportunities and assist students in completing the necessary steps to take advantage of those opportunities. These services

support persistence and success in adult basic education services and connect students to partner programs and entities in the workforce development system.

Adult basic education program administrators and other staff develop relationships and partnerships at the local level to support alignment of adult basic education services with the services of the other programs and workforce development system partners to include working with local business service teams. Applicants for Title II funds will be required to describe how they will align services with the local workforce development plan. To support the commonwealth's goal of increasing opportunities for youth, funded programs will be encouraged to co-enroll out of school youth by providing basic skills instruction.

Funded programs will provide integrated education and training whenever possible and appropriate. Integrated education and training requires three components offered concurrently and contextualized to an occupation or occupational cluster: adult basic education, workforce preparation, and workforce training. To make this possible, the commonwealth will define the spectrum of services to be included in integrated education and training. Furthermore, the commonwealth will develop policy and guidance governing the use of Title I training funds and other funding sources to support the costs of the workforce training component of integrated education and training opportunities, including both pre-employment and incumbent worker training. Integrated education and training activities will be aligned with local workforce needs, prepare students for realistic, existing employment opportunities, and be developed in consultation with LWDBs, employers, and training providers.

LWDBs are required to include a Title II representative to support overall alignment among core programs and other workforce development system partners. Per Sec. 107(b)(6) of WIOA, in local areas with more than one Title II provider, the Title II representative "shall be appointed from among individuals nominated by local providers." PDE further requires its adult basic education providers to meet regularly to coordinate their services and to make a formal presentation to the LWDB at least annually.

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)

OVR provides vocational rehabilitation services to help persons with disabilities prepare for, obtain, or maintain employment. OVR provides services to eligible individuals with disabilities, both directly and through a network of approved vendors. Services are provided on an individualized basis. The OVR counselor, during face-to-face interviews, assists customers in selecting their choice of vocational goals, services and service providers. An Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) is developed, outlining a vocational objective, services, providers and responsibilities. Counseling and guidance, diagnostic services, assessments, information and referral, job development and placement, and personal services such as readers or sign language interpreters are provided at no cost to the individual. OVR will continue to meet with individuals with disabilities and business representatives in the PA CareerLink® centers to provide vocational rehabilitation services and outreach. OVR will collaborate with partners in the workforce and education systems to develop strategies for streamlining and enhancing service planning and delivery.

Organizational charts for Labor & Industry workforce development programs and Adult Basic Education can be found in [Appendix III](#) and [Appendix IV](#).

Alignment with Other Partner Programs

How the activities described in (i) will be aligned with activities provided under employment, training, education, including career and technical education, and human services programs not covered by the plan, as appropriate, assuring coordination of, and avoiding duplication among, the activities referred to in this clause

The Pennsylvania workforce development system extends far beyond the core programs to include programs administered by numerous state agencies and quasi-governmental entities. An overview of major partners and programs is included on page 43. Core and partner programs will collaborate to ensure that resources are leveraged and services are not duplicated.

An interagency work group has been established and meets on a regular basis to consider ideas, discuss agency initiatives and goals and how partner agencies can help in achieving them, and share best practices. Additionally, DHS, DCED and the Department of Agriculture have recently added Special Assistants focused on workforce development initiatives, all of whom participate in the interagency work group and help in facilitating alignment of activities.

The State WDB is another body that works to promote alignment and collaboration across programs. The Secretaries of L&I, DCED, DHS, PDE and the Department of Agriculture all serve on the Board. Other agency secretaries are invited to participate in Board meetings when populations they serve are expected to be discussed, such as the Secretary of the DOC for discussions involving ex-offenders and re-entry programs, the Secretary of Aging when discussing older workers or the Secretary of the DMVA for discussions involving veterans. In addition to its other committees, the State WDB will retain a Youth Standing Committee that will provide leadership and information to Pennsylvania's local youth standing committees in promoting greater connections between workforce development boards, community organizations with experience and expertise in youth workforce preparation, and the young people that they serve.

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:

- OVR 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 under the 15 percent reserve.
- The Secretaries of PDE, DHS and L&I will, working with other commonwealth agencies and executive office officials, create a written plan that implements Employment First as the policy of all commonwealth executive branch agencies; aligns funding, policy, and practice toward an emphasis on competitive integrated employment; prioritizes competitive integrated employment as the first consideration and preferred outcome of all publicly-funded services for all Pennsylvanians with a disability; and creates the conditions that lead to a material increase in the number of Pennsylvanians with a disability who are employed in a competitive integrated job.
- WIOA Youth service providers coordinate with LEAs, adult education agencies, county human service offices, county assistance office income maintenance caseworkers, Keystone Education

Yields Success (KEYS) student coordinators, EARN contractors, juvenile justice and local law enforcement agencies, local housing authorities, OVR, economic development entities and other community and faith-based organizations to ensure Youth 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 Education Leading to Employment and Career Training (ELECT) 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.
- 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 HPO list and is designed to lead to credential attainment. Both credential attainment and HPO alignment assist job seekers in securing employment with family-sustaining wages.
- The commonwealth 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.
- PDE will work with representatives from the PA Department of Corrections and other education stakeholders to identify best practices to support the requirements of Section 225 of Title II.
- The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (DOC) is working closely with L&I, PDE, DHS, DCED and other partners to align its Career Pathways in Reentry Initiative with on-going efforts in the workforce and education systems.
- The DOC is partnering with LWDBs and PA CareerLink® service providers to build staff capacity in reentry employment and offender workforce development services.
- PDE will partner with the DOC to improve coordination of resources and systems at the state level, including providing professional development for Bureau of Correction Education (BCE) staff on key issues such as career pathways, rigorous academic standards, and the development of college- and career-ready skills. PDE's Bureau of Career & Technical Education (BCTE) offers regional meetings with secondary schools to discuss best and promising practices related to workforce readiness and will extend these opportunities to DOC BCE staff and others who are committed to improving educational and employment outcomes for students in the criminal justice system. In addition, PDE will work to connect DOC with institutions of higher education

and other partners who can provide opportunities for offenders to enhance skills and earn post-secondary credentials.

- South Central WDB and local economic development entities cooperate to ensure better business health. Members of the local economic development group and representatives of the WDB meet with all new and expanding businesses within the region to discuss their future needs. From the workforce side this helps connect the WDB with new companies and can provide detailed information about current workers in the region as well as give the WDB the opportunity to learn about future needs. At the same time it also introduces the company to the local economic development system that can help to connect the business with programs that can help them continue to grow. This partnership helps to identify issues and create innovative solutions especially in a region where the demand for workforce is very high and can be competitive.
- The Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and nine national Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) sponsors refer all individuals ages 55 and older to the PA CareerLink® centers to enroll in CWDS. PA CareerLink® staff reciprocates by referring SCSEP eligible individuals to the AAAs and SCSEP partners as appropriate. In some cases, SCSEP staff is co-located at PA CareerLink® centers on a full- or part-time basis.
- SCSEP sponsors seek to co-enroll participants in WIOA, OVR and veterans programs, as appropriate, to efficiently leverage available federal and state workforce development funds.
- When appropriate, SCSEP sponsors pursue the placement of SCSEP participants to serve as greeters, resource room aides, job developers, custodians, clerical aides and customer service representatives in PA CareerLink® centers.
- The Pennsylvania Workforce Data Quality Initiative (PA-WDQI) 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. DHS and L&I were the initial partner agencies in the project with analysis of Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser, TANF E&T and SNAP E&T program outcomes at the forefront of project goals. PDE is currently working with L&I to join the WDQI initiative and align PDE longitudinal data with L&I and DHS data.
- The PA Link to Aging and Disability Resources (PA Link) is a resource for elderly Pennsylvanians and adults with disabilities. The PA Link, through its collaborative network of partners including state and local public and private agencies improves access to information and provides referrals to long term living supports and services. Examples of services accessible through the PA Link network include assisted living and nursing home services, vocational rehabilitation services and transportation services.
- OVR has collaborated with Penn State's AgrAbility Program and the U.S. Department of Agriculture in developing the Farming and Agriculture Rehabilitation Management (F.A.R.M.) policy to address the rehabilitation needs of farmers and ranchers with disabilities. VR counselors, with technical assistance and guidance from Pennsylvania's AgrAbility Program, are

able to assess the rehabilitation needs of farmers and ranchers with disabilities in order to provide the specialized rehabilitative and assistive technologies they may need to maintain their employment.

- OVR 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.
- L&I partnered with DCED to release a Notice of Grant Availability for the Sector Partnership National Dislocated Worker Grant to ensure job training strategies pursued under the grant are aligned with regional economic development strategies.
- The Fast Track to Employment initiative in Mercer County, supported by state grant funds, utilizes the six public libraries in the county to provide resources to job seekers to include career guidance, resume preparation assistance and information about schools, financial aid, scholarships, and internships. The commonwealth will look to further utilize libraries and other community based organizations as access points to the workforce development system.
- Through a recently approved Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between L&I-OVR and DHS-Office of Developmental Programs, the agencies will pool their resources for the purpose of increasing the amount of financial resources available to assist individuals with intellectual disabilities secure and maintain community integrated employment; specifically, DHS-ODP will direct state funds in the amount of \$500,000 to L&I-OVR so that L&I-OVR will use those state funds to match available federal vocational rehabilitation funds at the allowable federal-to-state-ratio. This collaborative effort between L&I-OVR and DHS-ODP promotes competitive employment for individuals with an intellectual disability and will allow the possibility of expanded job-training programs, paid work experience for high school students, employment demonstration projects, and family outreach. This MOU is dependent on the availability of funds and the pooling of financial resources is a year-to-year endeavor.
- The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture invited representatives of groups interested in using agriculture education as a rehabilitation modality to come together to discuss existing programs and the possibility of collaborating to build new ones. The Department of Labor & Industry, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Human Services, and providers of similar services in local areas gathered to discuss some best practice examples and the possibilities for replication around the commonwealth. This group plans to continue meeting on a regular basis under the leadership of the PA Department of Agriculture.
- The PA Department of Agriculture continues work with the Department of Education in administering agriculture education programs (a part of career and technology education) as well as the accompanying FFA programs and 4-H (in cooperation with Penn State University). The Department of Agriculture plans an evaluation of the agriculture education system in the commonwealth in conjunction with PDE and the Pennsylvania Association of Agriculture Educators in 2016.

- The PA Department of Agriculture invited representatives from the veterans' services system within state government and around the commonwealth to a meeting to discuss jobs in the agriculture and food industry as a career pathway for people returning to the job market from active duty. As a result, many of the participants will be participating in a career day for veterans during the 100th Farm Show on January 14, 2016. This informal collaborative group plans to continue meeting on a regular basis under the leadership of the PA Department of Agriculture.
- In the process of outreach to urban farming groups in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, the PA Department of Agriculture discovered an interest in additional training for participants in urban farming projects. A meeting at the W.B Saul High School of Agriculture in Philadelphia drew representatives from 25+ groups into a conversation about technical training in soil remediation, season extension, and composting as well as formal apprenticeship programs. This collaboration will continue with meetings and tours planned on a regular basis. A tour of hydroponics and aquaponics sites is planned for early December.
- The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs –Office of Veterans Affairs (DMVA-OVA) will work to establish and participate in Regional Veterans' Employment and workforce development initiatives that are focused on combating veteran unemployment. DMVA will collaborate with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, the State Civil Service Commission, other Veterans' service organizations and our community partners to lead efforts that improve veteran employment within the commonwealth. DMVA recognizes that the emerging needs of veterans and their families are unique within several distinct regions. DMVA will work with sister departments and community partners to develop regional initiatives that both maximize available resources and focus on the economic and industry needs within those defined regions. This initiative will include utilizing new and innovative techniques that help veterans develop required skills, prepare for job interviews and attain employment opportunities. DMVA will publicize efforts, provide systemic updates on new opportunities, share success and facilitate access to regional employment opportunities with the end goal to pair job seeking veterans with employers who are ready to hire.

The commonwealth 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 State WDB and LWDBs will work with education agencies and educational institutions to build career pathways that include secondary and postsecondary career and technical education programs of study.
- The commonwealth 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 commonwealth will increase the integration of TANF employment and training services with WIOA core programs.
- The commonwealth 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.

Department of Labor & Industry

- Trade Act; Veterans Programs (Chapter 41 of Title 38); Unemployment Insurance; PennSERVE; Industry Partnerships; Rapid Response Coordination Services; Trade Adjustment Assistance Act Services

Department of Education

- Career and Technical Education Programs; K-12 Secondary Education; Office of Commonwealth Libraries

Department of Human Services

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Employment & Training (E&T); Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program E&T (SNAP); Keystone Education Yields Success (KEYS); PA Work Wear; Juvenile Justice Services

Department of Community and Economic Development

- WEDnetPA; Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance; Community Services Block Grant; PA Local Government Training Partnership; Powdered Metals Program

Department of Aging

- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

Department of Corrections

- Vocational Education; Secondary Education/GED; Adult Basic Education Services; Career Pathways in Reentry Initiative

Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole

- Returning Citizen Re-entry Programs

Department of Military & Veterans Affairs

- Veterans Programs

Department of Agriculture

Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education

- 4-year universities

Pennsylvania Community Colleges

- 14 Independent Community Colleges

Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency

- Student Financial Aid Provider; PA-TIP; Loan Forgiveness Program; Federal Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program

Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals

How the entities carrying out the respective core programs will coordinate activities and provide comprehensive, high-quality services including supportive services, to individuals

As described in the Alignment Strategy in Section I of the plan, the commonwealth strives to provide consistently excellent service to workforce development customers across the state through minimum standards, clearly defined roles and responsibilities and well-trained staff.

The commonwealth will establish minimum requirements for PA CareerLink® career services orientation and basic career services customer flow, a customizable initial intake/assessment/triage form, and a customizable template for developing Individual Employment Plans. In addition to ensuring a level of consistency across regions, these minimum requirements and standard forms will also support alignment of services across programs by reducing duplicate data collections and allowing partners to all work from the same basic customer information.

Trained and informed staff is another critical element to providing comprehensive, high-quality service. An expanded curriculum of standardized courses, technical courses, conferences and workshops enhance knowledge, skills and the professional development of workforce professionals in PA CareerLink® centers, LWDBs and partnering agencies and promote a collaborative and consistent service delivery through information exchange and learning.

The commonwealth also recognizes the need to provide supportive services to customers, particularly those with barriers to employment, in order to promote successful outcomes. While many of these supportive services can be provided by the core programs, other services must be secured through partner programs and community and faith-based organizations. Examples of work with partners to provide necessary supportive services include:

- Participants determined to be eligible under WIOA's Title I core programs are characterized as having barriers to employment. Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker funds allow local areas to provide supportive services while Title I Youth dictates supportive services as a mandatory program element. Referrals and/or assistance with transportation, housing, child care and dependent care are found at all PA CareerLink® centers and can also often be leveraged from TANF and SNAP Employment and Training programs. LWDBs also coordinate with partnering agencies, human services entities, and community-based organizations to ensure a robust variety of services.
- Case management in adult basic education programs connects students with other services, both social services to address barriers to participation in adult basic education programming and services to support transition to employment and/or postsecondary education and training. Perkins postsecondary programs are among the eligible training programs. The programs are part of career pathways aligned to HPOs and credentials.
- OVR partners with local providers to increase resources for extended services for individuals with the most significant disabilities in Supported Employment.
- OVR collaborates with BWPO via PA CareerLink® centers to better assist veterans who have disabilities in obtaining assistive technology (AT) to remove barriers in locating and maintaining employment. OVR staff attends PA Cares meetings to learn AT and training programs offered by

various community and state agencies and higher education institutions and disseminate this information statewide to OVR Veteran Coordinators and Veteran Counselors who provide AT equipment and training to OVR customers who are veterans with disabilities.

Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers

How the entities carrying out the respective core programs coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs. The activities shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

The commonwealth is committed to providing high-quality service to employers as evidenced by one of the five state goals being specific to employer engagement. Employers will be prominent participants in the development of workforce development strategies through forums like the employer-led State WDB and through ongoing meetings with business leaders as part of the Governor's Jobs that Pay Tour.

At the local level, Business Service Teams (BSTs) in the PA CareerLink® centers work with area employers to identify their talent needs and refer qualified candidates to fill those positions. This includes referring candidates for on-the-job or customized training where the referred individual is not immediately ready to take on the full duties of the position. BSTs also have access to a plethora of labor market information that can be helpful to employers in setting wages and benefits that will attract high-quality candidates. BSTs will communicate and collaborate with other agencies of state government which may have direct liaison activities with employers and regional economic development partners to avoid business fatigue from multiple contacts and ensure coordination of services. This will also include coordination and connection with school districts, career and technical centers and post-secondary providers who can serve as a source of talent for employers.

Employers also have access to the JobGateway® online job-matching portal. The initial system was developed based on feedback from employers received through meetings and surveys. The commonwealth will continuously seek employer feedback in order to enhance JobGateway® functionality and features to better meet employer needs.

The commonwealth welcomes the addition of an employer satisfaction measure to the federal common measures. Measuring employer engagement and satisfaction provides LWDBs with actionable intelligence to identify best practices and weaknesses in serving employers allowing constant system improvement.

Additional efforts to ensure the provision of comprehensive, high-quality service to employers include:

- The OVR Single Point of Contact (SPOC) model, which is designed to help any employer hire and on-board talented individuals with disabilities. The model connects the employer to one individual responsible for coordinating all program supports to include pre-screened talent recruitment and on-boarding supports to ensure new hire success.
- The commonwealth-funded Industry Partnership (IP) program has been successful at enlisting businesses participating in the same general economic sector to collaborate and cooperate. It has been found from the participating firms that IP's encourage continuous improvement while also gaining a better trained workforce through incumbent worker training.

- The Pennsylvania Department of Aging has partnered with the Pennsylvania Homecare Association to improve the skills of current and future workers and consequently improve the home care provided to older individuals. This has been accomplished through the creation of 55 online Direct Care Worker training courses and through a grant to Westmoreland County Community College to train older individuals to become direct care workers.
- The Pennsylvania Department of Education's secondary and postsecondary career and technical education (CTE) programs will collaborate and partner with employers who will assist in: informing and developing career pathways for targeted HPOs; developing work-based learning opportunities for CTE students and career exploration activities for middle school students; developing pathways to high value industry certificates and credentials; developing a system of micro-credentials; and improving STEM focused career exploration.
- The PA Department of Agriculture is working with local industry partnerships to identify industry needs and develop relevant training programs to include seeking to establish apprenticeship programs for positions such as Agriculture Equipment Service Technicians and in other occupations, particularly in the dairy industry and organic farming.
- The Work Opportunity Tax Credit program (WOTC) provides tax credits to employers for wages paid to individuals from targeted populations.
- The Strategic Early Warning Network (SEWN), a program managed by the Steel Valley Authority, offers layoff aversion services to manufacturing companies, upon request, at no cost. Core services include financial restructuring, operational restructuring and cost management, ownership transition, high performance workplace strategies and new market opportunities.
- Pennsylvania's Small Business Procurement Initiative designates a portion of state government contracts for companies with 100 or fewer employees that do not exceed established revenue ceilings. Allowing these small businesses to compete for contracts will, in turn, provide opportunities for them to add to their labor force.
- PA CareerLink® helps employers fulfill part of the US DOL requirements for Foreign Labor Certification by helping them recruit U.S. workers and determining whether or not there are any qualified job applicants available to fill their job postings. If U.S. workers are not available Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers are considered.
- Adult basic education programs can provide basic skills instruction and workforce preparation activities to support incumbent worker training.
- Career and technical education programs provide soft skills instruction, workforce preparation and technical skills instruction to support new worker and incumbent worker needs.

Engagement with Educational Institutions

How the state's strategy will engage the state's community colleges and area career and technical educational schools as partners in the workforce development system and enable the state to leverage other Federal, state and local investments that have enhanced access to workforce development programs at those institutions

The commonwealth's workforce development strategy is integrally tied to education, starting with the secondary school system to include career and technical schools and continuing through postsecondary education to include community colleges, and public and private colleges and universities. All core programs have a history of engaging with the education system, in particular the career and technical schools and community colleges, and will continue to develop those relationships.

The core programs will work with the education system to support and develop career pathways identified by employers and the workforce system. The commonwealth is partnering with seven 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 through a Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) grant. The community colleges are Perkins postsecondary recipients. The model developed by the seven community colleges will serve as a model that can be replicated by all of the Perkins postsecondary recipients. In addition, many of the approved secondary CTE programs of study 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 PDE, providers of career and technical education (CTE) programs of study have worked to align industry credentials to high priority occupations. Secondary career and technical centers make appropriate micro-credentials available through end-of-program assessment. Students graduating from a secondary CTE program exit high school with digital skill badges. The digital skill badge is a means to validate individual achievements and verify technical competence through projects, programs and assessments.

There has also been significant collaboration between the commonwealth workforce development system and community colleges on the multiple Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grants received. The TAACCCT I grant received by the Community College of Philadelphia and shared among all of the state's fourteen community colleges was 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 which support included arranging for wrap-around supportive services, as necessary. A TAACCCT II grant was received by Montgomery County Community College to develop prior learning assessment which became the online tool – ccfasttrack.org - used by all community colleges. The college also developed a free online entrepreneurial course – beresource.com. A TAACCCT III grant was received by Pennsylvania College of Technology, in partnership with Westmoreland County Community College, Navarro Community College (Texas), and Stark State College (Ohio) to support the ShaleNET US consortium. The project provides for entry-level certifications, credit-based stackable credentials, degree programs, and job match system services to job seekers looking to work in the oil and gas industry. Most recently, Northampton Community College, in partnership with Lehigh Carbon Community College and Luzerne County Community College, received a TAACCCT IV grant to prepare dislocated workers and other unemployed individuals for careers in advanced manufacturing,

health care, and transportation and logistics building on successful strategies from prior rounds of funding with an emphasis on technology-enhanced learning techniques. The commonwealth 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 case managers, OVR counselors, KEYS student coordinators and WIOA and Wagner-Peyser employment specialists have established relationships with educational staff to support the successful transition of their customers to postsecondary programs. The postsecondary programs include those offered by Perkins postsecondary recipients.

All Pennsylvanians 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 are implementing the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education. At the local level, many adult education providers have developed relationships with postsecondary education providers. 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 commonwealth 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 have worked together to identify key content areas for the adult education program to cover to support successful transition to the postsecondary program.

The commonwealth will strive to connect youth and adults seeking postsecondary education with available financial aid to include Pell and PHEAA grant programs. The commonwealth 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 GED 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 commonwealth.

In serving individuals with disabilities, OVR will continue to work collaboratively with local community colleges, career and technical schools and other Perkins recipients 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 such as Project PAS and Work Partners to expand postsecondary education options for youth with disabilities. OVR 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, DMVA-OVA 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. DMVA will 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. DMVA will leverage these education and training platforms to focus on job skills that meet the needs of employers within the regions. DMVA 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.

Leveraging Resources to Increase Educational Access

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 educational institutions described in Section E.

In recent years, there has been significant collaboration between workforce development programs and educational institutions, particularly community colleges. L&I has partnered with a number of Pennsylvania community colleges to apply for federal grants to increase access to post-secondary education for non-traditional, harder to serve individuals. Each of the community colleges is a Perkins postsecondary recipient and each is expected to leverage investments to enhance access to career pathways.

The WIF grant is a partnership between seven LWDBs, seven community colleges, OVR, the PDE Division of Adult Education and DHS, which administers the SNAP E&T and TANF programs. The target population for the project is out-of-school youth, adults with low basic skills and other learners with significant barriers to education and employment. The project aims to establish several career pathway models that include multiple industry-recognized micro-credentials along the pathway. The project will also seek to catalog available interventions and supportive services to assist students in danger of not completing. The ultimate goals of the project are to improve the educational and employment outcomes of students with barriers and to make micro-credentials an integral part of career pathways for individuals.

The commonwealth has also leveraged state workforce development resources to promote new opportunities for students to access post-secondary education. In May 2014, the *Access College – Employment Success (ACES)* grant was awarded to Dreams Realized through Education Aspiration Model (D.R.E.A.M.) Partnership to create college-based certificate programs for young adults with intellectual disabilities. D.R.E.A.M. Partnership is in the process of developing and implementing programs at two Pennsylvania colleges or universities per year over a three-year period. Programs will provide a mix of credit and non-credit course offerings and extracurricular activities that provide accessible, integrated and developmental opportunities with the goal of increasing participants’ opportunities for community-integrated, customized or competitive employment following program completion. The grant is being funded through the state Reemployment Fund.

The commonwealth will continue to work closely with post-secondary education partners, including all Perkins postsecondary recipients, to leverage federal, state and local resources, including financial aid programs and veterans’ benefits, to enhance access to educational opportunities. These efforts are essential in order to meet Governor Wolf’s goals for postsecondary credential or certificate attainment.

Improving Access to Postsecondary Credentials

How the state's strategy will improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable)

As discussed in the Strategic section of this plan, the commonwealth 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 commonwealth 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.

Governor Wolf has set a goal that 60 percent of Pennsylvanians in the labor force will have postsecondary credentials or certificates by 2025 in order to meet expected employer demand. The commonwealth will work to identify and align credentials to career pathways for high priority occupations. The commonwealth 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 PDE approved CTE programs are 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.

All 14 of Pennsylvania's community colleges use a website and e-portfolio platform called College Credit FastTrack (ccfasttrack.org) to translate prior educational, workforce and life experiences into college credit and to establish common standards for prior learning assessment within the community college sector. The website guides students through developing and submitting a portfolio that highlights their prior learning experiences, including transfer credit, military service, workforce training and badges. A community college faculty then reviews the portfolio and determines how many credits are awarded. Headed by lead institution Montgomery County Community College, College Credit FastTrack was made possible by a \$2.5 million Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant from the U.S. Department of Labor.

In accordance with the federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006, Pennsylvania requires postsecondary institutions receiving Perkins funding, including the 14 community colleges, to articulate with secondary schools that offer PDE-approved Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs of study. The Students Occupationally and Academically Ready (SOAR) Program allows 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. The SOAR program serves as a seamless pathway from secondary to postsecondary education and ensures students transition from level to another without delays or duplication of learning. Colleges use an electronic transfer and articulation system provided by the state to indicate the number of credits awarded to each program of study.

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

- All training providers seeking inclusion on the ETPL 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.
- The Industry Partnership program encourages 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.
- The PA-TIP program, administered by the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) provides need-based awards to students enrolling in certificate programs less than two years in length for HPOs in a number of industry sectors.
- OVR 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.
- The Keystone Education Yields Success (KEYS) program, funded by DHS, provides support and guidance to TANF and SNAP recipients attending any of Pennsylvania's 14 community colleges. A KEYS student facilitator at each college assists eligible students with identifying career goals, scheduling courses, applying for financial aid, transportation and child care needs.
- 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.

Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies

How the activities described in (i) will be coordinated with economic development strategies and activities in the state

Commonwealth economic development strategies are primarily developed and implemented by DCED. DCED staff work closely with local economic and community development entities located throughout the state. To promote coordination and collaboration amongst economic and community development partners, DCED established the Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP), a network of business assistance partners designed to encourage regional coordination in economic and community development efforts, yielding superior customer service to the business community and a comprehensive, efficient statewide economic delivery strategy. PREP partners are organized in ten regions across the state offering one-on-one counseling, specialized workshops, online training and

financial incentives to new business ventures and existing companies looking to expand and grow. The commonwealth has established that the state planning regions under WIOA will be the ten PREP regions to promote and ensure coordination between economic and workforce development at the regional level.

PREP partners use Executive Pulse, a cloud based customer relation management (CRM) software platform, to help manage and coordinate partner outreach with employers. Joining the economic and community development agencies as PREP partners are community colleges, the local PA CareerLink® centers and LWDBs. Additionally a number of LWDBs are considering the use of Executive Pulse to aid in coordinating business engagement between workforce and economic development partners on the regional and state level; the commonwealth encourages this coordination. In 2014 the commonwealth made state funding available through Regional Partnership grants to encourage greater collaboration between LWDBs and PREP partners. Grantees used grant funds in various ways to include comprehensive regional planning, conducting employer needs assessments and developing training programs to meet the needs of regional employers. The commonwealth will also encourage LWDBs to become PREP workforce providers. In order to become a PREP workforce provider, the LWDB must register in the Executive Pulse System. Once registered in the program, the LWDB would be required to use the database in Executive Pulse to share contacts and action items for each business contact.

At a state level, the Secretary of DCED serves as a member of the State WDB, ensuring that workforce development strategies align with economic development efforts. Additionally, the DCED Special Assistant for Agency Development Initiatives is a member of the interagency workgroup previously discussed. In addition to driving state economic development strategies, DCED also administers the Workforce and Economic Development Network of Pennsylvania (WEDnetPA) Guaranteed Free Training Program. The WEDnetPA program provides qualified companies with funding for essential skills and advanced technology training. Since the program's inception, over 1.1 million workers have been trained from 17,733 companies. Business client satisfaction is surveyed annually. In Program Year 14-15, 99 percent of survey respondents reported a positive impact as a result of the training, 80 percent realized improved product and/or service quality, 74 percent saw increased employee morale, 72 percent benefitted from improved communications and teamwork, and 66 percent said the training led to employee promotions and/or increases in pay. In keeping with the commonwealth's goal of making Industry Partnerships and similar multi-employer partnerships the primary means of connecting the workforce development system to the needs of employers, DCED will collaborate with L&I to link WEDnetPA more closely to those partnerships during the coming years.

Section III – State Operating Systems and Policies

The plan shall describe the state operating systems and policies that will support the implementation of the strategy described in the strategic portion of the plan, including a description of:

- *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)*
- *Data collection and reporting processes used for all programs and activities, including those present in one-stop centers*
- *The state policies that will support implementation of the state's strategies (e.g. co-enrollment policies and universal in-take processes)*

Pennsylvania has in place strong operating systems and policies to support implementation of the Governor's strategic vision.

JobGateway® is the commonwealth's job-matching system linking job seekers to employment opportunities and employers to available talent. The system has numerous additional features for job seekers to include skills assessments, career exploration tools and videos, labor market information, interview training and listings of eligible training providers. Similarly, employers have access to recruiting tools and rich labor market information.

The Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) serves as the primary database and system of record for numerous workforce development programs tracking and recording services, activities and outcomes. Activities are recorded by funding stream, enabling the system to identify the resultant outcomes for each investment made. CWDS facilitates dual and multi-program enrollment and service strategies, as customers provide intake information once to register for services while staff triage the individual to the program(s) and funding stream(s) most applicable to the individuals' needs. CWIA uses data collected through CWDS to generate performance reports for programs.

The Division of Adult Education uses the e-Data v2 web-based system to capture and evaluate Title II program data. e-Data v2 is a real-time data system with a web-based design that allows users and Division of Adult Education staff access to individual programs' adult education and family literacy data.

Federal Perkins recipients submit data into the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS). Data is collected at the recipient, program and student level for each of the mandated performance measures. Data reports are provided on an aggregate level. The entities can pull student level reports. PDE works with CWIA on an annual basis to align Perkins programs of study to HPOs. The resulting product is a CIP/SOC crosswalk.

While CWDS is the database for several workforce development programs, there are other workforce and education programs that use different systems of record. With that in mind, the commonwealth has established the PA-WDQI system to link data from multiple data sets. To date, the system includes human services, workforce and wage record data that can be linked in a secure way while protecting confidentiality. The linking of data allows for the measuring of program return on investment and the identification of the supply of skilled workers to meet employer demand. Additional efforts to allow a greater level of integration between CWDS and other data collection and case management systems will

also be explored. PDE is working to join the PA-WDQI system and align its longitudinal education data to the data sets in WDQI.

Relevant state guidance and policies include, but are not limited to:

- Guidance for WIOA Title I-B Programs, which aides staff in determining program eligibility and appropriately entering services into CWDS;
- Labor Exchange Policies and Procedures, which discusses CWDS, system use policies, how to enter customer information (both job seeker and employer); how to post jobs; labor exchange services; and other pertinent information;
- Eligible Training Providers Policy, which addresses initial and continued eligibility requirements and processes for the statewide Eligible Training Provider List; and
- e-Data v2 Instruction Manual and Glossary, which provides technical guidance for using the e-Data v2 system.
- PDE's PIMS Secondary and Postsecondary Instruction Manual, which outlines each data element and reporting requirements.

State Program and State Board

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.

The operation of the workforce development system is a shared responsibility among the state, LWDBs, state and local elected officials, the core WIOA partner programs, other partner programs and PA CareerLink® operators. Five of the six core programs are administered by L&I with Adult Basic Education administered by PDE. An overall workforce development system organizational chart, L&I workforce development programs organizational chart and PDE adult basic education organizational chart are included as Appendices I, II and III. Local organizational charts will be required elements of local workforce development plans.

State Board - provide a description of the State Board to include a membership roster, including all members' organizational affiliations and a description of the activities that will assist State Board members and staff in carrying out State Board functions effectively.

The Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board (PA WDB) is the governor's principal private-sector advisory body for programs and policies under the authority of the WIOA. Implementation of WIOA provisions aligned with Pennsylvania's election of a new governor and provided an additional incentive to restructure and re-establish the PA WDB. Only four members of the previous board were retained, with 45 new persons being appointed. The board exceeds the requirements of WIOA, and includes: the governor; four members of the legislature (two from each caucus and chamber); two local elected officials; five cabinet secretaries; eight representatives of labor organizations; one representative of a joint apprenticeship and training council; one representative from a community-based organization; two representatives from institutions of higher education; and 25 representatives of business. The Chairman is Mark L. Butler, President and CEO of Ollie's Bargain Outlet, Inc.

Members were provided a thorough orientation to their roles and responsibilities as the PA WDB, including Governor Wolf's strategic vision for the workforce development system in the commonwealth.

The governor's strategic vision calls for the board to assist in guiding the system, specifically through: 1) creating strong policies and standards on local boards and governance; 2) re-designating local workforce areas to more closely align with labor markets while also maximizing resources for direct service delivery; 3) providing direction and building policies surrounding local and regional planning to ensure connection with economic and community development priorities; and, 4) designating grant eligibility for regional efforts.

The PA WDB is comprised of a variety of business representatives, small, large, women and minority owned, spanning technology to manufacturing, retail to logistics, healthcare to energy, biotechnology to agriculture, thus creating a diversified board, which enhances the board's ability to look at workforce issues from varying perspectives. A PA WDB membership roster is available on the [Pennsylvania WDB website](#).

Subcommittees of the PA WDB have included multiple agency representatives including staff from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education as well as the Office of Postsecondary and Higher Education. The diversity of the representatives ensure secondary, career and technical education and postsecondary policies are addressed in the PA WDB subcommittees.

Assessment of Programs and One-Stop Partners

How the respective core programs will be assessed each year, including an assessment of the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs (analyzed by local area, or by provider) based on state performance accountability measures described in section 116(b)

The commonwealth will at a minimum produce the six common performance measures described in section 116(b) on a quarterly basis for each of the core programs under Titles I, III, and IV in accordance with the reporting templates proposed under 1205-ONEW. Outcomes will be compared to negotiated levels of performance for each measure. Once Title II data is fully integrated into CWDS, the commonwealth will explore the feasibility of producing these quarterly performance reports for Title II programs. Participant-specific reports that provide the pool of people included in the six common performance measure(s) for Titles I, III, and IV will be compiled in conjunction with these quarterly reports and distributed to LWDBs in support of program management and analysis. Assessment of effectiveness measures are also being developed to allow the state and LWDBs to make more informed decisions about programming and the use of funds. The commonwealth will be developing additional performance measures to the degree they provide meaningful and actionable information and data can feasibly be collected. The state WDB has established a standing committee to review recommendations for Performance and Accountability standards and measures.

The commonwealth will negotiate performance levels for core programs under Title I with LWDBs and local programs based on the state negotiated levels. PDE intends to apply its state negotiated levels for the six common performance measures to Title II programs. In addition, Title II programs will be required to report on the number of outcomes per enrolled student. All core programs will be monitored on a regular basis to ensure progress toward meeting or exceeding state and local WIOA negotiated performance levels.

How other one-stop partner programs will be assessed each year

The PA CareerLink® operator plays an instrumental role in assessing all one-stop partner programs. Beyond traditional program-specific performance metrics, the operator will consider how well all of the one-stop partner programs coordinate and integrate service delivery, promote the seamless transition of customers from one partner to another and demonstrate the capacity to meet the needs of customers accessing the PA CareerLink® system. Program-specific performance is addressed in the response to the effectiveness of programs in the preceding two-year period question that follows.

The results of an assessment of the effectiveness of the core programs and other one-stop partner programs during the preceding 2-year period

Pennsylvania has met or exceeded its negotiated goals for WIA common measure performance for the past three years, qualifying for incentive grants in PY 2012 and PY 2013. Title II has exceeded its negotiated performance targets annually since 2011-2012. Pennsylvania is in the top two quartiles of performance in the majority of Title II outcome measures.

OVR performance standards are established by the Rehabilitation Services Administration. OVR had six main performance indicators, three of which – competitive employment outcomes, significance of disability and earnings ratio – were considered primary indicators. State VR agencies must meet or exceed at least four of the six performance indicators including at least two of the three primary indicators. Pennsylvania OVR has exceeded the performance standards for all three primary indicators and has met or exceeded performance requirements for at least four total indicators in each of the last three years. Pennsylvania OVR has also exceeded the performance ratio level for serving minorities in each of the last three program years.

US DOL assesses the Pennsylvania Department of Aging and nine national sponsors providing SCSEP services in the commonwealth each year against six core SCSEP performance measures. These six measures are: entered employment, retention, average earnings, community service, service level and most in need. The US DOL establishes goals for each performance measure that its grantees, such as the Department of Aging, must meet or exceed. In both FY 13-14 and FY 14-15, the Department of Aging met or exceeded each performance measure.

Trade Act programs are focused on getting participants reemployed and ensuring those individuals maintain employment. In FY 2013 a total of 3,414 participants received Trade services of which 81.3 percent entered employment and 89.3 percent of those who entered employment retained employment. In FY 2014 a total of 2,887 participants received Trade services of which 100 percent entered employment and 98.2 percent of those who entered employment retained employment. The commonwealth will continue to emphasize and reinforce case management services as a means to maintain performance levels for Trade Act participants. Re-employment services will also be enhanced as a component of case management services for participants who have completed Trade Act training prior to exiting the program. This will ensure that participants are receiving the necessary assistance to enter the workforce with suitable employment in place.

Distribution of Funds for Core Programs

A description of the policies that establish the State's methods and factors used to distribute funds to local areas for Youth activities.

A description of the policies that establish the State's methods and factors used to distribute funds to local areas for Adult and training activities.

Allocation of Adult and Youth Funds to Local Areas:

The three-part formula for allocating adult and youth funds to local areas is as follows:

Step 1

The process begins by determining the average number of individuals in the civilian labor force and unemployed for the most recent twelve-month reference period of July 1st through June 30th.

Once these numbers are calculated the areas of substantial unemployment [ASU] are identified. By definition, an ASU is a contiguous area with a population of at least 10,000 individuals and an unemployment rate of at least 6.5 percent.

For Local Areas that have unemployment of 6.5 percent or greater, the civilian labor force and unemployment data is inserted directly into the allocation formula. For Local Areas that have unemployment less than 6.5 percent, an ASU search is performed. For reference, the ASU search process, as described below, is completed through a joint working venture between L&I's Center for Workforce Information and Analysis and the Bureau of Workforce Development Administration.

An ASU search is a procedure developed by the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics to identify areas of substantial unemployment. County level unemployment data along with either census tract or municipal level unemployment data from the most recent census is used to determine the current unemployment rates for cities, townships, or census tracts. Through this procedure, which can utilize a subtraction or addition method, cities, townships or census tracts that border each other are joined together until the definition of an ASU is achieved. A Local Area can have more than one ASU within their geographic border, if the building method is used.

Once the ASU[s] is designated, the civilian labor force and unemployed totals for each Local Area's ASU are then inserted into the computer based allocation formula.

Step 2

The first third of funds is allocated on the basis of the number of unemployed in areas of substantial unemployment compared to the statewide total of such individuals. The unemployment data was previously determined in step 1. The percentage share of funds is determined by dividing the number of unemployed in each Local Area with unemployment of 6.5 percent or greater, by the statewide total of unemployed in areas with unemployment of 6.5 percent or greater. The resulting percentage is then multiplied by one-third of the State's available allotment.

Step 3

The next third of funds is allocated on the basis of the number of unemployed individuals in excess of 4.5 percent of the civilian labor force in each Local Area compared to the total number of such individuals in the State. As required by WIOA the “higher of” either the number of unemployed individuals in excess of 4.5 percent of the civilian labor force in the Local Area; **or** the number of unemployed individuals in excess of 4.5 percent of the civilian labor force in areas of substantial unemployment in the Local Area is calculated.

The excess number of unemployed over 4.5 percent of the civilian labor force is then totaled for the State. This statewide total is then divided into the number of excess unemployed in each Local Area to determine each Local Area's percentage share of funds. This percentage is then multiplied by one-third of the State's available allotment.

Step 4

The final third of funds is allocated based on the number of economically disadvantaged individuals in each Local Area compared to the statewide total of such individuals. The number of economically disadvantaged individuals is derived from the most recent federal census. Economically disadvantaged youth (age 16-21) and economically disadvantaged adults (age 22-72) are used for each respective funding stream.

Using federal census data, the percentage share is determined by dividing the number of economically disadvantaged for each Local Area by the statewide economically disadvantaged total. The resulting percentage for each Local Area is then multiplied by the final one-third of funds. The amount of funds for each third of the formula is then totaled for each Local Area.

Step 5

Note that prior to the minimum allocation percentage, commonly known as "hold-harmless" provision, being applied, the total amount determined in the prior steps would be each Local Area's allocation.

Briefly, the hold-harmless provision ensures that a Local Area will not be allocated funds that are less than 90 percent of their average allocation percentage for the prior two years. Utilization of this authority, combined with WIOA's requirement that a hold-harmless percentage be applied, means that Local Area's allocations will continue to include the critical hold-harmless provision. The utilization of the hold-harmless provision will stabilize Local Area funding and minimize service disruptions.

The next step is then to apply the hold-harmless provision to the allocations. This is done by first combining each Local Area's allocation, excluding transfers or unexpended funds, for the previous two years. The Local Area's two-year combined allocation is then divided by the statewide two-year combined allocation to determine the relative share percentage of funds that each Local Area received for the two reference years.

Ninety percent of the relative share percentage is then calculated to establish the minimum percentage share that each Local Area must receive in the formula allocation process.

MAXIMUM PERCENTAGE: The local area shall not receive an allocation percentage for a fiscal year that is more than 130 percent of the allotment percentage of the local area for the preceding fiscal year.

Step 6

Using the base allocations determined in steps 2, 3 and 4, each Local Area's percentage share of funds is calculated by dividing each Local Area's allocation amount by the statewide total.

Step 7

This step calculates the minimum dollar amount of funds each Local Area is to receive based on the hold-harmless provision. This is determined by multiplying the 90 percent relative share percentage determined in step 5, by the statewide allotment. The resulting figure establishes the minimum amount of funds that each Local Area will receive under the formula allocation process.

Step 8

Local Areas with a relative share percentage that is less than the 90 percent minimum hold-harmless percentage are identified by comparing the percentage share determined in step 6, to the 90 percent minimum hold-harmless percentage determined in step 5.

The funds needed to bring the Local Areas with percentages below the mandated minimum into compliance comes from the Local Areas who have a percentage share of funds which is above the mandated minimum percentage. Funds are subtracted, on a prorated basis, from the Local Areas that exceed the minimum percentage to bring the other Local Areas that are below the minimum percentage into compliance with the hold-harmless provision.

The Local Area allocations and relative share percentages are then recalculated to determine whether each Local Area received the 90 percent minimum allocation percentage.

This step is repeated as many times as is necessary to comply with the minimum allocation percentage provision. Compliance with this provision completes the formula allocation process.

Additionally, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Youth Development Funding (YDF) is allocated to local workforce development areas via the PA Department of Labor & Industry (L&I). L&I currently utilizes TANF caseload numbers (broken down by county), provided each year by the PA Department of Human Services (DHS), to determine the percentage of TANF YDF that will be distributed to each local area.

A description of the policies that establish the State's methods and factors used to distribute funds to local areas for Dislocated Worker employment and training activities.

Allocation of Dislocated Worker Funds to Local Areas:

The following factors will be utilized when allocating DW funds to local areas:

FACTOR	DATA SOURCE	PERCENTAGE WEIGHT
Insured Unemployed	Continued Unemployment Compensation Claims	10%
Unemployment Concentrations	Number of Unemployed Over 4.5%	20%
Plant Closing and Mass Layoff	# of Workers affected by WARN notices (CWDS).	15%
Declining Industries	Employment in Industries Projected to Lose 10% of Employment Between 2012-2022	10%
Farmer-Rancher Economic Hardship	Employment Levels in the Agriculture Industry based upon American Community Survey (US Bureau of Census)	5%
Long-Term Unemployment	Number of Claimants Exhausting Unemployment Compensation Benefits	17%
Dislocated Worker [State added factor]	Estimated Number of Dislocated Workers	23%

The data used to calculate the dislocated worker Local Area allocations is provided by the L&I's Center for Workforce Information and Analysis.

County level data for the most recent 12-month program year is entered into the computerized formula.

In order to provide a balanced distribution of funds, one-half of the funds are allocated on a relative share percentage basis and one-half on a proportional basis. Specifically, the insured unemployment, unemployment concentrations, plant closings and mass lay-off and farmer-rancher factors are calculated on a relative share percentage basis. For example, the number of insured unemployed for the Local Area is divided by the statewide number of insured unemployed to determine the relative share percentage for that factor. Conversely, the declining industries, long-term unemployment and dislocated workers factors are calculated on a proportional percentage basis of each Local Area's civilian labor force. For example, the number of dislocated workers for the Local Area is divided by the civilian labor force for that Local Area to determine the percentage of dislocated workers in proportion to that area's civilian labor force.

Using the Local Area data, the computerized formula calculates the Local Area's relative or proportional percentage share for each factor. For the relative factors, the percentage share for each Local Area is first multiplied by the percentage weight assigned to each factor and then by the statewide dislocated worker allocation figure to determine the dollar amount for each relative factor. For the proportional factors, the percentage share for each Local Area is totaled. The resulting percentage is then divided into each Local Area's proportional percentage share and then multiplied by the percentage weight assigned to each factor and then the statewide allocation to determine the Local Area dollar amount for each

factor. The Local Area's allocation amount for each factor is then added together to determine the Local Area's total dislocated worker allocation.

Note that prior to the minimum allocation percentage, commonly known as "hold-harmless" provision, being applied, the total amount determined in the prior steps would be each Local Area's allocation.

Briefly, the hold-harmless provision ensures that a Local Area will not be allocated funds that are less than 90 percent of their average allocation percentage for the prior two years. Utilization of this authority, combined with WIOA's requirement that a hold-harmless percentage be applied, means that Local Area's allocations will continue to include the critical hold-harmless provision. The utilization of the hold-harmless provision will stabilize Local Area funding and minimize service disruptions.

The next step is then to apply the hold-harmless provision to the allocations. This is done by first combining each Local Area's allocation, excluding transfers or unexpended funds, for the previous two years. The Local Area's two-year combined allocation is then divided by the statewide two-year combined allocation to determine the relative share percentage of funds that each Local Area received for the two reference years.

Ninety percent of the relative share percentage is then calculated to establish the minimum percentage share that each Local Area must receive in the formula allocation process.

MAXIMUM PERCENTAGE: The local area shall not receive an allocation percentage for a fiscal year that is more than 130 percent of the allotment percentage of the local area for the preceding fiscal year.

Using the base allocations, each Local Area's percentage share of funds is calculated by dividing each Local Area's allocation amount by the statewide total. This step calculates the minimum dollar amount of funds each Local Area is to receive based on the hold-harmless provision. This is determined by multiplying the 90 percent relative share percentage by the statewide allotment. The resulting figure establishes the minimum amount of funds that each Local Area will receive under the formula allocation process. Local Areas with a relative share percentage that is less than the 90 percent minimum hold-harmless percentage are identified by comparing the percentage share to the 90 percent minimum hold-harmless percentage previously determined. The funds needed to bring the Local Areas with percentages below the mandated minimum into compliance comes from the Local Areas who have a percentage share of funds which is above the mandated minimum percentage. Funds are subtracted, on a prorated basis, from the Local Areas that exceed the minimum percentage to bring the other Local Areas that are below the minimum percentage into compliance with the hold-harmless provision. The Local Area allocations and relative share percentages are then recalculated to determine whether each Local Area received the 90 percent minimum allocation percentage. This process is repeated as many times as is necessary to comply with the minimum allocation percentage provision. Compliance with this provision completes the formula allocation process.

How the Title II 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.

How the Title II 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 procedures for all eligible providers.

The PDE Division of Adult Education will conduct a competition for multi-year grants for Title II direct service funds as required by WIOA. The content of the grant application will address the seven requirements and thirteen considerations identified in the Act. As part of the application, all eligible providers will be required to submit evidence of demonstrated effectiveness. Providers seeking to provide integrated education and training services will also be required to supply evidence of their ability to do so either directly or in partnership with other providers. To demonstrate effectiveness, applicants that have received Title II AEFLA funds and/or state matching funds through PDE Division of Adult Education in the program years immediately preceding the competition will be evaluated based on their performance against the state's negotiated targets during those years. Applicants that did not receive funds through the Division of Adult Education will be required to provide data that show their past ability to achieve success in comparable measures. Also as part of the application process, eligible providers will be required to demonstrate alignment of proposed activities and services to the strategies and goals of the local workforce development plan and describe how the activities and services provide learning in context, including through integrated education and training services, either directly or in partnership with other providers, when and where appropriate.

PDE has policies and procedures in place to ensure that the same grant announcement is made available to all eligible providers. Options for publication of grant announcement(s) include the Pennsylvania Bulletin and Penn*Link. Information will also be posted to the PDE website, which is accessible to the public. PDE anticipates conducting the grant competition through its eGrants system. Through this system all eligible providers have access to the same grant application for each project being competed.

PDE will use a needs-based funding formula previously developed with input from local administrators to ensure fair distribution of funds to local workforce development areas. Title II distribution of funds is further discussed in the "Program Specific Requirements" section of the State Plan.

In the case of a state that designates a state agency to administer the part of the VR services portion of the State Plan under which VR services are provided for individuals who are blind, describe the process and factors used by the State to determine the distribution of funds among the two VR agencies in the State.

PA OVR is a combined agency and consists of the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (BVRS) and Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services (BBVS). Funds are distributed based on historical spending patterns of specific regions covered by offices. OVR also maintains a reserve fund in case offices experience an increase in demand for services and funds are redistributed as necessary so that no one single office ever runs out of funds if other offices have remaining funds.

Program Data

How the lead state agencies with responsibility for the administration of the core programs will align and integrate available workforce and education data on core programs, unemployment insurance programs, and education through postsecondary education. The description should include the State's goals for achieving integration and any progress to date.

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 commonwealth currently has a data system, WDQI, which incorporates all Department of Labor workforce program data, Unemployment Compensation (UC) wage record data, and TANF and SNAP participant data from Pennsylvania's Department of Human Services. The proposed plan is to incorporate Adult and Basic Literacy Education and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation data as well. In addition, the Department of Education (PDE) is working to integrate its current pre-k through grade 12 statewide longitudinal student level data into WDQI and develop more robust postsecondary data. This will enable the production of performance metrics via one data platform with reporting and analysis capabilities.

Describe the state's plans to integrate data systems to facilitate streamlined intake and service delivery to track participation across all programs included in the plan.

Five of the core partners utilize CWDS to collect and track participant data. PDE is in the process of working with L&I to connect the Title II data collection system of record (eData v2) with CWDS.

Explain how the State board will assist the governor in aligning technology and data systems across mandatory one-stop partner programs (including design and implementation of common intake, data collection, etc.) and how such alignment will improve service delivery to individuals, including unemployed individuals.

The Pennsylvania WDB has established a standing committee to consider Performance and Accountability. In considering performance and accountability standards, the committee will contemplate the technology and data systems used to obtain, store and analyze customer information and report performance measures. The WDB will make recommendations to the Governor on ways to improve technology and data systems.

Additionally, the full WDB will engage in a planning retreat featuring a lab session that will allow board members to analyze the comprehensive workforce delivery system from within and from the vantage point of both job seekers and employers. The WDB will use the lab session as a spring board to future initiatives and recommendations to better serve workforce development system customers.

Describe the State's plans to develop and produce the reports required under Section 116, performance accountability system.

The commonwealth will utilize the WDQI management information system described above to develop and produce the reports required under section 116(b).

How such agencies will use the workforce development system to assess the progress of participants that are exiting from core programs in entering, persisting in, and completing postsecondary education, or entering or remaining in employment

WDQI has the potential to longitudinally track workforce development system participants as they enter and complete postsecondary education but the system currently lacks postsecondary education data at an individual level. Discussions have been ongoing to try to bring postsecondary education data into the system while protecting the confidentiality of personally identifiable information. In the interim, programs will continue to track postsecondary program enrollment and completion through manual processes.

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

The quarterly UI wage records will be merged with participant data from all core partners. The proposed platform for the combined data is the WDQI management information system described above. Access to the quarterly UI wage records for the purpose of program evaluation will be granted within the constraints of Pennsylvania's regulations governing the use of such personally identifiable information.

UI wage records will supplement current labor market information by providing additional insight into the performance metrics. Analyses may include the evaluation of industries that are hiring workforce participants, a comparison of workforce participant wages compared to other workers within an industry, industries that are more apt to hire special population participants and training programs that seem to be the most effective for positive employment outcomes.

The privacy safeguards incorporated in such system, including safeguards required by Section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act and other applicable federal laws

The state follows confidentiality requirements for wage and education records as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, WIOA, and other applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

CWDS is a role-based system with specific permissions granted depending on an individual's role. Confidential information is protected within the system. Access to CWDS by commonwealth employees, as well as by business partners, requires the completion of a CWDS User Agreement and Access Form. The agreement outlines the policy for the disclosure of confidential data and information maintained in CWDS. The form authorizes staff access to an integrated system involving data and information, which is processed, stored, maintained, or transmitted on CWDS for the commonwealth.

The Title II *eData* v2 system has multiple security levels to access data and has protocols in place to ensure that any sharing of data is compliant with federal and state privacy rules and regulations.

WDQI produces reports of aggregate, de-identified data to ensure that no confidential information, including personally identifiable information, is shared or released.

Priority of Service for Veterans

How the state will implement the priority of service provisions for veterans in accordance with the requirements of section 4215 of title 38, United States Code

Veterans are advised of their priority of service status when they connect with the PA CareerLink® system by staff and through signs and documentation posted throughout PA CareerLink® centers. Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) and Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) staff work in conjunction with PA CareerLink® partners to identify veterans and establish an appropriate plan to meet the individuals' needs. Veterans qualifying for priority of service designation who require services and/or training are ensured the next available spot as a result of their priority of service status. In an effort to help promote the hiring of veterans, when an employer searches for talent on the commonwealth's job search website, JobGateway®, the search engine lists qualified veterans at the top of the list with their veteran status indicated by a United States flag next to their name.

Priority of Service for Recipients of Public Assistance, Other Low-income Individuals, and Individuals who are Basic Skills Deficient.

How the state will implement priority of service provisions for recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient in accordance with WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(E).

The commonwealth, LWDBs, and PA CareerLink® centers shall provide priority for Title I individualized career services and training services, as detailed below, to:

- (i) recipients of public assistance;
- (ii) other low-income individuals; and
- (iii) individuals who are basic skills deficient.

"Recipients of public assistance" includes individuals who receive, or in the past six months have received, or are a member of a family that is receiving or in the past six months has received, assistance through one or more of the following:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP);
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program;
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program; or
- State or local income-based public assistance

"Low-income individual" means an individual who:

- (i) receives, or in the past 6 months has received, or is a member of a family that is receiving or in the past 6 months has received, assistance through the SNAP, TANF, SSI, or State or local income-based public assistance;
- (ii) is in a family with total family income that does not exceed the higher of—(I) the poverty line; or (II) 70 percent of the lower living standard income level;
- (iii) is a homeless individual (as defined in the Violence Against Women Act) or a homeless child or youth (as defined under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act);

- (iv) receives or is eligible to receive a free or reduced price lunch under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act
- (v) is a foster child on behalf of whom State or local government payments are made; or
- (vi) is an individual with a disability whose own income meets the income requirement of clause (ii), but who is a member of a family whose income does not meet this requirement.

“Individual who is basic skills deficient” means an individual who is:

- (i) a youth who has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or
- (ii) a youth or adult who 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.

Priority of service requirements will no longer be triggered by limited funds. Priority of service applies regardless of funding levels.

The commonwealth will monitor data reported by LWDBs and PA CareerLink® centers to determine the percentage of those served who are individuals with priority of service. Should this percentage be less than 70 percent, the commonwealth shall provide the LWDB or PA CareerLink® center with technical assistance to ensure that effective affirmative outreach efforts to individuals with priority of service are made.

Note that 70 percent does not equate with satisfaction of priority of service requirements but is simply an indicator of whether affirmative outreach efforts are needed to ensure that those with priority of service are served.

Priority of service means the right to take precedence over non-covered persons in obtaining services. Taking precedence means:

- (i) The covered person receives access to the service earlier in time than the non-covered person; or
- (ii) If the service is limited, the covered person receives access to the service or resource before the non-covered person.

The following examples illustrate how priority of service will work:

- (i) Three individuals apply for training services. One is receiving public assistance, one is low-income, and the other does not fall into a priority category. There are two training slots available. In this scenario, the first two individuals take precedence over the third, meaning that the public assistance recipient and low-income person will receive training services and the non-covered person will not.
- (ii) The local board purchases ten slots for a short-term training program. Fifteen persons apply, seven of whom are eligible for priority of service, eight of whom are not. All seven of those entitled to priority of service will receive training slots; only three of the non-covered persons will receive training slots.

- (iii) Under the above example, with ten short-term training slots available, if only three of the fifteen people who apply are eligible for priority of service, those three will receive training slots. In addition, the local board or PA CareerLink® will make affirmative efforts to conduct effective outreach to other individuals eligible for priority of service to ensure that at least 70 percent of slots are provided to those with priority of service.

Per federal guidance in [Training and Employment Guidance Letter 03-15](#), veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, low income or basic skills deficient will receive first priority, non-veterans who are recipients of public assistance, low-income or basic skills deficient will receive second priority, veterans and eligible spouses not included in priority groups will receive third priority and all other individuals will receive last priority.

In their local plans, LWDBs and PA CareerLink® centers will be required to state the additional methods by which they will apply the WIOA priority of service requirements and the commonwealth's policy regarding priority of service. This means that, at a minimum, LWDBs and PA CareerLink® centers must describe in detail:

- (i) How they will obtain data reflecting each of the three categories of persons entitled to priority of service in their service area and the approximate numbers in each category.
- (ii) The outreach they will do to inform the public of Pennsylvania's priority of service policy and how they will target this outreach to best reach those potentially eligible for priority of service and any agencies that serve them.
- (iii) How they will inform individuals seeking to access WIOA services of their priority of service, such as through posters and prominent placement of other information.
- (iv) How they will affirmatively identify persons entitled to priority of service at the point of entry, whether in person or virtually, so the covered person can be notified of their eligibility for priority of service and informed of the full array of services available.
- (v) The assessments they will use to identify barriers to employment among those entitled to priority of service and the services needed to address them.
- (vi) The process by which they will develop Individual Employment Plans for persons entitled to priority of service that will address, in addition to career service and training needs, any barriers to employment they may have.
- (vii) How they will ensure that they are serving the spectrum of persons entitled to priority of service, including those, such as English language learners, who may require more resources to serve.

- (viii) How they will address the special needs of individuals with barriers to employment in the delivery of services, such as by assuring that appropriate career planning services are provided. This should include a detailed description of how appropriate career planning services will be provided, or arranged for, through collaboration with other agencies in the event that the LWDB or PA CareerLink® center lacks the required expertise.
- (ix) How they will ensure access to services, i.e., interpreters and translated documents, for English language learners, as well as for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- (x) How they will train staff to ensure that staff members have an understanding of who is entitled to priority of service and that the office is responsive to the needs of these groups.

LWDBs and PA CareerLink® centers will be required to collect data reflecting, for each of the three categories of persons with priority of service, the numbers of persons who are served and the levels of performance achieved.

LWDBs and PA CareerLink® centers will be required to use between 5 percent and 10 percent of their funds to provide transitional jobs, as permitted under Section 134(d)(5) of WIOA, and ensure that priority of service for transitional jobs is afforded to individuals who qualify for priority of service.

LWDBs and PA CareerLink® centers must obtain permission from the commonwealth before transferring Title I-B funds allocated to the Adult Program to the Dislocated Worker Program and to demonstrate before doing so that goals for serving groups entitled to priority of service have been met.

Non-Discrimination and Accessibility

How the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with section 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including complying through providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. Describe the State's one-stop center certification policy, particularly the accessibility criteria.

The commonwealth's Methods of Administration (MOA) document provides written assurance that the state is in compliance with all nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements provided for in federal and state law and regulations. The MOA describes the actions and policies the state takes to ensure compliance. The Office of Equal Opportunity within L&I is responsible for implementing and monitoring compliance with nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of WIOA, ADA and other relevant laws and regulations.

PA CareerLink® centers strive to be physically and programmatically accessible to all customers, including individuals with disabilities. PA CareerLink® centers use principles of universal design and human-centered design, such as flexibility in space usage; the use of pictorial, written, verbal and tactile modes to present information for customers with disabilities or limited English proficiency; providing clear lines of sight to information for seated or standing users; providing necessary accommodations; and providing adequate space for the use of assistive devices or personal assistants. To further support service to individuals with limited English proficiency, many PA CareerLink® centers employ bilingual

staff, the PA CareerLink® website utilizes Google translation services to allow the site to be viewed in dozens of languages and the JobGateway® website can be utilized in English or Spanish.

The commonwealth mandates that all PA CareerLink® centers provide reasonable accommodations, reasonable modifications, architectural accessibility, programmatic accessibility, and CWDS website accessibility for persons with disabilities. Each office is equipped with assistive technologies and accessibility features including a computer with common accessibility devices such as JAWS, Zoom Text, enabled sticky keys, modified keyboards and other input devices. Staff members are trained on the maintenance and operation of available assistive technology devices.

In collaboration with one or more Centers for Independent Living and the Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the commonwealth will evaluate the physical accessibility and information technology accessibility of all PA CareerLink® offices and services annually to ensure that Pennsylvanians with a disability are able to fully avail themselves of PA CareerLink® services.

L&I's Office of Equal Opportunity evaluates each PA CareerLink® office at least every three (3) years to ensure compliance with ADA standards. This is done as part of the PA CareerLink® certification process. The commonwealth's Workforce Delivery System Policy outlines all of the criteria for certification and re-certification of its PA CareerLink® offices.

PA CareerLink® staff members receive refresher training on disability awareness, sensitivity and etiquette, outreach for employers and guidance concerning Social Security and related topics. Each office is required to develop an Enhancement Plan for providing services to persons with disabilities.

CWDS offers a variety of resources and information on services available to persons with disabilities including: information on training opportunities and links to online training; technology guides for using screen enlargement software, screen reading software, Windows Accessibility features, and the Text Telephone or Teletypewriter for the Deaf (TTY); information on the ADA and accessibility; alternate format handbooks; links to service providers and resources to assist persons with disabilities in removing barriers to employment; and links to information for employers interested in hiring a person with a disability including tax benefits, the ADA and accommodations.

The Division of Adult Education requires all Title II programs to be ADA compliant and mandates that programs have reasonable materials available for students to use to accommodate learning differences. The Division of Adult Education also supports various professional development activities on providing services to address learning differences.

In order to further promote programmatic accessibility, OVR has developed a comprehensive disability awareness and etiquette training that is delivered across the commonwealth to interested PA CareerLink® partners and businesses. OVR has also made available to all commonwealth employees an "Introduction to OVR" training to inform staff about the services OVR can offer to individuals with disabilities. OVR staff has received Leadership Training on the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAA) to include strategies and modules for training businesses and customers on the Act.

Section IV – Program Specific Requirements

Identify the regions and the LWDAs designated in the State. 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.” Describe the process used for identifying regions and Planning Regions under section 106(a), including a description of how the state consulted with the local boards and chief elected officials in determining the Planning Regions

The appeals process referred to in section 106(b)(5), relating to the designation of local areas

The appeals process referred to in section 121(h)(2)(E), relating to determinations for infrastructure funding

Local Area Designation

Pennsylvania issued a revised *Workforce System Guidance No. 02-2014* on June 30, 2015, providing initial designation to Pennsylvania’s 23 local workforce investment areas that existed under WIA effective July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2017. A list of the 23 local workforce development areas is included as [Appendix V](#). The guidance requires Chief Elected Officials, in collaboration with local workforce development boards and other workforce system stakeholders, to evaluate their local areas on a series of factors to include:

- natural labor market areas;
- regional economic development areas;
- existence of education and training providers, such as institutions of higher education and career and technical education schools;
- service delivery and resources available toward the provision of services;
- benefits of multiple resources within areas that are based on labor markets and natural travel patterns of local residents;
- capacity and access to public/private transportation resources;
- education leaders, business leaders, government officials, stakeholder buy-in;
- availability of Federal and non-federal resources necessary to effectively administer workforce investment activities and other provisions of the WIOA to include resources beyond the 10 percent allowed for administrative expenditures allotted to local areas;
- strategies to provide enhanced quality services to employers and individuals; and
- local capacity to manage funds, provide oversight of programs, and provide for the proper stewardship of public funds.

The Chief Elected Officials and local workforce development board chair must submit a formal letter to the Department by March 1, 2016 describing the evaluation process and addressing each of the factors above. The review is intended to serve as the basis for a local workforce development area either seeking continued designation in its current form or seeking designation as part of a newly proposed workforce development area. A newly proposed workforce development area must include more than one unit of local government. A request for new area designation must address the factors listed above and the impact on the workforce development area from which it is withdrawing (if applicable). The request must be signed by all of the Chief Elected Officials who make up the new local workforce development area. Final approval of newly requested workforce development areas rests with the

governor. The governor reserves the right to make additional changes in regard to local area designation.

The local area is determined to have performed successfully if it has met or exceeded locally negotiated levels of performance and has not failed any individual measure for the last two consecutive program years before the enactment of WIOA for initial designation and in the first two years of enactment for subsequent designation. The terms “met or exceeded” and “failed” are defined as consistent with how those terms were defined at the time the performance levels were negotiated.

The local area is determined to have sustained fiscal integrity if, within the last 2 consecutive years preceding the determination of fiscal integrity, a formal determination has not been made that either the grant recipient or administrative entity of the local area misexpended funds due to willful disregard of the requirements of the provisions involved, gross negligence, or failure to comply with accepted standards of administration.

The commonwealth maintained local area designations, so an appeals process has not yet been established; however, an appeal process will be provided for through policy should the commonwealth re-designate local areas.

In cases where local areas cannot agree to infrastructure funding and the state formula is used, an appeals process will be outlined in the commonwealth’s Financial Management policy.

Local and Regional Planning

In accordance with WIOA, the commonwealth has established ten regional planning areas. The ten regions mirror the existing Partnership for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) regions used by the Department of Community and Economic Development to promote collaboration among economic development partners. A list of the ten regional planning areas is included as [Appendix VI](#). Prior to WIOA, the commonwealth began to encourage the inclusion of workforce development partners in PREP region strategic planning through the issuance of Regional Partnership grants. The goal of the grants was to strengthen workforce and economic development collaboration at a regional level to develop a highly skilled workforce to support business growth and attraction. Using the PREP regions as the commonwealth’s regional planning areas logically follows the aims of WIOA to increase partnerships with economic development. Regional plans will look at how workforce development, economic development, education and other partners interact at a macro-level to serve the citizens and employers of the region.

While the PREP regions will be the defined regions for purposes of WIOA, the commonwealth strongly supports and encourages additional regional planning for specific purposes to include alternate contiguous in-state regions, non-contiguous regions and multi-state regions. Additional regional planning could be done in support of sector strategies, grant applications, economic development initiatives or other initiatives that arise.

Each local workforce development board and its chief elected official(s) must collaborate with the other local workforce boards and chief elected officials within its planning region to prepare and submit a transitional one-year regional plan for PY 2016. Additionally, a transitional one-year PY 2016 local plan for each local workforce development board within a workforce planning region must be developed by the local boards and their respective chief elected official(s), in alignment with the transitional regional

plan, and submitted as a component of that regional plan. Transitional regional plan and local plan templates have been issued by the commonwealth in [Workforce System Guidance No. 05-2015: Regional and Local Planning](#).

State Policies and Guidance

State policies or guidance, for the statewide workforce development system and for use of state funds for workforce investment activities

Pennsylvania issued Workforce Investment Information Notices (WIINs) and workforce policies that provided guidance for the workforce system from the time the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) was enacted up until the time it was rescinded. Such notices and policies administered direction to the commonwealth's 23 local boards as well as other statewide and local workforce system stakeholders.

Upon the enactment of WIOA, the commonwealth established seven workgroups composed of various stakeholders throughout the commonwealth to provide recommendations to L&I and inform key elements of the state plan, as well as future policies and guidance. Pending fully complete federal guidance, the commonwealth has had an obligation to issue interim guidance in order to maintain federal compliance, which may change as a result of additional guidance from the federal government. That guidance includes, but is not limited to:

- [Workforce System Policy No. 02-2014, V002: Workforce Delivery System, Version 002](#)
- [Workforce System Policy No. 01-2015: Pennsylvania's Workforce System of Record](#)
- [Workforce System Policy No. 02-2015: Local Governance Policy](#)
- [Workforce System Policy No. 03-2015: Financial Management Policy](#)
- [Workforce System Policy No. 04-2015: Eligible Training Providers](#)
- [Workforce System Policy No. 05-2015: Priority of Service](#)
- [Workforce System Guidance 02-2014: Process and Timeline for Designation of Pennsylvania's Local Workforce Development Areas](#)
- [Workforce System Guidance No. 01-2015: Implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act -- Transition Procedures](#)
- [Workforce System Guidance No. 05-2015: Regional and Local Planning](#)

Governor's Set-Aside Funding

Describe how the state intends to use Governor's set-aside funding.

Governor's set-aside funds will generally be used to promote Governor Wolf's vision of jobs that pay, schools that teach and government that works with more specific emphasis on the five goals for the workforce development system articulated in the strategic portion of the State Plan.

The commonwealth plans to use a portion of Governor's set-aside funds to support the creation of an Office of Apprenticeship (OAT) with the goal of promoting and growing Registered Apprenticeship (RA) and pre-apprenticeship programs across the state. The OAT is described in greater detail in the response to how the state will incorporate RA into its strategies and services.

The commonwealth also plans to use set-aside funds to expand and provide additional support for the Industry Partnership program as well as similar multi-employer partnerships that conduct workforce development activities that are within the scope of WIOA.

Additionally, the commonwealth intends to use set-aside funds to provide discretionary grants to LWDBs to support programs and activities that better serve targeted groups of workforce development system customers.

The commonwealth also plans to use set-aside funds to identify and replicate proven models for high-risk out-of-school youth, including models that incorporate demand-driven strategies and multi-employer workforce partnerships such as Industry Partnerships.

Lastly, a portion of set-aside funds will be used to provide incentives to LWDAs whose performance exceeds negotiated levels and meets the criteria in state policy.

Rapid Response Services

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 should also describe layoff aversion strategies they have implemented to address at risk companies and workers.

Rapid response is an early-intervention service that helps workers and employers affected by layoffs, plant closures, or natural disasters. It provides information about and access to the commonwealth's PA CareerLink® and unemployment compensation systems, helping to transition workers into reemployment.

The primary objective of rapid response is to provide workers with the resources and services necessary to allow them to find new jobs or get the training and education needed for new careers so they can return to work quickly.

Rapid Response Coordination Services (RRCS) also helps communities develop proactive and coordinated strategies to access Pennsylvania's economic development systems that help businesses at risk of closing to keep their doors open.

L&I's Deputy Secretary for Workforce Development is responsible for executive oversight of Pennsylvania's RRCS activity under WIOA. The Rapid Response/Trade Coordination Services Unit within the Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations is responsible for the policy development and implementation of the state's rapid response program.

The commonwealth uses a regional approach to deliver rapid response assistance. There are L&I regional bureau staff assigned to geographic areas covering one or more LWDAs. Regional representatives work closely with PA CareerLink® staff as well as the local board or chief elected officials, as appropriate. They meet with the LWDB staff periodically to share information and to discuss major dislocation events. RRCS provides information and access to a comprehensive menu of available services and resources to avert or reduce the effect of plant closings and mass layoffs to businesses, communities and individuals.

Early intervention services provided through RRCS offer workers affected by downsizing the best chance to reenter the workforce as quickly as possible. Since inception, RRCS has become nationally recognized, often cited by the U.S. Department of Labor as a model for service delivery.

RRCS, in concert with partners operating as a single business services team (BST) provides strategic planning that helps area employers become more globally competitive and connect with area economic development and educational institutions to meet their workforce needs. RRCS is the state's lead unit delivering a business-focused approach, working with employers to coordinate layoff aversion activities in coordination with the Strategic Early Warning Network (SEWN) and other economic development stakeholders working with the affected employer and supply chain companies, as applicable.

L&I, through a competitive process, contracted with the Steel Valley Authority to design and manage SEWN, which provides layoff aversion services to help businesses, particularly in the manufacturing sector, remain competitive and keep workers employed. SEWN and RRCS obtain referrals to struggling companies through a variety of sources, including workforce development professionals, LWDBs, financial institutions, company customers, suppliers or vendors, industrial resources centers, unions, or affected workers themselves. Within 48 hours of receiving a referral, SEWN staff and/or RRCS will contact the company and attempt to establish a meeting and plant tour. SEWN staff have expertise in several areas of business turnaround and layoff aversion, including: financial restructuring; buyouts; succession planning and ownership transition; labor-management relations; high-performance workplace strategies; operations; and cost management.

Informational and Direct Reemployment Services for Workers

Rapid response activities are triggered when L&I learns of a planned closure or layoff, either by receiving a notice under the Federal Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act, through the media, or by information provided by community and business leaders. Services may also be offered when Pennsylvania experiences mass job dislocation as the result of a natural disaster. There is no charge to the employer or employee for these services, and they are provided regardless of the reason for the layoff or closing.

RRCS initiates a fact finding meeting to plan for coordination of services within 48 hours of receipt of notice. Contact is made with the employer and any union to develop a preliminary service strategy. Through rapid response, orientation meetings are held either at the workplace or at a convenient site to provide workers with a wide range of information about benefits and services that are critical for a successful transition to new employment or training for a high-priority occupation, based on assessment of their skills and background. When possible, orientation meetings are held prior to the layoff date and on company time. Information is typically provided on the following topics.

- Unemployment insurance;
- Transition teams
- Outplacement services
- Health and pension benefits
- Job-search activities
- Education services
- Training programs
- Trade Adjustment Assistance
- Social services programs
- Community and economic development activities
- Emergency assistance
- Crisis counseling

Working in close partnership with CWIA, along with PA CareerLink® and LWDBs, RRCS developed an outplacement curriculum delivered to affected workers that uses comprehensive, customizable workshops and a proven “Surviving a Layoff” publication. The customized workshops include information about the realities of job loss, job-search strategies, local labor market information (LMI), using social media as a job-search and networking tool, resume development, job-search resources, household budgeting and job-interviewing tips.

Crucial to the program’s success is the ability of RRCS to gather and synthesize real-time LMI and conduct needs-profiling of dislocated workers accomplished through surveys distributed, completed, and collected at RRCS informational sessions with affected employees. By understanding the local, regional, and in some cases statewide cause and effect related to a dislocation event, along with the manner in which these circumstances directly affect individual workers, RRCS has become an essential component in the commonwealth’s layoff-aversion and reemployment network.

RRCS realizes its full potential for employers when it is managed as a business service during the entire business lifecycle. The commonwealth will continue to invest rapid response dollars to fund a layoff-aversion system targeting small- and medium-sized manufacturing firms. RRCS staff sits on local PA CareerLink® and regional economic development BSTs to help employers with turnaround and to market dislocated workers to employers, enhancing the value of business services provided by the workforce and economic development systems. RRCS, as well as the regional SEWN representatives, will also receive technical training to allow them to effectively market the Shared-Work Program operated by the Office of Unemployment Compensation Benefits & Services as a component of layoff-aversion strategy.

RRCS staff will maintain a comprehensive set of partnerships to provide customers the services, resources, and benefits they are eligible for and need. To complement the current network of partnerships, RRCS will continue outreach efforts to other entities such as local chapters of the Society for Human Resource Management, manufacturing associations, state and local economic development entities, chambers of commerce, industry partnerships and sector-based associations and business groups, central labor councils and area labor federations increasing awareness of rapid response services as a business-cycle service linking workforce and economic development.

Rapid Response Additional Assistance, or RRAA, funding will be directed to serve LWDAs when local funding balances are insufficient to ensure a continuum of services for dislocated workers. Funds may be provided to LWDAs that experience increased numbers of unemployed individuals due to natural disasters, plant closings, mass layoffs, or other events for provision of direct services to participants.

Ultimately, RRCS have substantial benefits for the impacted employees, employers and community at large.

RRCS helps dislocated workers turn the challenge of a layoff into an opportunity by providing information about, and access to, the following services:

- Unemployment compensation;
- Career counseling, resume preparation and job-search assistance;
- Education and training opportunities, including Trade Adjustment Assistance;
- Locally available supportive services;

- Referrals and information about English as a second language or Limited English Proficiency classes;
- Referrals and information about Adult Basic Education and GED classes;
- Referrals and information about services available through the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation;
- Dislocated worker transition teams;
- Surviving a layoff, resume preparation, and interviewing skills workshops;
- Information about the local labor market;
- Information about retirement-plan benefits, Social Security and health-insurance options.
- Services exclusively for veterans and adults with disabilities.

When employers contact RRCS, they can expect:

- A quick response to transition planning needs;
- Confidentiality concerning business decisions;
- Help throughout their entire business cycle;
- Help understanding government regulations;
- Information about alternatives that may reduce or avoid layoffs;
- For small- to medium-sized businesses, referral to agencies that can help in re-structuring to avoid layoffs or closing the business;
- Higher productivity and worker morale and lower absenteeism during the layoff event due to reduced stress.

Lastly, community involvement forms the basis for some of the most dynamic and effective transition services available. The benefits of rapid response to the community include:

- Working with elected officials at the state and local levels;
- Helping to save the local tax base by keeping workers employed;
- Lessening adverse economic effects on other businesses within the community;
- Responding to job and business loss when a natural disaster occurs;
- Coordinating available resources by tapping into the community's service providers;
- Reducing emotional and financial stress on the community by offering workshops for unemployed workers, and local affected supply-chain or vendor companies; and
- Coordinating support groups and transition teams for unemployed workers.

Describe the state policies and procedures to provide Rapid Responses in cases of natural disasters including coordination with FEMA and other entities.

The L&I Rapid Response Unit works as the initial point of contact for businesses, emergency management teams to assist the businesses, and dislocated workers that are affected by a natural disaster. The Rapid Response Unit works in conjunction with Federal, State and Local Emergency Coordinators to respond to affected businesses. Regional Rapid Response Coordinators work with their regional and local emergency teams to develop contingency plans. Rapid Response works with the business through the business downturn cycle whether or not the disaster is PEMA or FEMA designated. If the disaster has an immediate impact on local business operations, Rapid Response coordinates the efforts with their local teams including Unemployment Compensation, local workforce development and

economic development entities, and other stakeholders to develop a strategic plan to assist the affected business and dislocated workers.

Rapid Response Coordinators work with LWDBs, fiscal agents and operators to assure delivery of services and assist in the application for additional workforce funds when necessary. WIOA permits states to provide Rapid Response Additional Assistance funds to local areas with an increased number of unemployed individuals, due to natural disasters, plant closings, mass layoffs or other events, if there are not adequate local funds to assist the dislocated workers.

Trade Adjustment Assistance

Describe how the State provides early intervention (e.g. RR) to worker groups on whose behalf a Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) petition has been filed. The 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 DW applying for them. Describe how the State will use funds that have been reserved for RR to provide services for every worker group that files a TAA petition.

L&I placed Trade Act Services, which administers the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program and RRCS within the Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations to align early intervention with TAA program administration. RRCS markets TAA to companies, workers, and unions (where present) through the rapid response process. RRCS provides technical assistance to filers of Trade Act petitions, as described in [Training and Employment Notice No. 23-14](#) and provides information about TAA. RRCS encourages all dislocated workers to participate in reemployment services offered through PA CareerLink® centers prior to layoff. After the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Trade Adjustment Assistance certifies a petition, RRCS coordinates and delivers group Benefits Rights Interview (BRI) sessions. All affected workers at certified employer sites are notified of the certification by mail, and are instructed how to follow the process for receiving benefits. PA CareerLink® contact information is supplied in this communication, along with the necessary steps to follow for eligibility. The commonwealth developed a BRI presentation to ensure that all trade-affected workers receive the same message, to emphasize that TAA is a reemployment program, and to ensure that TAA-eligible workers understand their rights and responsibilities under the law. To enable easy and early access to reemployment and training services, RRCS makes every effort to conduct BRIs on-site, in PA CareerLink® centers, or at a convenient neutral site. CWDS is the management system of record for trade-related activity, and has an integrated case-management component that includes a “call-in” feature for local PA CareerLink® staff to use for follow-up on trade affected workers.

The commonwealth implemented an online application for TAA training, job-search and relocation allowances, and the Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA) and Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA) programs. This online application is accessed via the Internet, and dislocated workers, PA CareerLink® staff and training providers add information online. PA CareerLink® staff helps trade-affected workers complete their applications, and assess workers’ skills and experiences.

The commonwealth uses Wagner-Peyser resources to provide career services for all job seekers. Pennsylvania’s service delivery system provides greater choice and focuses resources where dislocated workers most need them. Dislocated workers receive all WIOA services in a comprehensive PA

CareerLink® office. Pennsylvania co-enrolls all TAA-eligible workers in the WIOA program to ensure that all trade participants receive the full range of assistance available to dislocated workers.

Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and Training Models

If the state is utilizing alternative training models (OJT, incumbent worker training, transitional jobs, CJT) as part of its training strategy and these strategies are not discussed in other sections of the plan, describe the State's strategies for how these models ensure high quality training for the participant and employers.

The commonwealth allows for and encourages on-the-job training (OJT), transitional jobs and customized training as integral parts of the workforce development strategy. OJT, transitional jobs and customized training have been used to get job seekers employed for many years. These training models allow job seekers to hone existing skills, learn new skills and technologies and gain experience to meet the requirements of a new occupation or industry. Work-based training will generally be aligned with the Pennsylvania High Priority Occupation list to ensure that jobs are in-demand, have higher skill needs and are likely to result in family-sustaining wages. In cases of individuals with significant barriers to employment, the commonwealth will support OJT, customized training and transitional jobs in quality entry-level positions that provide the work experience necessary to lead to employment in HPOs. All OJT, transitional jobs and customized training is provided through contracts with employers in the private sector.

Incumbent worker training has long been a hallmark of Pennsylvania's workforce development system through Industry Partnerships and WEDnetPA. Both programs are funded through state budget appropriations. Each year, thousands of Pennsylvania incumbent workers receive training through these programs, allowing those individuals to be promoted along a career ladder and earn higher wages. Moving incumbent workers into higher positions also produces entry-level openings for other job seekers looking for employment opportunities.

Describe how the state will incorporate Registered Apprenticeship (RA) into its strategies and services.

The commonwealth is in the process of establishing a state Office of Apprenticeship Training (OAT) within L&I. The OAT will promote registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, provide technical assistance to employers and facilitate regional partnerships around the expansion of demand-driven registered apprenticeship programs across the commonwealth. The commonwealth is particularly interested in promoting the creation of non-traditional apprenticeship programs in industries, such as health care and agriculture, and occupations, such as food processing and information technology jobs, and in the recruitment and training of women, minorities, individuals with disabilities and other individuals with barriers to employment into apprenticeship programs. The commonwealth released a Nontraditional Apprenticeship grant availability using state Reemployment Funds in October 2015 to support the creation of new apprenticeship programs and the recruitment of women, minorities, individuals with disabilities and other targeted populations into existing apprenticeship programs.

OAT staff will provide outreach to PA CareerLink[®] centers to mentor state business service team staff in the benefits and promotion of apprenticeship as a viable training option for employers. Business service team staff will use their training to inform employers about apprenticeship opportunities, and in turn business service team members will forward information from interested employers to OAT staff, who will follow up on the leads to help employers create or expand registered apprenticeship programs. OAT staff will also assist community colleges and universities to register their programs with the Registered

Apprenticeship College Consortium. The commonwealth also intends to add registered apprenticeship opportunities to JobGateway® and allow job seekers to search specifically for apprenticeship options.

The commonwealth partnered with unions, employers and community colleges as part of a federal grant application for apprenticeship funding. The commonwealth will continue to pursue collaborative models with the aforementioned partners. These collaborative models will provide successes and best practices which OAT will apply to creating or expanding additional registered apprenticeship programs, particularly within nontraditional career pathways. Through collaboration with state agency partners and programs, including PDE, DCED, OVR, DHS, DOC, the Department of Agriculture, PennSERVE, JobCorps and YouthBuild, the commonwealth will also be able to augment and enhance registered apprenticeships, as well as ensure the connection to career advancement, seamless transitions to postsecondary education and training, and a skilled workforce for Pennsylvania's employers.

Provide the procedure for determining training provider eligibility, including RA programs.

The commonwealth issued [Workforce System Policy No. 04-2015](#) detailing initial implementation of eligible training provider provisions of WIOA. The policy outlines the requirements for becoming and remaining an eligible training provider in accordance with federal law and regulations. Guidelines may be revised at a later time to ensure that eligible training providers and programs are aligned with career pathways once they are established.

The policy stipulates that all providers and programs eligible under WIA during Program Year 2014 are to remain eligible through June 30, 2016. New providers and programs seeking initial eligibility must, in general: have been in operation at least 12 months; provide program information; assure compliance with nondiscrimination, equal opportunity and ADA; demonstrate effectiveness; and agree to collect and provide performance data. In order to maintain eligibility a provider or program must meet the minimum established performance criteria. Full details regarding initial and continued eligibility requirements can be found in the linked policy.

Procedures for applying for initial eligibility are as follows:

1. Local workforce development boards solicit training providers in their local area to become an eligible training provider; training providers may independently apply to be an eligible training provider of WIOA title I-B services.
2. Providers seeking eligibility must complete an online application in CWDS.
3. Upon receipt of completed application and required information, the appropriate local workforce development board will review the application and each proposed program.
4. The local workforce development board will make a recommendation for approval or denial to the Department through CWDS; the Department will make the final eligibility determination and add the program(s) to the ETPL if the determination is favorable.
5. Once the Department has approved eligibility, the local board must ensure the provider completes a Memorandum of Understanding covering use of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) in student data, PA wage records, PA employment records, WRIS2, and FEDES, as applicable.
6. New providers will be added to the eligible training provider list as they become eligible. Initial eligibility remains in effect at least one (1) year.

The renewal process for continued eligibility generally follows steps 2 through 6 of the initial eligibility process described above. Training providers seeking to remain on the statewide ETPL must meet at least seven of the ten minimum performance criteria established by the Department.

Registered apprenticeship programs will also be part of the ETPL. Although registered apprenticeship programs are not subject to the same review procedures as other providers, the commonwealth must verify the status of programs to ensure they remain registered and in good standing. Initially, all registered apprenticeship programs in the commonwealth will receive a letter with regard to procedures to opt-in to the ETPL. All registered apprenticeship programs are required to provide the following information to the Department as part of their procedures for inclusion on the statewide eligible training provider list:

- Occupations included within the registered apprenticeship program;
- The name and address of the registered apprenticeship program sponsor;
- The name and address of the related technical instruction provider, and the location of instruction if different from the program sponsor's address;
- The method and length of instruction; and
- The number of active apprentices.

Registered apprenticeship programs are not subject to the same information reporting requirements as other training programs. However, if Registered Apprenticeship programs volunteer to report performance information, the Department will accommodate such submissions.

The Department will verify the registration status of apprenticeship programs. Once the registration status has been confirmed, the entity will be added to the ETPL and the Department will notify the appropriate LWDB(s). Programs will remain on the list so long as the entity's registration status remains valid or until a program sponsor requests to have a program removed.

Youth Activities

WIOA increases the minimum out-of-school youth (OSY) expenditure rate from the 30 percent required under WIA to 75 percent—a shift that signifies a much greater focus of both dollars and resources on the OSY population, especially for those OSY who face the greatest challenges to attain meaningful employment. This conversion also allows for greater support for the educational and career success of OSY.

This paradigm shift requires adjustments at every layer of the workforce system. Early in WIOA's implementation process, the commonwealth developed several WIOA workgroups comprised of stakeholders from various levels of Pennsylvania's workforce system. An overall goal of the WIOA Youth Service Workgroup was to provide recommendations that would serve to help build a workforce system to meet the demands of today's customers and employers, as well as future demands.

As workgroup members, representatives from Pennsylvania's youth-serving organizations examined multiple strategies focused around intensive outreach and the engagement of disconnected youth and young adults, which resulted in recommendations around co-enrollment, partnerships, career pathways/sector strategies, retention, and performance measures. The Department is developing its overall youth strategy, in part, as a result of the recommendations from this workgroup.

One such strategy has led to the issuance of a guidance document that provided new definitions for youth to enable a larger number of OSY to be more efficiently served—a policy embraced by each of Pennsylvania’s core partners.

In addition to the work being done at the state level, local boards are to prioritize the adoption of the following strategies to effectively serve their youth population:

- *Recruitment and Outreach.* Conduct activities, including outreach to local government facilities, non-profit and faith-based organizations that provide support services to disconnected youth and young adults; including the use of word-of-mouth referrals, and social media platforms. Other suggested activities for youth services provider staff include:
 - Visiting local parks, tattoo parlors, smoke shops, homeless shelters, and other places that disconnected young people are known to frequent and speaking to them one-on-one in that environment, and in terms that make them the most comfortable.
 - Going into low-income communities and neighborhoods, knocking on doors, and speaking to friends, families, and young adults about available services and opportunities.
 - Creating a program application process that is easy to complete by removing as many of the administrative hurdles as possible.
 - Using text messages and social media. While this strategy may not be as effective for recruitment, it is a highly effective strategy for keeping participants engaged, as well as reconnecting those participants who have disconnected from the program.
 - Considering the tailoring of strategies for young adults by age group, 18-21 and 22-24. Younger individuals may be more ready to enroll in programs when compared to older individuals. Young adults, ages 22-24, are more likely to have been unemployed or separated from educational institutions longer than those in the younger age group. This older group requires more resource-intensive outreach and recruitment efforts. An emphasis on available work experiences and employment services, rather than education and basic skill building, is preferred for this older group.
- *Engagement.* Many disconnected young adults face challenges and life obstacles that result in the cycling in and out of program services. Such challenges are many and varied. They may include: periods of homelessness, issues with the criminal justice system, pressures to provide for their families, and substance abuse, among others.

Recognizing the unique hardships of each individual and working to establish trust between participants and staff, that is respectful of roadblocks preventing regular attendance, creates an atmosphere where participants feel staff is invested in their success.

The Department has recommended the following to be considered as part of a local area’s youth strategy:

- Once a participant is enrolled, communicate regularly and effectively. Explain the program's available services and activities, the expectations of the participant, and any available support services that may be necessary.
- If a participant disengages from the program at any point, calls, texts, visits and messages on social media are ways to find out why the participant is no longer engaged and let the participant know that he or she can return whenever he or she is ready. Engage adult mentors along with case managers. Such mentors can play a key role in keeping participants engaged with the program.
- Set achievable goals with the participant early in the process and communicate the status of progress towards meeting those goals often.
- Engage peers. Placing young adults in cohorts allows individuals to move through the program and receive services with others. Participants often become friends and gain a sense of togetherness and accountability within the cohort. Such engagement may also open the door for young adults to take a leadership role, such as tutoring other participants, giving presentations, etc.
- Ensure that supportive services are made available to participants to help remove barriers that would prevent them from continuing with the program.
- Encourage Re-engagement. If an individual leaves the program, the case manager/youth provider staff and adult mentor should remain in contact with that individual and encourage re-engagement through phone calls, texts, social media, or in-person visits at their 'hangouts' or homes.

With respect to youth workforce investment activities authorized in section 129, information identifying the criteria to be used by local boards in awarding grants for youth workforce investment activities and describing 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) in awarding such grants

Every local workforce development board will be required to have a youth standing committee, whose activities may include but are not limited to the following:

- Providing information and assisting with planning, operational oversight, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth.
- Recommending policy direction to the local board for the design, development, and implementation of programs that benefit all youth.
- Recommending the design of a comprehensive community workforce development system.
- Recommending ways to leverage resources and coordinate services among schools, public programs, and community-based organizations serving youth.
- Recommending ways to coordinate youth services and recommend eligible youth service providers.
- Providing on-going leadership and support for continuous quality improvement for local youth programs.

- Overseeing eligible youth providers and other aspects of youth programs.

The commonwealth will strongly encourage local workforce development boards and their youth standing committees to think comprehensively and systematically about youth programs and services described in Section 129 of WIOA, and to establish youth priorities in the WIOA Local Plans that allow for the service of as many eligible youth as possible, especially OSY, older youth and those young people who are most at risk of not acquiring the necessary skills and abilities to attain meaningful employment.

The success of a solid youth program that fulfills the intent of WIOA largely depends on the full and openly competitive procurement of qualified providers of the youth workforce investment activities outlined in Section 129 of WIOA, and active oversight of their performance in accordance with WIOA Section 116.

This begins with the incorporation of WIOA's youth program requirements into future Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and subsequent contracts, as well as existing youth provider contracts.

Such requirements include:

- the expenditure of a minimum of 75 percent of funding on services to out-of-school youth;
- the expenditure of 20 percent of funding on the provision of work experiences for youth, including those with significant barriers to employment;
- the development of strong career pathways for youth;
- the co-enrollment of eligible youth into appropriate partner programs and activities, including TANF;
- the provision of the 14 required youth program design elements;
- the provider's past record of success with the retention of youth participants in education, training activities, or unsubsidized employment during the second and fourth quarters after program exit; and
- a detailed description of the local board's negotiated performance goals with the commonwealth for which the provider has a role in meeting and/or exceeding.

To ease burdens on both applicants and providers and serve out-of-school youth who are most in need, the commonwealth will allow self-attestation for out-of-school youth for the purpose of WIOA eligibility determination, consistent with federal rulemaking. The commonwealth will require LWDBs and youth service providers to accept such self-attestation. An applicant will become eligible for youth services by providing a statement that addresses the required element that may make the applicant eligible to receive services as an out-of-school youth, signing and dating a form acknowledging this status, followed by verification conducted by workforce staff that such information meets WIOA eligibility criteria for out-of-school youth. The key elements for self-attestation are: the participant identifying his or her status for permitted elements and signing and dating a form attesting to this self-identification. The commonwealth will work with LWDBs to develop additional self-attestation policies and procedures that are consistent with the commonwealth's self-attestation policy.

Additionally, local areas are strongly encouraged to employ single-year provider contracts with the inclusion of a renewal option for additional years, rather than multi-year contracts. Local boards will establish criteria to ensure that newer provider entities with less professional experience in the provision of youth services are afforded the opportunity to compete with more established providers for

a contract. Criteria will also be established and included in contracts that outline the right of the local board to terminate a provider's contract for cause, such as fraud or failure to meet established performance standards.

The commonwealth will also work with LWDBs to explore the use of pay-for-performance approaches, as appropriate, when they appear to have the potential to produce positive returns on investment and also result in better services for the target population.

Finally, the commonwealth will encourage LWDBs to cooperate with Industry Partnerships and other multi-employer workforce partnerships, where relevant, on industry-specific career awareness, school-to-work, and other pipeline activities for youth.

How the State will use funds to carry out Youth Program elements described in WIOA section 129(c)(2)

The commonwealth is supporting Business-Education Partnerships in the form of \$1.6 million in grant funding, distributed in 2014, for the purpose of connecting local businesses with school districts to promote job opportunities and career pathways. These programs increase awareness of in-demand technical careers for students, their parents, and educators to engage more students in the technical skills required by employers. The partnerships connect schools, employers and students to provide career-related experiences and exposure opportunities for students through soft skills development, internships, workplace shadowing, and career mentoring. To the extent feasible, Business-Education Partnerships should include representatives (both staff and employers) of area Industry Partnerships and apprenticeship programs that connect to multiple employers with good jobs. The commonwealth will continue its support of Business-Education Partnership activities going forward.

In 2015, the commonwealth made available a \$4 million special appropriation of funding to local boards, as a supplement to the customary \$15 million full program year allocation of TANF Youth Development Funds (YDF). This TANF special appropriation was designated to allow for the provision of summer youth workforce investment activities for even more TANF-eligible youth. Funds were also provided to Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, as discussed in the strategic portion of the plan, to pilot new and innovative summer employment initiatives. The commonwealth will consider the results of those pilots in developing future approaches to serving youth.

Additionally, the commonwealth is designing a paid summer internship program for disadvantaged youth ages 16-18. This 8-week program will kick-off during the summer of 2016. Multiple state agencies and offices, including PA CareerLink® centers, will serve as worksites providing opportunities for valuable work experiences, with a strong focus on "soft skills" to area youth. State staff will act as supervisor/mentors for youth participants.

The Department of Labor & Industry is the lead agency in the development of the internship program framework, which includes the development of training plans, the recruitment process for eligible youth, and the assignment of youth to worksite rotations based on identified areas of interest. Approximately, \$3.5 million is being designated for this first year of program activity.

In addition to WIOA's about-face from WIA's ISY primary focus, the new legislation revises the delivery of youth services through the addition of new programmatic elements. WIOA added five new program elements to ones originally outlined under WIA, including: financial literacy education; entrepreneurial skills training; the provision of labor market and employment information about in-demand industry

sectors or occupations available in a local area; activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training; and education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a special occupation or occupational cluster. The Department highly encourages local boards and their standing youth committees to focus their allocated youth funds in support of a service delivery system that aligns with the governor's goals and priorities.

One of the required elements focuses specifically on work experiences for youth. WIOA requires local areas to spend a minimum of 20 percent of WIOA youth funds on work experience activities, including paid and unpaid work experiences such as: summer and other employment opportunities throughout the year; pre-apprenticeship programs; internships and job shadowing; and on-the-job training opportunities for youth and young adults.

As a result of the transformation in focus from ISY to OSY, especially disconnected youth and those young people who face barriers to employment, local boards are required to develop stronger year-round programs and work experiences that create opportunities for those young adults who are most in need of the services. Such programs and experiences may include, but are not limited to:

- Programs that combine “*learn and earn*” opportunities that maximize part-time employment as students build academic skills.
- Transitional jobs. Such opportunities allow young adults to gain meaningful work experience, create a work history, and develop the skills needed to promote workplace success.
- Pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships. These programs combine work-based opportunities for out-of-school youth.
- Utilizing work-based training opportunities such as OJT, internships and job-shadowing for this youth population.

Additionally, local boards must develop solid working relationships with service providers that have demonstrated experience in working with an older youth population, especially those young people who face barriers to employment. Such relationships will lead to a strong system of workforce investment programs and activities aimed at meeting the needs of Pennsylvania's youth and young adults, while fulfilling the requirements outlined in WIOA.

Provide the language contained in the State policy for “requires additional assistance to complete an education program or to secure and hold employment” criterion specified in WIOA section 129(a)(1)(B)(i) and 129(a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII)

Due to the uniqueness of Pennsylvania's 23 local areas and the varying levels of resources available, local workforce development boards will establish a definition, along with eligibility documentation requirements, for the “requires additional assistance to complete an education program or to secure and hold employment” criterion. This policy will be developed by each local board and will be required to be submitted to the commonwealth as a component of the WIOA Local Plan. To assist the local boards with this task, the commonwealth will convene panels of local representatives to develop recommendations on definitions and interpretations of the term “requires additional assistance to complete an education program or to secure and hold employment.”

Provide the state's definition of "alternative education."

Pennsylvania law and regulations discuss "alternative education" in the context of alternative education for disruptive youth. School districts are obligated to educate students of compulsory school age who have been excluded from school (expelled). The courts have ruled that local school officials may determine the amount and type of alternative instruction necessary and appropriate in each case involving an expelled student. Pennsylvania law defines a "private alternative education institution" as an institution operated by an individual or a for-profit or not-for-profit entity to provide alternative education programs as defined in section 1901-c(1).

Include the state's 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)

Pennsylvania defines school as "public schools, which includes school districts, charter schools, area vocational technical schools, and cyber charter schools; and non-public schools, which are primarily sectarian; and private schools." Anyone who is enrolled at one of those institutions would be considered "attending school." An individual not receiving service from one of those institutions, including individuals who are being home-schooled or privately tutored, would be considered "not attending school."

Youth without a secondary credential who are attending a high school equivalency program, regardless of how that program is funded, will be considered "not attending school" and, therefore, will be eligible for Title I services for OSY. Eligibility for these services will be based on the educational status of the youth, not on the location or funding of the entity providing the adult education service. For example, many youth, including youth over 21, attend high school equivalency programs that are funded outside of the WIOA Title II Adult Education system, or participate in interventions similar to YouthBuild or Job Corps that are funded by other public and private sources. Youth participating in these types of services are defined as "out of school."

If not utilizing the portion of the basic skills deficient definition contained in WIOA Section 3(5)(B), include the specific State definition.

The commonwealth will utilize the "basic skills deficient" definition contained in WIOA Section 3(5)(B) as follows:

Basic skills deficient – The term "basic skills deficient" means, with respect to an individual:

- (A) who is a youth, that the individual has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or
- (B) who is a youth or adult, that the 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.

The commonwealth will convene panels of local representatives to assist LWDBs in interpreting and implementing this definition.

Wagner-Peyser Act Program

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 job seekers and employers.

Within the Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations, Staff Development Services will continue to develop, facilitate, and provide a training curriculum that strengthens the professional skills of co-located partners' staff in PA CareerLink® centers and Local Workforce Development Board offices, as well as the bureau's staff in headquarters and regional locations, who provide programmatic expertise, guidance, and support to the one-stop career centers and local areas. The curriculum is designed, delivered, and evaluated to ensure staff from all partnering organizations have the opportunity to acquire consistent information and practical skills to effectively provide integrated programs and services to jobseeker and business customers. In addition, the Staff Development unit will continue to assist the bureau's programmatic managers and staff in creating procedural and informational products that ensure accuracy and consistency among the commonwealth's PA CareerLink® centers.

Describe strategies developed to support training and awareness across core programs and the Unemployment Insurance program and the training provided for Employment Services and WIOA staff on identification of Unemployment Insurance (UI) eligibility issues.

The Office of Unemployment Compensation Benefits Policy (OUCBP) will provide annual training to PA CareerLink® staff on the identification of UI eligibility issues. This training will include how to identify and refer a potential issue to the UC service center. The Department will monitor the number of cases being referred to the UC service center to ensure that the PA CareerLink® staff is fulfilling this requirement.

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.

L&I uses a sophisticated automated call distribution (ACD) system to receive calls from UI customers. The ACD system allows the Department to prioritize calls. The system is designed to give calls from the PA CareerLink® courtesy telephone the highest priority. When calling from a courtesy telephone located at the PA CareerLink®, the customer hears the greeting and makes a service selection. The caller is then placed at the top of the queue and routed to the next available customer service agent in the UC service center. This keeps call wait time for these customers to a minimum. All customer service agents are fully trained merit staff capable of handling the caller's questions and taking and processing UI claims.

Describe the State's strategy for providing reemployment assistance to UI claimants and other unemployed individuals.

Reemployment services are available to all UI claimants and other unemployed individuals through PA CareerLink® centers and JobGateway®. Information about reemployment services and instructions for enrollment are printed on the UI claim confirmation letter and in the Pennsylvania Unemployment Compensation Handbook sent to every UI claimant. Pennsylvania implemented formal work search and registration requirements for UI claimants effective January 2012. Pennsylvania UC law requires claimants to register for employment search services with the PA CareerLink® system within 30 days of filing for benefits. Beginning with the third week of the benefit year for which a claimant for

compensation is filed and each week thereafter, the claimant must apply for two positions and participate in one work search activity each week and maintain records of their work search efforts.

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:

- *Coordination of and provision of labor exchange services for UI claimants as required by the Wagner-Peyser Act;*
- *Registration of UI claimants with the State's employment service if required by State law;*
- *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*
- *Provision of referrals to and application assistance for training and education programs and resources.*

As mentioned above, Pennsylvania UC law requires claimants to register for employment search services with the PA CareerLink® system within 30 days of filing for benefits. When a claimant applies for UC benefits, s/he is immediately directed to JobGateway® to register for employment search services where occupational skills information is collected. The JobGateway® portal matches the claimant's skills with those required for jobs posted in CWDS to help satisfy job-search requirements. The system can also suggest training and education programs that may assist the individual in increasing his or her reemployment prospects. Claimant participation in reemployment services is tracked until exhaustion of UC benefits or termination of reemployment services.

In addition to PA CareerLink® services available to all job seekers, the Profile Reemployment Program is Pennsylvania's worker profiling/reemployment services collaborative program to expedite reemployment services for UI claimants while eliminating duplicative services. The database systems rank claimants according to those most likely to exhaust their UI benefits before returning to work. The ranking algorithms, based on common characteristics found in similar unemployed workers (such as employment history and/or educational levels), exclude claimants with a recall date, union affiliation, those involved in a work stoppage and claimants who are working part-time. Collaboration among PA CareerLink® partners makes the Profile Reemployment Program an effective means for UI claimants to obtain reemployment and training services across all service levels, including: orientations; job search planning, assistance, and workshops; labor market information; résumé preparation; program assessment; vocational and career guidance; testing; remedial or prerequisite training (e.g., GED or ESL); and skills training. All Profile Reemployment Program customers receive an employment needs assessment and an appropriate employment plan is developed. Participation in the program is tracked through CWDS until exhaustion of UI benefits or termination of reemployment services.

In four PA CareerLink® centers (Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, Hazleton and Tannersville), the RESEA program is being piloted. RESEA is supported by a federal grant to fund additional services to assist UI claimants in becoming reemployed. The Profile Reemployment Program will be suspended in the four PA CareerLink® centers piloting RESEA. L&I will select and notify UC claimants to participate in RESEA. Those chosen to participate are identified as mostly likely to exhaust UC, with military (UCX) claimants receiving first priority as required by the grant. A UC-24, RESEA Notice will be mailed to those claimants selected to participate in RESEA in the pilot region. The notice informs claimants that participation in RESEA activities is mandatory and to watch for additional mailings from their local PA CareerLink® center.

The RESEA will consist of a group orientation and an individual meeting with PA CareerLink® staff. The group orientation will consist of an introduction to the RESEA participation requirements and the services provided by the PA CareerLink®. Following the group orientation, claimants will be provided a one-on-one interview to further assess reemployment services needed, development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) and review and confirmation of the information the claimant provided on the UC eligibility assessment. PA CareerLink® staff will summarize the RESEA meeting on an outcome form, complete a checklist, and provide this information to UC. Each RESEA participant will be scheduled for a subsequent RESEA four weeks later. During the subsequent appointment, conducted by telephone, PA CareerLink® staff will review and update the IEP, provide additional reemployment assistance, and determine if additional services are needed through the PA CareerLink®. Any claimant remaining unemployed four weeks later will be scheduled for a second subsequent RESEA, also to be conducted by telephone. Any UC eligibility issues identified during the RESEA initial or subsequent interviews will be promptly reported to UC for adjudication.

Agricultural Outreach Plan

The Agricultural Outreach Plan discusses Pennsylvania efforts related to serving Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW), temporary foreign labor obtain through the H-2A program and in serving agricultural employers through the PA CareerLink® system. The Department of Agriculture, Department of Labor & Industry and other relevant state agencies as necessary, will work together to ensure that agricultural workers and employers needs are met. As part of that collaboration, the two departments will encourage agricultural employers to create multi-employer workforce partnerships and apply for funding through the Industry Partnership program.

Agriculture is one of Pennsylvania's leading industries, with a diversity of animal and crop production throughout the commonwealth. Pennsylvania ranks first in the nation in mushroom production, second in Christmas tree farms, third in apple production and fifth in terms of the number of dairy cows. Lancaster is the top agricultural county in the state.

In Pennsylvania's southeastern region a majority of smaller mushroom growers produce crops for the larger growers whose operations have become more modernized and efficient. The commonwealth produces 62 percent of our nation's supply of mushrooms. Additionally, in the eastern region there is considerable blueberry and cherry production. In Bucks and Montgomery counties there are also wholesale nursery productions and several apple orchards. Lancaster County leads the commonwealth in dairy, poultry and swine production.

Adams and Franklin Counties, located in South Central Pennsylvania, are considered the state's fruit-belt. The largest crop is apples, followed by peaches, cherries and pears. Although not nearly as large as Adams and Franklin Counties' apple production, Bedford and Blair Counties have numerous apple growers. A burgeoning local wine industry has resulted in the expansion of acreage dedicated to grapes. The agricultural activity in the western region of the state tends to be more in wholesale evergreen nurseries, vegetables and grapes. In the northwestern portion of the state there is more emphasis on grapes, followed by cherries, assorted vegetables and nursery production.

To remain competitive in the global marketplace, the agriculture and food industries in Pennsylvania must resolve the problem of an aging workforce. The commonwealth will seek to identify demand-

driven career pathways, to marshal substantial resources that already exist in a variety of systems, to identify gaps in education and training, to focus on work-based learning as methods to fill those gaps, and to account for the needs of young people and adults as a way of finding a solution to the shortage of talent in the near and long-term.

Consultations are underway with people across government including but not limited to the Departments of Agriculture, Education, Labor and Industry, and Community and Economic Development as well as people within the agriculture industry itself. As a result, this effort will be grounded in the needs of the agriculture and food industries, who will continue to be consulted.

Additionally, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture has defined the agriculture and food industry and developed projections around the number of openings needed in occupations related to them. More than 25 occupations have been identified as in demand for the industry. These occupations have been profiled in a desk guide that has been made available for counselors and educators in the social service and education systems. Each of the profiles provides crosswalks to academic standards for the K-12 system, to career and technology education standards, to Military Occupation Codes, to jobs with compatible skills, to the WorkKeys assessment system, and to O*Net descriptions of knowledge, skills, and abilities for occupation. Providing this guide helps workforce practitioners in secondary and post-secondary education, vocational rehabilitation, services for veterans, labor exchange services through the PA CareerLink®, and others better understand agriculture and food careers so that they can broaden the counseling options that they have for job seekers.

From the information that has been developed, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture has prepared a series of informational materials to include posters and handouts that can be used by the entities above to provide to interested job seekers. An Internet presence where these materials can be downloaded is planned before the end of 2015.

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.

BWPO recognizes that some farm workers possess specific needs and face certain barriers that result from cultural, educational, linguistic, scheduling, logistic, and other dynamics. The Administration will continue to seek stakeholder and customer input and will engage Migrant Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) service providers to identify and address needs, explore solutions, and collaborate in order to ensure quality living and working conditions.

Farmworker needs include, but are not limited to the following:

- Timely labor market information to facilitate planning for continuous employment;
- Occupational guidance and training to maintain a job or transition into a different occupation or industry;
- Transportation to seek employment or supportive services;
- Affordable and adequate housing;

- Information from various jurisdictions on labor laws and worker rights, protections, and responsibilities;
- Supportive services to enable MSFWs to obtain and maintain employment;
- Fair and equitable conditions and supervision from trained and committed field foremen, supervisors and farm labor contractors;
- Fair and equitable pay that includes health benefits. This is a necessity for the laborers, as well as for the safety of our nation's food supply, and for reducing health and public assistance cost; and
- Pesticide and heat stress prevention training.

Barriers that at times confront farm workers include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Lack of timely, reliable data and information pertinent to intrastate and interstate job openings and supportive services;
- Provider service delivery hours of operation that conflict with MSFWs work schedules;
- Lack of transportation, limiting access to jobs and supportive services;
- Underemployment or unemployment due to limited literacy education, and lack of non - agricultural job experience;
- Limited participation in support programs due to lack of understanding of eligibility and other factors, such as impact on immigration status for having utilized certain services;
- Lack of full-time, year-round work, combined with low wages, that relegates MSFWs to living below the poverty line;
- Competition from undocumented workers who work for less pay and substandard living and working conditions;
- Competition from intrastate and interstate farm labor contractors who follow migrant streams accompanied by their own farm worker crews;
- Limited educational opportunities, including a lack of short-term, skilled-based training offered bilingually, for MSFWs; and
- Limited knowledge of job search techniques for finding employment outside of agriculture.

Provide an assessment of available resources for outreach and whether the State believes such resources are sufficient. If the State believes the resources are insufficient, provide a description of what would help and what the State would do with the additional resources.

Every PA CareerLink® center in Pennsylvania has an employee, who may have other duties, designated as the "Agricultural Specialist." That employee is responsible for MSFW outreach and field checks when necessary. The State Monitor Advocate position is housed within L&I Central Office. The position is full-time and assists in outreach activities and in the coordination of outreach across the commonwealth.

Currently the number of staff positions assigned to outreach activities remains static in that each PA CareerLink® center has one individual designated as "Agricultural Specialist." In the case of a PA CareerLink® center closing a nearby center will expand their area of coverage and assume the duties of the center that had closed. The commonwealth believes that resources for outreach are currently sufficient.

Outreach Activities

Describe the State agency's proposed outreach activities including strategies on how to contact farmworkers who are not being reached by the normal intake activities conducted by the employment service offices. The plan for the proposed outreach activities must include:

The goals for the number of farmworkers who will be contacted each program year by W-P staff.

The commonwealth projects 40,000 MSFWs for the coming year as estimated by WIA 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantees. This number remains static because similar crop activities are anticipated.

In PY 2015, PA CareerLink® centers estimate they will receive approximately 800 agricultural job openings and will refer applicants to approximately 85 percent of them. The offices estimate they will continue to receive approximately 140 clearance orders for the PY 2015 harvest season from other states and anticipate these to be primarily requests for H-2A workers.

The number of farmworkers who will be contacted each program year by other agencies under cooperative arrangements. These numerical goals must be based on the number of farmworkers estimated to be in the State in the coming year, taking into account the varying concentration of farmworkers during the seasons in each geographic area, the range of services needed in each area and the number of W-P and/or cooperating agency staff who will conduct outreach.

Wagner-Peyser staff and WIA 167 NFJP grantees (participating partner agencies) have set a goal of contacting five percent of the total estimated number of MSFWs in the state during PY 2015. Five percent has been a consistent number from year to year. While the commonwealth understands the higher percentage the better, limited resources and a diminished economy make it a challenge to maintain the current numbers. The goal for the immediate future is sustainability. The level of Wagner-Peyser funding to be used on outreach is equivalent to an average minimum of five outreach contacts per Wagner-Peyser staff workday. The amount of funding decreases proportionately as the average number of MSFWs contacted per staff workday increases.

Open communication is on-going with the liaison, partner agencies such as Migrant Health, Migrant Education, PathStone, and legal services. PathStone shares statistical information with the commonwealth and is also a partner in several PA CareerLink® centers. Frequently informational exchanges occur with regards to services to MSFWs. Cooperation amongst partner agencies is common. Referrals are made to L&I regarding wage complaints, job referrals, working conditions, housing conditions, and unsafe working conditions. MSFWs seeking OJTs, in need of emergency lodging or food, ESL classes, emergency transportation or having health issues are immediately referred to the appropriate partner agency. These open lines of communication and referrals serve almost synergistically to assist MSFWs.

The State's plans to conduct outreach to as many farm workers as possible.

MSFW activity is year-round in Pennsylvania. MSFWs represent an almost constant presence in the commonwealth. Many agricultural employers, specialty growers and others cultivate an on-going relationship with farm workers and keep in touch with these workers even when they are out of state. The same holds true for foreign labor through the H-2A program. There is a “big picture” with regard to

Pennsylvania's significant agricultural office. Activities wax and wane by season. Apples are by far the largest crop in the south central area. There is a pruning season, which runs from winter to spring. A handful of farm workers can prune large orchards over that period of time. Later on in spring the same workers may thin apples. Thinning typically ends at about the same time that the blueberry harvest begins in New Jersey, and migrants leave the area and return later on around the time that the earliest of tree fruits are harvested. That continues until late fall, and after that the great majority of farm workers migrate to Florida for the winter vegetable, fruit, and citrus season.

Outreach is performed at the height of the harvest season. One aspect of outreach is to determine the number of MSFWs in an area. To perform outreach in the off (or slow) season could result in counting many of the same workers more than once. The few workers who had stayed behind for the pruning and thinning season are the same workers who had received contact and service information during the harvest season.

The number of outreach workers dedicated to outreach to farmworkers by service areas.

Every one-stop office in Pennsylvania has a job specialist employee designated as the "Agricultural Specialist," and that employee is responsible for MSFW outreach and field checks when necessary. The State Monitor Advocate position is housed within Central Office. The position is full-time and assists in outreach activities and in the coordination of outreach across the commonwealth.

State Strategies

Coordinating outreach efforts with WIOA Title 1 section 167 grantees as well as with public and private community service agencies and MSFW groups.

The State Monitor Advocate, in partnership with the 167 NFJP grantee, holds an annual MSFW Coordinating Committee meeting and invites all MSFW agencies and groups along with USDOL and the PA Department of Agriculture to attend. These meetings are also open to the public.

Explaining to farmworkers the services available at the local one-stop centers.

As mentioned above, each PA CareerLink® has a designated agricultural specialist. Though some PA CareerLink® centers in metropolitan areas have no (or minimal) agriculture, the centers will provide any visiting MSFWs with full and equal services. In other, non-significant MSFW PA CareerLink® centers, outreach is performed when necessary. In Pennsylvania's lone significant agriculture office, Adams County, 100 percent of farm labor camps receive outreach.

In the PA CareerLink® office in Adams County, which is deemed a "Significant Bilingual MSFW Office" according to conditions in 20 CFR 651.10, designated staff provides MSFWs with in-depth services including: referrals to agricultural and non-agricultural jobs; information on training and supportive services; testing, counseling and job development services; and an explanation of basic farm worker rights and the complaint system. These services are provided regardless of a MSFW's ability to communicate in English.

Other non-significant agricultural offices covered by LEP requirements may have bilingual staff, but they are not necessarily designated as MSFW specialists. Pennsylvania's State Monitor Advocate performs outreach in the Adams County office. The PA CareerLink® centers bilingual MSFW Specialist covers the

Adams County office regarding MSFWs throughout the peak season, which is September through November.

Marketing the employment service complaint system to farmworkers and other farmworker advocacy groups.

The system provides MSFWs the opportunity to file complaints when violations are believed to have been committed. Services provided at PA CareerLink® centers are measured using the indicators of compliance reports as mandated by federal regulation at 20 CFR 653.112.

Providing farm workers with a basic summary of farmworker rights, including their rights with respect to the terms and conditions of employment.

As mentioned above, MSFWs receive a basic summary of their rights when they receive services in the PA CareerLink® center or during outreach. Outreach is defined as going to farm labor camps and providing information about PA CareerLink® services and services available through other agencies; visual re-inspection of labor camps; informing MSFWs of their rights; and taking complaints, if necessary. Outreach is also used to obtain a headcount of farm workers. A contact is an in-person, one-on-one or group encounter with farm workers. Contact numbers are increased by going directly to the place of work or to the labor camp. Field checks occur in H-2A orders where there have been U.S. workers hired. Field visits are random, and employers are contacted for permission to visit their workers. Field checks generally take place if there are U.S. workers. Rarely, if ever, are U.S. workers hired for H-2A orders in Pennsylvania. If third-party complaints come in or workers directly complain about conditions, or if the employer has had problems in the past, those workers will be visited. Tools used to conduct outreach contacts include printed material, flyers, cellular phone, business cards and posters. Printed materials range from business cards, listings of services, provider agencies, worker rights, and topical information on everything from pesticides to heat stress. Outreach focuses on farm worker services, health and safety, abuse, apparent violations, farm worker rights, and all topics are weighted equally as any particular topic covered may ultimately be the most important to a farm worker.

Urging those farm workers who have been reached through the State's outreach efforts to go to the local one-stop center to obtain the full range of employment and training services.

MSFWs are encouraged to visit the local PA CareerLink® center to receive the full range of employment and training services available to all job seekers during outreach efforts.

Services provided to farmworkers and agricultural employers through the one-stop delivery system. Describe the activities planned for providing the full range of employment and training services to the agricultural community, both farmworkers and agricultural employers, through the one-stop delivery system.

Services Provided to MSFWs through the PA CareerLink® Delivery System

In the PA CareerLink® office in Adams County, which is deemed a “Significant Bilingual MSFW Office” according to conditions in 20 CFR 651.10, designated staff provides MSFWs with in-depth services including: referrals to agricultural and non-agricultural jobs; information on training and supportive services; testing, counseling and job development services; and an explanation of basic farm worker

rights and the complaint system. These services are provided regardless of a MSFW's ability to communicate in English (see available LEP services in other areas of this plan).

Farmworkers seeking permanent agricultural employment are apprised of opportunities, such as in the dairy industry, which also offer opportunities for advancement. Many companies, particularly in food processing, provide training opportunities for workers to advance to become managers, supervisors and technicians. The system also provides MSFWs the opportunity to file complaints when violations are believed to have been committed. Services provided at PA CareerLink® centers are measured using the indicators of compliance reports as mandated by federal regulation at 20 CFR 653.112.

Other non-significant agricultural offices covered by LEP requirements may have bilingual staff, but they are not necessarily designated as MSFW specialists. Pennsylvania's State Monitor Advocate performs outreach in the Adams County office. The PA CareerLink® bilingual MSFW Specialist covers the Adams County office regarding MSFWs throughout the peak season, which is September through November.

Services Provided to Agricultural Employers through the PA CareerLink® System

Pennsylvania growers are offered the full range of PA CareerLink® services. Through the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS), the PA CareerLink® centers are able to help employers meet their needs for permanent, temporary and/or seasonal labor by placing job postings in CWDS and by marketing openings to job seekers.

In addition to Pennsylvania's high quality business services offered to all employers as outlined throughout the State Plan, agricultural employers are also offered our services when met in person on MSFW outreach, at agricultural meetings, and other business-related events.

Job posting requirements, as specified under federal regulations at 20 CFR 653, and housing standards, as specified at 20 CFR 654 and 29 CFR 1910.142, are complied with in the PA CareerLink® centers. Additional requirements, as outlined in ETA Manual No. 3398, which pertain to requests from employers for employing temporary alien agriculture workers under the H-2A Program, are also followed. Along with these requirements, PA CareerLink® staff conduct Prevailing Wage and Prevailing Practice surveys where there is significant MSFW activity and where there are requests for seasonal or temporary farm workers under the H-2A Program. L&I will consult with the PA Department of Agriculture on survey content and timing to try to obtain the highest response possible.

Other Requirements

State Monitor Advocate. The plan must contain a statement that indicates that the State Monitor Advocate has been afforded the opportunity to review and approve the AOP.

Pennsylvania's State Monitor Advocate assisted in the development of the PY 2015 Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP) section of the Pennsylvania Combined State Plan.

Review and Public Comment. The plan must provide information indicating that WIOA Section 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantees, other appropriate farmworker groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations, have been given an opportunity to comment on the State AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.

The commonwealth will ensure that the WIOA Section 167 NFJP grantee, other appropriate farmworker groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations are aware that the State Plan has been posted for public comment. The commonwealth will respond to any comments received during the public comment period in the final submission of the State Plan.

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.

PY 2014 MSFW Activity

During PY 2014, there were an estimated 40,000 migrant workers in the commonwealth, with 77 MSFWs registered for services with PA CareerLink®. Since only a small percentage of MSFWs use the PA CareerLink® computerized system, the 77 registered farm workers represent less than one percent of all MSFWs. These numbers are not unique to Pennsylvania or to Federal Region II. One of Pennsylvania's neighboring states listed in its AOP zero (0) as the total number of registered farm workers on their system. While MSFW usage of state one-stop services are constantly low through the entire East coast migrant stream, Pennsylvania welcomes and encourages MSFWs to take full advantage of the wide range of services.

The following table shows estimated numbers of MSFWs involved in the harvest of labor intensive agricultural communities for some of the highest volume crops during PY 2014. Estimates have changed only slightly over the last several years.

Estimates of Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers

Crops	MSFW Estimates	Geographic Area
Apple/Peach	4,000 Workers	South Central PA
Green Wrap Tomatoes	150 Workers	North Central PA
Mushroom Harvest	5,000 Workers	Southeast PA
Vegetable Harvest	4,000 Workers	South Central & Western PA
Nursery/Landscape/Trees	150 Workers	Western & Central PA
Cut-Christmas Trees	250 Workers	Central & Eastern PA

The difference in numbers between the estimated 40,000 MSFWs in Pennsylvania and the numbers of estimated workers provided in Table 5.1 (13,550) can be attributed to all other crop activities, many of which are too small to have their own category and breakdown. Cherries, strawberries, grapes, raspberries, blueberries, nuts, pears, Asian pears, apricots, pumpkins, sweet corn, potatoes, beets, asparagus, carrots, garlic, and a full range of other crops comprise a large agricultural industry spread out across the state. The 40,000 number of farm workers on the AOP was provided to the commonwealth by the WIOA section 167 grant recipient, PathStone, which collects data and comes up with the total number of MSFWs on an annual basis.

Pennsylvania has received a waiver from the USDOL to pilot the Common Measures Management System. Some of the MSFW data elements are no longer captured. Therefore, to account for those

missing elements, data from prior years has been used, factoring in current agricultural trends in the state. Data that continues to be captured reflect the stability and accuracy of the report.

Between July 1, 2014, and June 30, 2015, CWDS listed 80 temporary H-2A agricultural job postings. Seventy-three U.S. workers applied for these jobs in person at PA CareerLink® centers. A considerably larger number of U.S. applicants self-referred for those same jobs, but the exact numbers are not captured. Total numbers are captured by the Chicago National Processing Center. Of the 73 known applicants to these jobs, four U.S. workers were hired. During this same period, PA CareerLink® offices received 7,356 temporary non-agricultural job openings and 47,287 permanent non-agricultural job openings. PA CareerLink® offices placed 5,906 job applicants against the temporary non-agricultural job postings and 32,849 against the permanent non-agricultural job postings.

The 5148 Labor Exchange Agricultural Reporting System (LEARS) statistical activities require little explanation. Although MSFW numbers are low due to extenuating circumstances, Pennsylvania consistently meets or exceeds USDOL-ETA goals. All five “Equity Indicators,” i.e., *referrals to jobs, staff assisted services, supportive services, career guidance, and job development contacts* were met. That means that in each of the above categories MSFWs received equal or greater service than the general population. With regard to the seven “minimum service level indicators,” which are job placement, placed at \$.50 above the minimum wage, placed in long term non-ag job, reviews of significant offices, field checks conducted, outreach contacts per staff day worked, and timely process of ES complaints, all service levels consistently met or surpassed DOLETA goals for the year.

Unlike areas of growth industries, agriculture in Pennsylvania remains robust yet static. Therefore, our goals are set accordingly. From year to year there is practically no change in the numbers of growers, labor camps, and ultimately MSFWs. The same holds true for the H-2A guest worker program. The different numbers of H-2A orders from year to year generally vary by single digits. Thus field checks, field visits, outreach, monitoring, and equity ratio indicators remain constant. During the 2014 growing/harvest season, L&I received a total of 360 agricultural interstate clearance orders for a total of 1,750 farm workers.

Title II Programs

How the eligible agency will, by July 1, 2016, align 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

The content standards for adult education are currently in full alignment with state-adopted challenging academic contents standards. The Pennsylvania State Board of Education adopted the Pennsylvania Core Standards in November 2013. The standards went into effect March 1, 2014. PDE, Division of Adult Education began formal statewide implementation of the *College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education* (CCRS) during PY 2014-15. Prior to implementation of the CCRS, Division of Adult Education staff completed a crosswalk of the CCRS to the Pennsylvania Core Standards. All items included in the CCRS are also in the Pennsylvania Core Standards; in many cases, the wording of the standards is identical.

PDE, Division of Adult Education is implementing the use of CCRS in Title II programs under a three-year plan. The plan began in PY 2014-15 with the goal of full implementation in PY 2016-17. At that point, the CCRS should serve as the foundation for instruction in all Title II programs, including English language acquisition programs.

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 adult education and literacy activities, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of 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. 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.

Once all required conditions are in place, PDE will conduct a full and open competition for new grants to be awarded July 1, 2017. The grant application will address, at a minimum, the thirteen considerations and seven requirements established in Title II. The competition will be open to all eligible providers. All eligible providers will be required to submit evidence of demonstrated effectiveness. To demonstrate effectiveness, applicants that have received Title II AEFLA funds and/or state matching funds through PDE Division of Adult Education in the program years immediately preceding the competition will be evaluated based on their performance against the state's negotiated targets during those years.

Applicants that did not receive funds through the Division of Adult Education will be required to provide data that show 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/training. The competition will be conducted through PDE's eGrants system. As part of the application process, applicants will be required to submit their applications to the LWDB, which will review the applications for alignment with the local plan. PDE will provide opportunity to the local boards to provide recommendations and will take the recommendations and results of the review into consideration when scoring the related sections of the applications.

PDE anticipates a four-year grant period with yearly grant contracts. Each year's renewal will be based on evidence of success in provision of the contracted services and subject to the availability of funds. All funds will be used in compliance with the supplement not supplant stipulation of the law.

Prior to the competition, PDE will use a needs-based funding formula to distribute funds to the local workforce areas. The funding formula was developed in 2010 by PDE and a group of adult basic education program administrators under a technical assistance activity provided by US Department of Education. In local workforce development areas consisting of multiple counties, PDE anticipates further breaking out funding by county to ensure services are available throughout the local area.

All adult education programs funded under Section 231 and state matching funds will be required to be full-service adult education programs. They must provide instruction at all six adult basic education (ABE) and adult secondary education (ASE) educational functioning levels (EFL), plus English language acquisition (ELA) activities and integrated English literacy and civics (IEL/Civics) education where there is a need. Programs providing ELA and/or IEL/Civics services must support transition of those students to ABE/ASE instruction. All programs must use a portion of their state funds to support a tutoring program that offers one-on-one and/or small group instruction or volunteer classroom aides. Programs must also prepare students for and support them in achieving successful transition to postsecondary education/training or employment. Family literacy activities will be supported with state funds.

Programs will integrate digital literacy, employability skills and workforce preparation activities into services. Basic skills instruction will incorporate activities that require the use of technology, promote critical thinking, and build self-management skills, such as utilizing resources and information, understanding systems, and working with others. Programs will have an intake and orientation process that helps students and staff determine an individual's readiness for participation in the program. This includes activities to help the individual assess his/her own schedule and potential barriers to successful participation in instruction. It also includes a discussion of the individual's reasons and goals for participation. Programs must have attendance and other policies that are consistently enforced to help students develop the self-management skills to persist in services, with the goal that those skills will transfer to employment situations. All programs will integrate career awareness and career planning activities into the services provided to students, including using those activities as the context for basic skills instruction. Programs must have at least one case manager who works with students to address barriers to participation and to plan and prepare for transition to postsecondary education and/or training. Case management activities in support of transition will be offered in a variety of ways: integrated into instruction, stand-alone group activities, and one-on-one case management support. The activities will include introducing students to and helping them use the resources available through L&I and the PA CareerLink®; helping students identify employment and career pathways that align with their

skills and interests and also lead to jobs that pay; and supporting students through the application process for employment or training. Case managers will help students identify and address potential barriers to successful transition, such as child care, transportation, and funding to pay for training, among others. Case managers will work closely with staff at the local PA CareerLink® and refer students to PA CareerLink® career services as appropriate. Case managers will also coordinate with TANF or Title I or Title IV career counselors to support co-enrollment.

When and where appropriate, programs will be encouraged to develop integrated education and training that 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 that is for the purpose of educational and career advancement. Integrated education and training programs will support the needs of the local labor market and will be developed in consultation with LWDBs, employers, and training providers. 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 and provide an “on ramp” to a career pathway for the participants. The commonwealth will develop policy and guidance further clarifying allowable and required activities in an integrated education and training program. In addition, the commonwealth will research funding opportunities to cover the costs of the occupational training whenever possible.

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.

Through the competition described above, PDE’s Division of Adult Education will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider offering corrections education services in the state. Entities funded to provide corrections education will provide at least one of the allowable activities listed in section 225 and will be required to ensure that priority of service is given to those individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program. PDE will work with representatives from the PA Department of Corrections and other education stakeholders to identify best practices to support the requirements of Section 225 of Title II and use the information to inform development of the grant application. As appropriate, PDE will include individuals with knowledge of corrections education on application review teams.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program

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.

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.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities.

Describe how the program is 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.

PDE will hold a competition for funds under Section 243 of WIOA for IEL/Civics with integrated education and training activities, which will be open to all eligible providers. Applicants will be required to submit applications to the LWDB as described above.

PDE anticipates a two-year grant period with yearly grant contracts. Renewal of the grant for the second year will be based on evidence of success in provision of the contracted services and subject to the availability of funds. Funds awarded under Section 243 of WIOA will be used, at a minimum, to support the IEL/Civics, 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.

Applicants for IEL/Civics funds under Section 243 will be required to provide extensive data to demonstrate the need for 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 need 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 also need to provide evidence of communication with and input from the LWDB and local businesses/employers in identifying the occupational training opportunities to be included in the integrated education and training portion of the program. Applicants will provide evidence that such occupational training is in in-demand industries and has the potential to lead to economic self-sufficiency. Applicants will be required to provide assurances that the occupational training included as part of the program will be provided by qualified providers.

PDE does not anticipate mandating a specific model for all programs that receive Section 243 funds to provide IEL/Civics with integrated education and training. Applicants will propose a model that ensures provision of all required components in compliance with WIOA regulations. In cases in which the grant recipient does not provide all components itself, it will be responsible for ensuring full integration of all activities.

The commonwealth encourages Title II providers to pursue innovative IEL/Civics programs regardless of whether providers receive the grants described above. Although external funding is desirable, the absence of such funding should not prevent providers from establishing these programs.

State Leadership

Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out the required State Leadership activities under section 223 of WIOA.

Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out permissible State Leadership Activities under section 223 of WIOA, if applicable.

The overarching goal of PDE's investment 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 commonwealth. The system emphasizes program improvement based on data and high-quality research-based technical assistance and professional development opportunities that promote such program improvement. PDE will also use some of its state allocated funds to support state leadership priorities established in state law.

PDE 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.

PDE intends to fund one or more activities to support the use of technology. PDE 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. PDE 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.

PDE intends to fund several activities that, together, comprise a high quality professional development system that identifies and provides training in the following: instruction in areas such as reading, writing, speaking, mathematics and English language acquisition; use of data for program monitoring and evaluation for continuous program improvement; training for volunteer instructors; and development of lesson plans, resources and curricula that align with the CCRS.

PDE will ensure that procurement of both required and permissible state leadership activities is in compliance with state procurement policy. PDE anticipates using a combination of contractual tools, including both grants and purchase of services.

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.

PDE, Division of Adult Education will apply the performance targets established in the state plan to the local programs for monitoring, assessment, and evaluation purposes. Further, the Division of Adult Education will apply an additional performance measure: the number of outcomes achieved per student; the outcomes are those addressed in the performance measures: employment in the second and fourth quarters after exit, attainment of a secondary or postsecondary credential, and demonstration of a measureable skill gain. The numerator for this performance measure is the unduplicated number of successful outcomes an agency has for all of its enrolled students. The denominator is the unduplicated number of enrolled students in the agency.

The Division of Adult Education will conduct formal ongoing monitoring, assessment, and evaluation of local programs through both desk monitoring and onsite monitoring visits. Regional advisors will keep track of agency progress toward key markers of performance, such as contracted enrollment, appropriate assessment, employment outcomes and student persistence, using a range of tools. When data show areas for concern, advisors will contact the local program administrators to discuss the concerns and provide guidance and technical assistance. After the end of the program year, advisors will contact each agency individually to discuss its performance, focusing on areas in which the program has shown progress and areas in which it must improve.

In addition to this ongoing desk monitoring, division staff will conduct comprehensive, onsite monitoring visits. The division will use a risk rubric, applied annually, to determine which agencies to monitor. Agencies with the highest scores will be selected for onsite monitoring visits. These visits will be conducted by teams of two, four or six people. Each visit will be guided by a monitoring tool to ensure standardization of the visits. Monitoring visits will include an initial meeting with the administrator of the adult education program; class visits; a student focus group; a staff focus group; a review of data and student records; program compliance review; fiscal review; and a meeting at the end of the visit for the presentation of commendations, findings with required actions, and recommendations.

After the monitoring visit, the division will send a written monitoring report to the agency explaining all of the commendations, findings with required actions, and recommendations. The agency will submit a corrective action plan (CAP), which must address all findings with required actions, at a minimum. Agencies will be strongly encouraged to address recommendations as well. The regional advisors will be available to provide technical assistance during the development of the CAP and during implementation of the approved actions for correction and improvement. In addition, programs will be referred to the services of state leadership-sponsored activities where appropriate. The program will be required to provide updates on progress and documentation/evidence of completed actions. When necessary, the regional advisor will conduct a follow up visit approximately six months after the CAP is submitted.

The state office will also conduct ongoing informal evaluation for the purpose of technical assistance and continuous program improvement. Initial focus will be on three areas: 1) students who had sufficient attendance hours to be post-tested but were not; 2) students who completed intake, orientation, and initial assessment but did not reach enrollment status (i.e. 12 hours of instruction); and 3) students who reached enrollment status but did not stay long enough to be post-tested within the

appropriate timeframe. Other topics will be determined based on the results of future assessment and evaluation.

Local programs will also be supported by state office staff and state leadership activities to engage in required, ongoing self-monitoring, assessment and evaluation. Each program year, they will be required to develop a program improvement/professional development plan based on data and aligned with state office goals. They will be provided with tools similar to those used by the state office staff to track their own progress toward key markers of performance.

Vocational Rehabilitation Programs

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the 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:

Input of State Rehabilitation Council

All agencies, except for those that are independent consumer-controlled commissions, must describe the following:

- (A) 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;*
- (B) the Designated State unit's response to the Council's input and recommendations; and*
- (C) the designated State unit's explanations for rejecting any of the Council's input or recommendations.*

The following documents were used to develop these recommendations to OVR:

1. The Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council's (PaRC's) annual report (FFY 2014)
2. PaRC Customer Satisfaction Survey
3. Review of items in last year's Attachment 4.2(c)
4. Comments received at 2014 State Plan Meetings
5. Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Monitoring Report
6. Statewide Needs Assessment
7. Workforce Development Statistics

Commendations:

- PaRC commends the leadership of OVR for their partnership with PaRC in regard to policy development and review and Council representation on workgroups.
- PaRC praises OVR leadership for encouraging and supporting stakeholder input such as their involvement in the Pennsylvania Disability Employment & Empowerment Summit (PADES) and Transition conferences, and the customer satisfaction advisory committee.

1. Transition

Issue: Support for students between ages 14 to 21 is critical to creating an expectation for employment after school is finished.

Recommendations:

- a. Work with Youth Leadership Network and Youth Workforce Investment Boards (WIB)

OVR Response: OVR continues to work with the Pennsylvania Youth Leadership Network (PYLN) through the Pennsylvania Community on Transition State Leadership Team. OVR is part of a subcommittee working on Youth Engagement led by members of the PYLN. Together, we are exploring new ways to reach out to local WDB Youth Councils and to increase participation of our youth with disabilities throughout the state in these organizations.

- b. Continue relationships established with the Department of Human Services (and the office of Developmental Programs), and Department of Education

OVR Response: OVR is represented on the PA Developmental Disabilities Council, the Governor’s Special Education Advisory Panel and the Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Project, all of which are comprised of representatives from partnering agencies.

OVR continues to be a lead member of the Pennsylvania Community on Transition Statewide Leadership Team (SLT). OVR has presented on various employment topics for the SLT’s monthly webinar series this year and will continue to do so in the upcoming year. OVR is a member of the Renew Advisory Board through the Department of Education. This program works with the schools to assist youth who are at risk for dropping out.

OVR continues to work with the PA Department of Human Services, Office of Developmental Programs, the Bureau of Autism Services, the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, and the Office of Long Term Living. OVR has reached out to the Department of Health, Bureau of Children, Youth and Family Services to spread awareness of both agency’s initiatives and services. OVR is also working with the Bureau of Juvenile Justice in understanding the services needed by adjudicated youth and in assisting our district offices in learning more about this population and how to best determine and provide appropriate services to them. OVR maintains contact with the agencies through monthly or quarterly phone calls. OVR also participates on Advisory Boards and Committees when invited by our collaborating partners. OVR has served on the Department of Health’s Traumatic Injury Advisory Board for over 10 years.

- c. Continue evaluating Early Reach program for effectiveness

OVR Response: OVR is collecting Early Reach data. The expectation is that the numerical and student data collected early (beginning at age 14) will facilitate and streamline the application and eligibility process for youth with disabilities. This plan may take a few years to implement, but it is in the discussion stage. The criteria to measure the effectiveness of the Early Reach Initiative are still being determined. One method will include OVR better identifying how youth with disabilities first learned about OVR and how they were formally referred for services. In addition, there are requirements for data collection and services to youth and students with disabilities included in WIOA amendments to the Rehabilitation Act.

2. Training for OVR staff and Counselors of Consumer Customers

Issue: Important that the public face of OVR is one that is understanding and helping individuals to achieve employment goals.

Recommendations:

- a. Continue working on improving Consumer Customer satisfaction.

OVR Response: OVR has been committed to providing at least one general customer service video conference training each year. We will continue to develop and offer at least one customer service related video conference session in 2016.

- b. Work towards implementation of recommendations from “Defining Positive Customer Service in the State Vocational Rehabilitation System” report.

OVR Response: OVR will continue to collaborate with the PaRC to implement recommendations from Defining Positive Customer Service in the State Vocational Rehabilitation System. We have mutually decided to develop a subcommittee, made up of PaRC and OVR participants who will further evaluate necessary changes as a result of this report. We are confident the recommendations contained in the report will assist us in providing more effective and efficient customer service. OVR commends the PaRC for initiating this project which resulted in true collaboration and will positively impact service provision in the future.

3. CACs (Citizen Advisory Committees)

Issue: The CACs are the connection between OVR and Consumer Customers. Each district has their own process for the meetings and for notification about the meetings.

Recommendations:

- a. OVR to take a more active role in the guidance and development of the CACs.

OVR Response: Development and guidance of CACs can be added to the agenda at an Executive Director’s meeting for discussion. However, the intent of the CAC is to be locally-run, consumer-driven and responsive to CAC member recommendations. OVR will promote CAC meetings as opportunities present themselves.

- b. OVR to issue a memo to District Administrators on expectations on utilizing and promoting CACs and citizen involvement (for example including a calendar of PaRC meeting schedule and request to not schedule local meetings at the same time).

OVR Response: OVR Bureau Directors will work with the new Executive Director to develop expectations for how CACs can best be utilized.

- c. OVR to gather best practices from the CACs that are effective and well attended by consumer customers and share with all CACs

OVR Response: Sharing of District Office CAC best practices can be added as an agenda item at an Executive Director’s Meeting, at Regional DA/ADA Meetings and during DA/ADA Conference Calls for discussion.

- d. Continue to advise CACs on use of PaRC’s website for agendas and minutes

OVR Response:

OVR liaison to PaRC sends monthly reminders to district offices and forwards updated information to PaRC for posting on their website.

4. Information Sharing

Issue: It is important to get information to consumer customer quickly and in a manner they can access.

This will allow greater involvement and lead to a positive customer experience.

Recommendations:

- a. Use current technology to get word out.

OVR Response: OVR has already connected with 340 followers on LinkedIn and 580 on Facebook as part of our agency's social media initiative, which was launched in October 2013. OVR has been delivering content on a more frequent basis since the platforms became available. Information is gathered from local district offices, statewide events and national sources. Social media posts have highlighted OVR-sponsored activities and events, agency accomplishments, customer success stories and other information pertinent to our consumer and business customers. OVR will increase and refine our social media presence moving forward, with a continued emphasis on delivering quality content and relevant information to all of our customers in a timely manner. OVR will continue to evolve with the changing social media landscape and adapt our strategies as necessary in order to ensure that the material we provide is accessible and impactful.

- b. Make sure all communication is accessible.

OVR Response: In collaboration with the L&I Press Office, the Business Services and Outreach Division Chief and Communications Administrative Officer (position to be filled) will review accessible formats for all OVR web information to ensure that current brochures and publications can be provided in large print, Braille or read by using alternative speech recognition technology. Additionally, communication materials can be tested for accessibility, and recommendations can be made by OVR's Assistive Technology Specialist.

- c. Make sure captioning is available in all public meetings OVR holds.

OVR Response: All district offices ensure that captioning and/or signing is available at state plan public meetings.

- d. Review lead times for dissemination of information to make sure it is far enough ahead.

OVR Response: OVR will strive to provide information at least two weeks prior to meetings.

5. Partnership with PaRC

Issue: PaRC and OVR have mutually benefited from a collaborative relationship as the advisory body in reviewing policies and priorities.

Recommendations:

- a. Continue involvement in OVR leadership with Council.

OVR Response: OVR will continue to partner with the Council as opportunities present themselves for mutual benefit and input. Specifically, we will be collaborating with PaRC on the results of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) and future planning based upon those findings. OVR will also have a presence on PaRC committees as needed. In addition, we will be requesting additional input on the ongoing development of the

OVR/PaRC combined customer satisfaction survey process.

- b. Continue seeking involvement in policy review and implementation.

OVR Response: OVR involves Council members in policy workgroups. We provide subsequent drafts of new and revised policies to the PaRC Policy Committee. The workgroup leader also presents the draft to the PaRC at their full Council meetings to explain the policy and answer any questions.

6. OVR Staff and Counselors as Role Models

Issue: People with disabilities need to see Counselors and Management and staff of OVR that have disabilities. This is a benefit to both Consumer and Business Customer to see the possibilities of people with disabilities.

Recommendations:

- a. Continue and increase outreach to people with disabilities and cultural minorities in Counselor and leadership roles within OVR.

OVR Response: Through collaborative initiatives with higher education institutions, OVR will continue to expand recruitment and outreach to students with disabilities for entry-level VR Counselor positions. Collaboration with universities on federal RSA grant applications that seek to provide scholarship opportunities for students with disabilities will further this initiative. This includes supporting the efforts of university programs to apply for and implement Long Term Training Grant programs to train VR Counselors to work for the public VR program in Pennsylvania. In addition, OVR will continue the following activities as part of its overall VR Counselor recruitment initiative:

- Expand and maintain OVR's partnership with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU's) that offer a Master's Degree Rehabilitation Counseling Program. This includes campus visitations, presentations, use of telecommunication technology and meetings with students for targeted recruitment.
- Maintain active membership with the National Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns (NAMRC) and the National Council on Rehabilitation Education (NCRE).
- Visit colleges, universities, and appropriate job fairs in conjunction with the Office of Equal Opportunity in L&I in order to recruit potential job applicants who are from diverse cultural backgrounds and applicants with disabilities.

- b. Review data (such as what is found in Attachment 4.10) to see if numbers are increasing.

OVR Response: Voluntarily disclosed data related to OVR counselors, management and staff that have disabilities shall be compiled, reviewed, and reported on in 6-month intervals. Results will reveal whether or not the number of OVR counselors, management and staff with disabilities has increased or decreased versus the previous 6-month period.

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;*
- (2) the designated State unit will approve each proposed service before it is put into effect; and*
- (3) requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan will apply to the services approved under the waiver.*

1. OVR entered into an Interagency Agreement with Berks Career and Technology Center (BCTC) effective 10/1/14 to provide school-to-work transition services to OVR eligible youth with disabilities who are enrolled in approved training programs at the BCTC and attend one of 16 public school districts within Berks County.

The interagency agreement, named “Work Partners,” provides for joint funding (including salary & benefits) of two positions which did not previously exist at BCTC:

- School-to-Work Coordinator (Professional)
- Job Trainer (Paraprofessional)

Services to be provided through this interagency agreement are career and technical education instruction, work-based experiences, job development, placement and follow-up and job coaching.

The goals of the Work Partners Interagency Agreement are:

- To serve 50-65 OVR eligible youth with disabilities during FFY 2015, 2016 and 2017
- To achieve greater than 50 percent successful competitive, community-integrated job placements among those served
- To increase the number of students served in the Service Occupations Cluster

The Interagency Agreement was approved by the Berks CTC Board of Directors on May 28, 2014 and signed by the school’s authorized representative. Berks CTC provides 21.3 percent of project funding which serves as local/state match. OVR provides the remaining 78.7 percent from federal VR funds.

OVR is optimistic that this program has the potential for statewide replication. Pennsylvania has 67 counties, 15 OVR District Offices, and 85 Career & Technology Centers.

A second interagency agreement was developed with Greene County Human Services (GCHS), Intermediate Unit #1 (IU1) and OVR to provide school-to-work transition services for OVR eligible youth with intellectual disabilities enrolled in local education agencies within Greene County.

OVR, GCHS, and IU #1 will jointly provide funding in the amount of \$60,000 per year for a two (2) year period to be used exclusively for the operation, and administration of the “School-to-Work” services for OVR eligible youth with intellectual disabilities who are enrolled in local education agencies throughout Greene County.

Services to be provided through this interagency agreement are work-based educational experiences, on-the-job support through a job coach, independent living skills development and community involvement all oriented toward competitive, community-integrated employment.

The goals of the Greene County program are:

- During fiscal years 2014-2016 this pilot project will serve approximately 20 unduplicated OVR eligible and IDD waiver program eligible youth through this interagency agreement.
- As a result of the services provided through this agreement, it is expected that OVR will successfully place and vocationally rehabilitate approximately 54 percent of those individuals served.

For the Greene County Agreement, OVR will provide 78.7 percent of the funding (Federal- VR funding) and GCHS and IU #1 will each provide 10.65 percent of the funding, transferring to OVR 21.3 percent of the total (Local/ State match) funding.

Statewide replication of this program will provide OVR with opportunities to braid funding to serve OVR eligible youth with disabilities and to collaborate with the Departments of Education & Human Services more effectively.

2. Each Interagency Agreement may be amended only by written consent of all parties. Such amendments become part of the Interagency Agreements upon the signature of the respective designees. Signatories on the Work Partners project are Berks CTC and OVR. Signatories on the Greene County project are Greene County Human Services (GCHS), IU1 and OVR.

The parties to these agreements shall provide the services as specified and described in Appendix A of each of the Agreements. Such services shall be provided consistent with the budget as described in Appendix B of said Agreements.

3. All other State Plan requirements of the VR services portion of the State Plan will apply to the services approved under the waiver.

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:

Federal, State, and local agencies and programs;

- Memoranda of Understanding currently exist between OVR, PDE and the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP). In light of the WIOA amendments, discussion has been initiated to update the MOUs.
- Discussions are underway to partner with the Juvenile Justice System and Area Office of Aging.
- Institute of Higher Education (IHE) Agreements, typically valid for five years, are currently being renewed.
- Partnership with PA Centers for Independent Living (CILs) in the form of grants, contracts, and LOUs are on-going.

- Interagency Agreements are being developed with local Career and Technology Centers; Berks County is already established.
- A Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) between OVR and DOC issued June 2013 streamlines the request for and receipt of information and waives fees to OVR for copies of documents identified in the MOU. OVR and DOC collaborate on training initiatives to assist individuals with disabilities in the correctional system.

State programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998;

- OVR oversees agreements with Temple University's Assistive Technology Lending Library (ATLL), the Telecommunications Device Distribution Program (TDDP), and Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation (PATF).
- OVR has multiple Assistive Technology (AT) providers on the fee schedule for customer services; some providers have LOUs.
- OVR establishes an annual contract via Invitation for Bid (IFB) with an AT provider for staff services.

Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the Department of Agriculture;

- Currently, OVR does not have any agreements with the US Department of Agriculture.
- OVR and Penn State University are currently in discussion about an amended LOU agreement for the AgrAbility program.

Noneducational agencies serving out-of-school youth; and

- OVR has numerous LOUs with a variety of service providers serving all populations, including out-of-school youth.
- OVR has developed an On-the-Job Training (OJT) initiative specifically targeting youth.
- OVR has a goal to partner with community service providers to develop more programs to target transition aged youth.

State use contracting programs.

- As noted above, OVR has a MOU with ODP and is in the discussion stage of updating it.
- The possibility of an Interagency Agreement with the Department of Human Services (DHS) is being investigated.
- OVR oversees funding supplied by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) to Temple University for the TDDP program.
- OVR oversees funding supplied by the PUC to the National Federation for the Blind for the Newsline Print Media Access Program.
- OVR has supported Temple University's efforts to begin a Wireless Expansion Initiative financially supported by the PUC.

Coordination with Education Officials

Describe:

- (a) 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.*
- (b) 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;*
 - b. transition planning by personnel of the designated State agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and implementation of their individualized education programs;*
 - c. roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services;*
 - d. procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.*

OVR continues to collaborate with its agency partners on the Pennsylvania Statewide Leadership Team (PA SLT) which evolved as the result of the IDEA Memorandum of Understanding implemented in 1999 and addended in 2006 and 2010. The PA SLT has recommended that the IDEA Memorandum of Understanding be revised to incorporate changes in Transition Services regulated by WIOA and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. OVR representatives meet regularly with representatives from the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Bureau of Special Education and Bureau of Career & Technology Education to review policies, procedures, initiatives, and projects to ensure that eligible students with disabilities who are still enrolled in secondary education and youth with disabilities who are no longer engaged in secondary education are receiving the vocational rehabilitation services that they need to successfully transition from school to work and independence.

As OVR awaits regulatory guidance from RSA, several initiatives are being developed to implement "pre-employment transition services" to increase interagency collaboration, to create and implement new interagency agreements and to update Memoranda of Understanding pertaining to transition from school to work and adult services. Technical assistance, agency cross-training and resource sharing will be required to assist LEAs to end utilization of sub-minimum wage employment as a model for transition planning. Discovery and customized employment as well as other innovative approaches will be utilized to assist the students with the most significant disabilities to exit secondary school with the goal of achieving competitive, integrated employment.

OVR's Transition Policy, which was updated as recently as 2013, will be updated again to reflect changes once final regulations of the Rehabilitation Act as amended by WIOA become available. Ongoing training and technical assistance will be provided to ensure that OVR is effectively providing Pre-Employment Transition Services to students with disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services. Ongoing training is especially important due to the number of new OVR employees.

The policy provides for the following:

- Outreach to youth and young adults with disabilities and their families/advocates to provide information on OVR services and vocational planning beginning at age fourteen (14) or the age of onset of disability, if later.
- Accept referrals of students with disabilities at least two (2) years prior to graduation, or earlier on a case by case basis when appropriate.
- Provide consultation to students with disabilities, youth with disabilities, parents/families/advocates, LEAs, and other transition partners on vocational issues, the Rehabilitation Act as amended and other legislation that affects youth and young adults with disabilities, other partners, and other resources.
- Refer cases from OVR's Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services (BBVS) Specialized Services to BBVS Vocational Rehabilitation when the students with disabilities reach transition age and eligibility is determined.
- Develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for eligible customers before students with disabilities graduate or exit high school.

Each OVR district office will have a point of contact to collaborate with LEAs in its district. This will enable each LEA to speak with one contact person at each District Office. This point of contact will be responsible for contacting the appropriate OVR staff person and following up to assure that all questions and issues are resolved. Duties include:

- Collaboration with local education agencies (LEAs) and other community agencies that serve students and youth with disabilities.
- Provision of cross training for VR staff and LEA staff to provide a better understanding of transition policies and procedures.
- Professional cooperation so that instruction as outlined on a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is consistent with the vocational goal on the IPE of a student with a disability.
- Seamless coordination of programs and supports as students with disabilities and youth with disabilities transition from entitlement to eligibility systems.
- Facilitation of self-advocacy and self-determination for transitioning students with disabilities and youth with disabilities.

Students with disabilities and youth with disabilities may be eligible, but may not be otherwise entitled under State and Federal law, to other services, including but not limited to mental health and intellectual disabilities services, vocational rehabilitation services, employment and training services, drug and alcohol services and other health related services.

LEAs are responsible for the provision of necessary goods and services for students with disabilities to access "a free and appropriate public education" to include the provision of transition services that promote movement from school to post-school activities as outlined in the IEP. Students with disabilities who may not be entitled to special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), as amended, are entitled to related aids and services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended. LEAs are also responsible, under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), to ensure that their facilities, resources and technology are accessible to the public.

OVR is responsible for the development of an IPE that promotes or facilitates the accomplishment of short-term, intermediate and long-term vocational rehabilitation goals and objectives. OVR will provide Pre-Employment Transition Services as regulated by the Rehabilitation Act as amended for eligible or potentially eligible students with disabilities with 15 percent of its federal allocation of General Funds to the maximum extent possible. All other services will be provided when necessary to determine eligibility for OVR services and if the services are in the individual's IPE.

OVR may agree to cover costs if a local interagency agreement exists in which it is indicated that OVR shall do so, or if it is in the best interest of the student. In the latter instance, OVR staff will consider pursuing reimbursement from the LEA utilizing the interagency dispute resolution mechanism outlined in the state MOU.

OVR representatives will:

- Meet with school personnel to discuss OVR transition services whenever possible.
- Provide information regarding OVR programs and services available to students with disabilities and youth with disabilities.
- Assist the transitioning students with disabilities and youth with disabilities as well as their family/advocate with an application for OVR services.
- Serve as a consultant regarding employment supports and services.
- Supply information to students with disabilities and youth with disabilities regarding other relevant agencies and organizations.
- Attend school functions (i.e. college fairs, career days, disability fairs, open houses, etc.).
- Collaborate with the educational staff in providing career counseling and vocational exploration activities.
- Ensure that students and youth with blindness or a visual impairment are informed of BBVS Specialized Services for Children.

In order to identify youth and young adults with disabilities who may not be served in public schools under an IEP or 504 Plan, OVR will continue its collaborative relationships through its Memorandum of Understanding and local interagency agreements. This includes students and youth with disabilities covered under [Chapter 15 of the Pennsylvania Standards and Regulations](#). Outreach will be conducted to identify youth and young adults with disabilities who are underserved through other community partners, such as, but not limited to:

- Intermediate Units
- Career and Technology Centers
- Private schools
- Home schools
- Student assistance programs
- Summer employment programs
- Local Workforce Development Boards
- Home school organizations
- Juvenile justice system
- Foster youth organizations
- Homeless shelters/programs
- Medical facilities

OVR is the designated agency responsible to promote the employment of individuals with disabilities by providing vocational rehabilitation, job training, and placement services pursuant to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, (29 U.S.C. §§ 701- et seq.), the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1988, (43 P.S. § 682.1 et seq.) and Article XXII of the Administrative Code of 1929, as amended, (71 P.S. §580.1 et. seq.).

Section 101(a)(8)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act requires OVR to have in place a mechanism for interagency coordination with public institutions for higher education to ensure the provision of vocational rehabilitation services that:

- identify financial responsibility;
- specify terms and conditions of reimbursement;
- provide a system for resolution of disputes; and
- set forth procedures for coordination of services to individuals with disabilities who are both customers of OVR and students of the institution of higher education.

Agreements have been achieved with the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) and all 14 community colleges. Negotiations continue with the four state-related institutions to include Penn State University, Lincoln University, Temple University and the University of Pittsburgh.

Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations

Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.

The PA Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) maintains negotiated Letters of Understanding (LOUs) with more than 200 community service providers covering more than 1,000 different rehabilitation, independent living and related services. Many of those organizations are private and/or not-for-profit community rehabilitation providers.

LOUs define service programs and the corresponding conditions of purchase, including fees and effective/expiration dates, which exist between a rehabilitation service provider and OVR.

A LOU entered between OVR and a community service provider creates a locally developed, locally negotiated, and locally sensitive response to the rehabilitation service needs of persons with significant disabilities in the diverse areas of the commonwealth.

A LOU is neither a contract nor an agreement. It does not commit either provider or OVR to the sale or purchase of the defined services.

The continuing use of a LOU for OVR customers is reliant upon customer choice, satisfaction with the service, affordability, and the existence of available alternative services.

Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services

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.

OVR will coordinate with other State agencies such as the Office of Developmental Programs, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, Office of Long Term Living, and other entities to provide supported employment services and extended employment services. OVR will continue to communicate and collaborate with these agencies to provide quality supported employment services and provide referrals and information regarding mutual customers. OVR will provide up-to-date information and training to State agencies and other entities to ensure the provision of supported employment services and extended services.

Coordination with Employers

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:

VR services; and

PA OVR is routinely engaged with employer/business customers to better understand their workforce needs and how public VR can build our supply side of talent, i.e. the job seekers' industry skills to meet the demands required to help our business customers to be successful in competing in today's global marketplace. To accomplish this, OVR has Central Office staff who are available to meet with an employer to listen and explore their organization's unique culture to learn about the services or products they produce, to learn about talent needs, and how the leadership of a company or organization envisions their future workforce succession planning. Where possible, OVR will coordinate business outreach with other workforce and economic development partners, including Industry Partnerships and other multi-employer workforce partnerships.

1. In response to an organization's demand side needs, OVR can suggest a talent recruitment process to bring qualified pre-screened individuals with a disability into their organization.
2. OVR will work with each business to target career ladders and pathways in competitive integrated employment that is a match to each VR consumer customer's unique aspirations, capacities and career goals and the succession plans of an organization.
3. OVR will keep the process simple by using a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) approach modeled after the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) model to provide a national network of Points of Contact when large employers have needs across several states and regions.

OVR will provide:

1. National outreach to employers/businesses through the CSAVR National Employment Team, the VR-NET, and by participation in the Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP).
2. Statewide outreach through the Business Services and Outreach Division (BSOD) Chief, with Western, Central and Eastern BSOD Specialists by in-person meetings, regional and statewide Chamber of Commerce membership, networking, and Society of Human Resource Manager (SHRM) statewide and local organization involvement.
3. Local outreach through local combined agency District Offices and Hiram G. Andrews Center-HGAC Business Services team outreach in follow-up to VR-NET national inquiries by business, or

BSOD Chief, Western, Central or Eastern Specialist employer/business contacts. Local combined agency teams will then actively coordinate recruitment, on-boarding supports for qualified pre-screened VR hires and successful job performance and follow-up to ensure the continuing success of new talent and the overall satisfaction of the businesses and organizations who recruit OVR talent.

4. No-cost consultation to employers on disability etiquette, accessibility, accommodation needs and assistance to help retain an employer's workforce members following an injury or the onset of a disability.

Transition services, including pre-employment transition services, for students and youth with disabilities.

OVR will collaborate with employers, Industry Partnerships and other multi-employer workforce partnerships to provide students and youth with disabilities opportunities for career exploration that would lead to competitive, integrated employment. Students and youth with disabilities will be given opportunities to complete work-based learning experiences to develop soft skills and work-related skills. Students and youth with disabilities may be afforded opportunities to complete mock interviews with employers, job shadowing experiences, career days, disability mentoring days with employers, and other pre-employment transition services to prepare students for competitive integrated employment.

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:

The State Medicaid plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act;

As a key member of the PA Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Project currently sponsored by a grant administered by the Office of Disability Employment Policy, OVR will partner with agencies within the Department of Human Services to ensure that the employment needs of individuals with disabilities are met, that cost services are comprehensive, effective, innovative and not duplicative, and that every individual with a disability who wants to work to achieve self-support will be given the opportunity to do so. The Departments of Labor & Industry, Education, Human Services, Transportation and Health, under the leadership of OVR, will execute and commit to coordinating the interagency agreement and collaboration required to secure and maintain community integrated employment for youth and adults with disabilities. Elements of the inter-departmental and interagency agreement shall fully address:

1. interdepartmental eligibility and enrollment processes;
2. data collection, sharing and reporting;
3. service coordination, resource leveraging and braiding of funding; and
4. quality assurance and improvement resulting in the collective accountability and performance measurement needed to substantially increase the numbers of Pennsylvanians in competitive integrated employment.

The State agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities; and

The agreements below outline the responsibilities of each agency in the area of service delivery and funding. OVR and ODP are currently working on a coordination policy to enhance the employment outcomes for individuals with intellectual disabilities. The intended result is for a more seamless entry into employment for individuals with intellectual disabilities and for the coordination of extended services to allow individuals to maintain long-term employment. This is important because many of the supported employment services assist individuals with intellectual disabilities to gain, stabilize and maintain successful employment.

The State agency responsible for providing mental health services.

OVR uses many avenues to ensure collaboration and partnership in the delivery of supported employment and extended services. These include a formal written MOU at the state level between OVR, the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) and the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP). At the local level, agreements between the 21 OVR District Offices and 43 ODP/OMHSAS Administrative Entities exist to ensure that shared customers of both funding sources are receiving needed services at the appropriate time.

Comprehensive System of Personnel Development; Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

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:

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;*
 - (ii) the number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and*
 - (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.*

As of December 31, 2014 OVR had 1,029 filled salaried positions and 146 vacancies. This figure includes 198 filled salaried positions at the Hiram G. Andrews Center (HGAC). Statewide, OVR had a total of 405 filled Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor positions, 23 Vision Rehabilitation Therapist positions, and 11 Orientation and Mobility Specialists positions. The current complement of VR Counselors requires that OVR maintain an Order of Selection in order to adequately serve and meet the needs of eligible VR customers at this time.

Job Title	Filled Positions	Vacancies	Projected Vacancies Next 5 years
VR Counselor	400	25	92
VR Counselor Deaf and Hard of Hearing	19	2	4
VR Counselor Placement	1	0	1
Vision Rehabilitation Therapist	23	1	3
Orientation and Mobility Specialists	11	7	6

OVR projects that in the next five years approximately 97 VR Counselors will become eligible to retire. This will be an average of 19 VR Counselors retiring per year. However, additional numbers of new VR Counselors will be needed due to promotions of VR Counselors to higher positions within OVR. OVR projects that an average of 20-25 new VR Counselors will be hired per year in the next 5-10 years. To assist with recruitment of VR Counselors, OVR plans to continue its expanded utilization of the "VR Counselor Internship" Program to attract qualified VR Counselors during their last semester of graduate school. There is expected to be an adequate number of VR Counselor candidates to fill vacancies over the next 5-10 years. However, certain locations within the state may require targeted recruitment efforts at any given time.

During FFY 2014, 21,264 individuals applied for VR services, 16,241 individuals were found eligible for VR services and approximately 55,000 individuals received VR services from OVR. As a result, 8,546 individuals were placed in employment in FFY 2014. In the same time period, 3,671 individuals received Independent Living Older Blind Services and 1,379 individuals were referred to the Hiram G. Andrews Center.

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;*
- (ii) the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and*
- (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.*

CORE-accredited university programs in Pennsylvania include: Pennsylvania State University, the University of Pittsburgh, the University of Scranton and Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. These programs graduate approximately 47 students per year with a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling.

Institutions	Students Enrolled	Employees sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates from the previous year
Penn State University	20	0	0 OVR & 6 RSA	21
University of Pittsburgh	39	0	0 OVR & 0 RSA	8
Edinboro University of PA	13	0	0 OVR & 0 RSA	7
University of Scranton	29	0	0 OVR & 0 RSA	11

By providing the number of individuals who have obtained a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling, we are suggesting that this is also the number of personnel who are eligible for certification (CRCC) or licensure.

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.

OVR Counselor Recruitment

In addition to the 47 available students graduating from in-state graduate degree programs, Pennsylvania OVR can recruit students from CORE-approved and other universities that offer a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling nationwide. Pennsylvania residency requirements are waived under the State Civil Service Commission for the VR Counselor Internship position and other VR Counselor classifications in OVR. This waiver provides OVR with an opportunity to recruit students nationwide and offer paid VR Counselor Intern positions to interested master's degree students who are in their final semester of graduate school. This paid internship allows OVR to attract and recruit candidates for VR Counselor positions who have a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation while they are still in school and before they are recruited by other agencies. The residency waiver and the paid Internship position also assist in OVR's efforts to recruit and hire individuals with disabilities and those from diverse and minority backgrounds.

OVR's Counselor Internship program continues to serve as an example amongst state VR agencies that seek to attract rehabilitation counseling students for employment. While surrounding states offer internship opportunities to students with competitive compensation, none within the northeastern region offer permanent positions to interns upon satisfactory completion of the probationary period and/or successful completion of the rehabilitation counseling graduate degree.

Through collaborative initiatives with higher education institutions, OVR will continue to expand recruitment and outreach to students with disabilities for entry-level VR Counselor positions. Collaboration with universities on federal RSA grant applications that seek to provide scholarship opportunities for students with disabilities will further this initiative. This includes supporting the

efforts of university programs to apply for and implement Long Term Training Grant programs to train VR Counselors to work for the public VR program in Pennsylvania. In addition, OVR will continue the following activities as part of its overall VR Counselor recruitment initiative:

- Expand and maintain OVR's partnership with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU's) that offer a Master's Degree Rehabilitation Counseling Program. This includes campus visits, onsite presentations, use of telecommunication technology, and one-on-one meetings with students for targeted recruitment. OVR has established relationships with the following HBCUs nationwide: Alabama State University, University of the District of Columbia, Fort Valley State University, Southern University and A&M College, Coppin State University, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, North Carolina A&T State University, Winston-Salem State University and South Carolina State University. OVR will also continue to build relationships with program coordinators at graduate training programs in Puerto Rico who offer rehabilitation counseling disciplines including Bayamon Central University, Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico and University of Puerto Rico.
- Maintain appointed membership on Coppin State University (CSU) and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) Rehabilitation Counseling Program Advisory Committees. Both are HBCU's in the Mid-Atlantic region that prepare increased numbers of minority individuals for careers in the public VR program.
- Maintain active membership with the National Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns (NAMRC) and the National Council on Rehabilitation Education (NCRE).
- Visit colleges, universities, and appropriate job fairs in conjunction with the Office of Equal Opportunity in L&I in order to recruit potential job applicants who are from diverse cultural backgrounds and applicants with disabilities.

Orientation and Mobility Specialists and Vision Rehabilitation Therapists

Accredited university programs in Pennsylvania that train Orientation and Mobility Specialists and/or Vision Rehabilitation Therapists include: Salus University, the University of Pittsburgh's Vision Studies Program, and Kutztown University. These programs graduate a combined total of approximately 45 students per year. Graduates of these approved university programs are eligible for certification in Vision Rehabilitation Therapy or in Orientation and Mobility from the Academy for the Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP). In addition, OVR is able to recruit and hire Vision Rehabilitation Therapists and Orientation and Mobility Specialists who are being trained at universities nationwide and who reside outside of Pennsylvania.

Civil service test announcements for the Orientation and Mobility Specialist (O&M) Intern and Vision Rehabilitation Therapist (VRT) Intern positions were made available as of July 22, 2015. The Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services now offers paid internships for O&M and VRT students during their last semester of study. The O&M and VRT hourly wage is equivalent to the VRC Intern at Group 5 Step 1. This initiative will likely increase the candidate pool of available O&M and VRT professionals who are available for employment with PA OVR BBVS upon successful completion of their academic training.

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 to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

- (i) 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*
- (ii) the establishment and maintenance of education and experience requirements, to ensure that the personnel have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities.*

Section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act as amended, or the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD), requires that State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies establish personnel standards for rehabilitation staff, including Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselors, that are consistent with any national or state-approved or recognized certification, licensing or registration that applies to a particular profession. The purpose of an agency's CSPD is to ensure the quality of personnel who provide VR services and who assist individuals with disabilities to achieve competitive employment outcomes through the VR program.

New Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors

In 2002, OVR raised the entry-level requirements for VR Counselor positions to reflect the requirements established by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) for Certified Rehabilitation Counselors (CRC). Specifically, all newly hired VR Counselors are required to possess a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, Rehabilitation Administration or Rehabilitation Education; or CRC credentials or documented proof from CRCC of eligibility to obtain CRC credentials. The revised Civil Service Announcement for VR Counselor positions became effective on October 4, 2002. As of January 2015, a total of 672 VR Counselors and VR Counselor Interns were hired under the new entry-level requirements. All 672 new VR Counselors and Interns met CSPD standards for qualified rehabilitation professionals upon being hired.

The change in entry-level standards for VR Counselors, requiring a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation or CRC credentials or CRC eligibility, includes the following components that seek to ensure an adequate supply of VR Counselors to meet OVR's staffing needs for the next 5-10 years:

- Waiver of Residency - OVR has received, from the Pennsylvania Civil Service Commission, a waiver of Pennsylvania residency as a condition of application for the positions of Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and VR Counselor Intern.
- Review of Experience and Training - OVR received approval from the Pennsylvania Civil Service Commission to implement an Experience and Training Examination as the means to assess a candidate's qualifications for the position of VR Counselor. This "review of experience and training" replaces the former written Civil Service Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Exam. The new VR Counselor Civil Service Position Announcement and the Experience and Training Review will remain open "until further notice" in order to assist with recruitment efforts and to ensure an adequate supply of qualified candidates.

- Designated Recruitment Specialist - OVR has designated a Rehabilitation Specialist position for the purpose of actively recruiting qualified VR Counselors within Pennsylvania and nationwide. This Specialist is assigned to work in the OVR Central Office and coordinates all OVR Counselor recruitment activities. The Recruitment Specialist, with the assistance of CORE-approved university faculty, field office staff, active OVR Advisory Councils, the Pennsylvania Social Services Union, and other key stakeholders, has developed and is implementing a proactive OVR Recruitment Plan. The goal of this plan is to attract and recruit adequate numbers of qualified VR Counselors, including those with disabilities and those from diverse cultural backgrounds and underrepresented groups, to fill future anticipated Counselor vacancies. The Recruitment Plan includes recruitment efforts to ensure an adequate supply of VR Counselors trained to provide services to specialty caseloads such as Counselors for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Counselors for the Blind and Visually Impaired.
- Paid Internship Program - OVR continues to utilize and expand the OVR paid Internship Program. This includes a waiver of Pennsylvania residency, so that the Internship Program can include out-of-state residents as candidates for employment. This provides OVR with an edge in recruiting qualified VR Counselors while they are still in the final year of their Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling Program. The Paid Internship Program offers a Master's Degree candidate, enrolled in an approved CORE accredited master's degree program in Rehabilitation Counseling, a permanent position as a VR Counselor upon graduation and the successful completion of the paid internship with OVR.

Effective January 7, 2006, OVR received approval to hire VR Counselor Interns as a salaried position instead of as an hourly position. This means that VR Counselor Interns will accrue sick days and vacation days and will receive health insurance, group life insurance and other employee benefits upon their date of hire. This change adds an additional employment incentive for Intern candidates to choose to work for Pennsylvania OVR. This continues to make Pennsylvania OVR an attractive and competitive employer of VR Counselors nationwide.

Effective November 1, 2006, OVR received approval to increase the pay scale for VR Counselor Interns statewide, and to hire staff above the minimum for VR Counselor Interns who choose to work in Norristown and Philadelphia District Offices. The annual salary statewide for the classification of VR Counselor Intern was increased from Pay Scale 4 to Pay Scale 5. Norristown and Philadelphia District Offices are authorized to hire VR Counselor Interns at Pay Scale 5, Step 9. This targeted increase for new staff in southeastern district offices provides an additional recruitment and hiring incentive for this challenging recruitment area and should help to relieve the higher numbers of vacancies in these offices.

Additional salary incentives have been implemented to assist with recruitment efforts to include:

- Norristown and Philadelphia District Offices are authorized to hire VR Counselors at Pay Scale 7, Step 5, which is consistent with the increase in these areas for VR Counselor Interns.
- VR Counselors for Deaf and Hard of Hearing in all offices across the commonwealth are authorized to be hired at a higher pay scale level (Pay Scale 7, Step 5).
- Vocational Rehabilitation Supervisors who are employed in the Philadelphia and Norristown District Offices receive a four pay step increase.

Staff Development. Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section 101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

- (i) 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*
- (ii) procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.*

OVR is committed to offering a plan for a comprehensive system of staff development and training. The goal is to ensure staff development for OVR personnel in areas essential to the effective management of OVR's program of VR services. OVR will no longer have the support of the RSA In-Service training grants, inclusive of the Basic and Quality Award Grants, as these programs were eliminated with the end of the five year grant in September 2015. Nevertheless, OVR will continue to provide for the training and development of personnel necessary to improve their ability to provide VR services leading to employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities, especially those with the most significant disabilities.

We are committed to a focus on certain priorities identified as "Customer Service" and "Multicultural Competency" in addition to the priorities included with the implementation of WIOA to include business services, transition services and supported employment. In addition, particular attention will be devoted to offering training on assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology.

As in past years, as part of developing a training plan, OVR will complete an annual internal survey to determine the training needs of professional and paraprofessional staff.

In order to ensure that OVR's personnel receive significant knowledge from research and other state-of-the-art methodologies, OVR seeks out and provides presentations by university faculty experts in the field of rehabilitation, and statewide and nationally known speakers at in-service training programs. In addition, OVR coordinates efforts with various professional associations such as the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Association, Pennsylvania Association of Rehabilitation Facilities, National Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns, Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Association and the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired to train and retain qualified personnel.

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.

Entry-level requirements for Rehabilitation Counselors for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing require that candidates pass the Sign Communication Proficiency Interview (SCPI) before being offered a formal

interview for employment. OVR district offices, in geographic areas where there are large numbers of individuals who speak Spanish, recruit and hire a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor who can speak both Spanish and English. In instances where there are no Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors who can communicate with a customer in his or her native language, an interpreter is hired to assist with communication.

Special Populations

OVR plans to continue efforts to work with the blind and deaf communities in order to recruit and hire qualified individuals who are deaf, blind, deaf-blind and hard of hearing. This includes recommendations and assistance provided by the OVR Advisory Committee for Persons who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the OVR Advisory Committee for the Blind of Pennsylvania. In addition, OVR has a Rehabilitation Specialist assigned to coordinate the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf-Blind Program in OVR. This specialist assists with recruitment and outreach to these special populations in order to attract qualified OVR candidates for employment.

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.

Training on OVR's Transition policy will be provided for the benefit of new counselors and Early Reach Coordinators (ERCs). The emphasis will be on their roles and responsibilities as Transition counselors and ERCs and their interactions with OVR's partners and stakeholders across the state.

The Transition Resource Manual has been placed on an internal computer drive and is available for viewing and reference by all OVR staff. Updates and additions will be made as necessary.

New transition brochures have been forwarded to be posted on the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) website, secondarytransition.org. Information on OVR initiatives will be forwarded as they become available. Future updates to new and existing brochures and informational handouts will be developed and posted on the internal drive and secondarytransition.org as necessary.

Mandated Reporter Training is available online through the Department of Human Services (DHS) and Rehabilitation & Community Providers Association. The training is required for any OVR personnel working with youth.

OVR counselors will continue to be encouraged to participate in local Transition Council meetings so that they may be of service to the families, students and professionals.

OVR will promote training opportunities provided by PDE and other Transition partners as a means of broadening the scope of topics available to OVR staff.

Statewide Assessment

Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, particularly the VR services needs of those:

This year OVR focused on the provider side of the equation to ensure the best service possible to meet the needs of our customers. OVR has worked on its public image and information sharing, relationships with other state agencies and community organizations, and creating more standard operating procedures so that each customer receives the same stellar service from OVR staff. Below are the categories outlined by RSA and an update on how we worked to set and meet goals in that category.

With the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;

Supported employment (SE) services are a mainstay for many OVR customers to gain competitive, community-integrated employment. These services offer supports that allow individuals with the most severe disabilities not only to gain employment, but also to become stable and hold their jobs and positions in the long-term. SE provides a support structure that allows customers to use their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice in gaining employment in the community. It also provides a method of assisting customers to acquire new skills and talents in the search for employment and on the work site while employed. SE services are typically provided by community service providers acting in conjunction with the OVR counselor and customer to learn the aspects of the job setting, employer expectations, workplace etiquette and other skills needed to build a solid work performance. SE services benefit the employer as well by providing assistance in instruction and on-site problem-solving for the customer with a disability and helping the customer to learn work skills as quick and efficiently as possible.

Who are minorities;

A public awareness strategy was developed by the Public Awareness/Outreach in-house workgroup. Thus far, a media review of all OVR print and web media has been conducted. Out-of-date information and policies have been removed or updated and translated into other languages. OVR continues to have weekly meetings with the L&I Press Office to discuss the future media focus for OVR. OVR established the MOD Squad, a group composed of OVR counselors and Central Office staff to examine the many facets of social media and how OVR could best utilize it. In the fall of 2013, OVR launched its Facebook and LinkedIn pages providing more access, availability and awareness of OVR.

An increasing number of minorities who are applying for and becoming eligible for VR services within Pennsylvania have a criminal history. While having a criminal history/record is not a condition of eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services, the number of minorities who do have disabilities and involvement with the criminal justice system is rapidly increasing. It is important to involve as many partners as possible when working with these individuals because having a criminal record is a barrier to many employment opportunities. Additionally, there is an added level of issues that need to be addressed when a person has major criminal convictions and/or conditions of supervision, i.e. probation or parole. Helping OVR customers understand what responsibilities they have to meet such conditions or how their criminal charges and/or convictions affect their employment opportunities is critical to the success of customers in their pursuit of employment. The ultimate outcome is to assist customers to gain competitive community integrated work by teaming collaboratively with the individual and community partners to remove all barriers.

Who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program;

Transition services within OVR have been identified as a core function of our public vocational rehabilitation program. An internal transition manual was created to help OVR VR professionals better serve this customer population. This guide was developed to assist all OVR rehabilitation professionals deliver services that result in optimal outcomes for youth and young adults with disabilities. The following document provides a comprehensive resource aligned with OVR's School to Work Transition policy.

Rehabilitation professionals work with transition age youth and young adults with disabilities beginning at age 14 through 21 years of age. For the Bureau of Blindness & Visual Services (BBVS), this means helping young children in school (and their families/advocates) so they may maximize their elementary, middle, and high school experiences, and in doing so optimize their chances of success when they transition to adult life, higher education and/or work. For the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (BVRs), this means working with youth and young adults starting at an earlier age (and their families/advocates) so they know what services we offer and how they can maximize their high school experience, whether through general education or special education, to optimize their chances of success when they transition to adult life, higher education and/or work.

Rehabilitation professionals who work with youth and young adults are encouraged to coordinate their efforts with their BBVS/BVRs counterparts including Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (VRC) from BBVS and BVRs, Early Reach Coordinators (ERC), BBVS Social Workers, Orientation and Mobility Specialists (O&M), and Vision Rehabilitation Therapists (VRT). All of these professionals should spend time in the schools forming relationships with transition partners, working with youth and young adults with disabilities and establishing consistent routines.

The Early Reach Initiative was started in OVR in response to a need in the BVRs district offices to increase capacity to prepare youth with disabilities, beginning at age 14, for vocational planning and future OVR services.

In 2012, OVR re-classified seventeen existing positions to the Pennsylvania State Civil Service Commission "Social Work 2" position. A formal job description for a Social Worker 2 in BVRs was finalized with a working job title of Early Reach Coordinator (ERC). An Early Reach Coordinator position was assigned to each of the 15 BVRs district offices, with a second Early Reach Coordinator position assigned to both Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. The scope of the Early Reach Initiative and the functions of an Early Reach Coordinator were developed and implemented by a Phase 1 Management Implementation Work Group.

Subsequently, the Early Reach Initiative was gradually implemented in BVRs district offices in three phases according to the following schedule:

Fall 2013 - Phase 1 – DuBois, Harrisburg, Norristown, Philadelphia, Wilkes-Barre
Spring 2014 - Phase 2 – Allentown, Altoona, Erie, Pittsburgh, Washington, York
Fall 2014 - Phase 3 – Johnstown, New Castle, Reading, Williamsport

Comprehensive training was provided to all Early Reach Coordinators, supervisors and management in each BVRs district office during implementation of the three phases. In addition, monthly conference

calls were held with offices in each phase to prepare for and facilitate a smooth implementation in each district office. In addition, for interested offices, a general overview that outlined the Early Reach Initiative was provided to all staff in each district office during implementation. The first statewide presentation that introduced the Early Reach Initiative in a public forum was at the 2014 Transition Conference held in State College.

As of the final Phase 3 Early Reach Coordinator Training held February 24 – 27, 2015, all BVRs District Offices are implementing the Early Reach Initiative.

Who have been served through other components of the statewide workforce development system; and

In the fall of 2013, an employer-friendly “how to” manual was introduced, to ensure consistent and excellent service when it comes to hiring people with disabilities. The manual was compiled by staff from OVR, PDE, DHS-ODP and DHS-OMHSAS. The materials appropriately identify OVR as the single-point-of-contact for employers who want to meet their workforce needs by hiring people with disabilities. This will build on the employer manual and encourage local team approaches to working with employers. The teams include representatives from OVR, local PDE agencies, and DHS-funded county-based human service agencies to support people with disabilities in securing employment and meeting the related needs of the employers.

Who are youth with disabilities and students with disabilities, including, as appropriate, their need for pre-employment transition services or other transition services.

This is a new category, so it was not included in the needs assessment for this reporting period. We have contracted with the Disability Institute of Temple University to conduct our next needs assessment. We have informed them of this new category, to ensure that it will be included in the next reporting period.

Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State; and

All LWDBs now have OVR representation, and trainings have been updated for both systems’ staff so an improved understanding of each other’s resources and roles occurs. An updated Citizen Advisory Committee handbook has been published.

OVR created the Business Services and Outreach Division (BSOD). OVR already has a single point of contact model with placement staff in most offices, but with our new business services and outreach division, this concept is now being directed towards all placement services that serve people with disabilities in the commonwealth. BSOD personnel are now meeting with current and potential employers and partners (government and community) to detail OVR’s services and how those services can benefit their agencies and organizations.

The merging of the customer satisfaction surveys of OVR and the Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC) was completed in July 2014. Both groups worked diligently to reword the survey to meet everyone’s needs. In addition, the workgroup is now creating surveys for current OVR customers and for unsuccessfully closed cases. OVR staff is also looking at a better vehicle for delivering the surveys. Two online survey models and delivery systems are being examined to determine whether they meet the

needs of OVR and the PaRC. In addition, a meeting has been scheduled with DHS, which now uses an online performance survey tool to collect information from their customers.

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 .

This is a new category, so it was not included in the needs assessment for this reporting period. We have contracted with the Disability Institute of Temple University to conduct our next needs assessment. We have informed them of this new category, to ensure that it will be included in the next reporting period.

Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment for FFYs 2015-2017

In conjunction with the PA Rehabilitation Council, OVR is required to conduct and interpret a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) every three years. The CSNA is the basis for developing state plan goals, objectives and strategies. It is completed to identify needs for individuals with disabilities that can be addressed through the VR program. Our previous CSNA was completed January 2015 and the next cycle is effective July 2015 and will continue through June 30, 2016. After that date a new contracting process will be implemented to address the activities of the remaining two-year cycle. OVR has contracted with Temple University's Institute on Disabilities to assist OVR and the PA Rehabilitation Council to carry out the front line research, survey development, public forums, interpretation of results and report writing. The Temple staff are experienced research personnel very familiar with disability-related research and programming.

Many targeted activities planned for the next year were issues identified in the previous CSNA. Other activities were identified by OVR staff and agreed upon by the PaRC as important initiatives. Temple staff will coordinate their tasks with both OVR's Central Office staff and PaRC representatives. The following is an overview of the CSNA project for the next year.

1. Create and/or revise multiple customer satisfaction surveys for the agency. The surveys shall be prepared in a format for broad electronic distribution and electronic collection of data.
 - a. Revising and updating the customer satisfaction survey tool for status 26 closures;
 - b. Creating a customer satisfaction survey tool for status 28 closures;
 - c. Creating a customer satisfaction survey tool for open cases to assess specific services following their completion; and
 - d. Creating a transition-age youth survey to determine what is essential for a successful transition (what worked, what did not and what is still needed).
2. Gather information regarding the multifaceted programs of the Hiram G. Andrews Center (HGAC), including but not limited to:
 - a. Analyzing current educational programs (successful/unsuccessful, how to improve programs, relevancy with job opportunities in the community, potential new programs);
 - b. Comparing the quality and value of HGAC programs to other community based educational and rehabilitation programs;
 - c. Engaging the community to create a more accurate positive image of the HGAC;

- d. Determining student satisfaction regarding all aspects of the HGAC;
 - e. Increasing referrals to the HGAC and increasing student census;
 - f. Increasing student graduation rate; and
 - g. Increasing student job placement rate.
3. Gather information from employers, VR professionals, community partners, etc. to increase competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities, especially those with the most significant disabilities, including but not limited to:
 - a. Increasing the knowledge of OVR services in the business and employment sector;
 - b. Identifying what is needed to increase competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities;
 - c. Engaging employers to effect an increase in the rate of employment for individuals with disabilities;
 - d. Identifying barriers to successful job search, job hire and job retention for individuals with disabilities;
 - e. Assisting employers in the hiring process of job candidates with disabilities;
 - f. Identifying post-employment supports employers need to retain employees with disabilities;
 - g. Determining employer-identified “good employee” work characteristics, i.e. soft skills; and
 - h. Identifying needs of older workers with disabilities.
4. Increase staff training targeted to providing consistent and equitable delivery of OVR information and services within district offices and across the commonwealth.
 - a. Identifying strategies to deliver equitable and consistent agency services throughout the commonwealth;
 - b. Enhancing counselor skills to better develop and provide individualized plans of service;
 - c. Identifying strategies to improve communication and follow-up services with customers;
 - d. Identifying strategies to shorten wait time for services; and
 - e. Identifying strategies to quickly refer job-ready candidates to employers for job vacancies.

Annual Estimates

Describe:

The number of individuals in the State who are eligible for services.

790,000 individuals in Pennsylvania are eligible for services as of the end of 2014 (Source: Cornell University Employment and Disability Institute using data from the Current Population Survey (CPS), which is conducted by the Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics - <http://www.disabilitystatistics.org/reports/cps.cfm?statistic=prevalence>)

The number of eligible individuals who will receive services under:

- The VR Program: 59,000

- The Supported Employment Program:
 - Most Significantly Disabled: 1,800
 - To be served in FFY 2016 with Title VI, Part B funds: 593
 - Title VI, Part B funds to be allocated: \$919,851
- Each priority category, if under an order of selection.
 - Most Significantly Disabled: 53,250
 - Significantly Disabled: 179
 - Not Significantly Disabled: 2

The number of individuals who are eligible for VR services, but are not receiving such services due to an order of selection; and

33 cases

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.

It is anticipated that approximately 1,845 Pennsylvanians with the most significant disabilities will receive SE services in FFY 2016. Of this number, approximately 593 individuals will be funded out of the \$919,851 Title VI, Part B Funds anticipated for distribution to Pennsylvania in FFY 2016.

State Goals and Priorities

The designated State unit must:

- (1) 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.*
- (2) Identify the goals and priorities in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs.*
- (3) Ensure that the goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following areas:*
 - 1. the most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates;*
 - 2. the State's performance under the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA; and*
 - 3. 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.*

Any projections, program continuations, etc. in this Attachment are subject to the availability of supporting funding in the Plan year. Goals were developed jointly with the PaRC on December 8, 2014 and jointly agreed to revisions.

Goal #1: Increase Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities

1. Expand the availability of apprenticeships, internships and on the job training (OJT) for individuals with disabilities.

2. Partner with the Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations (BWPO) to ensure programmatic and physical accessibility of the PA CareerLink® centers for equal access for individuals with disabilities.
3. Create and expand interagency agreements between OVR and local Career and Technology Centers and other community-based organizations.

Goal #2: Increase/Improve Transition Services for Students with Disabilities

1. Increase pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities.
2. Increase opportunities for students to gain workplace skills and community-integrated work experiences.
3. Enhance collaborative relationships with DHS, PDE and higher education.
4. Expand BBVS Overbrook School for the Blind Summer Transition Initiative to create summer employment opportunities for transition age students who are blind.
5. Research best practices for the implementation of peer mentoring opportunities.

Goal #3: Increase community education and outreach.

1. Work with the PaRC to share best practices and outreach methods to increase participation in the Citizens Advisory Committee meetings.
2. Continue to grow OVR's social media presence.
3. Educate staff on accessibility and technology based upon universal design principles.

Order of Selection

Describe:

- (1) The order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided VR services.*
- (2) The justification for the order.*
- (3) The service and outcome goals.*
- (4) The time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.*
- (5) How individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities; and*
- (6) 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.*

1. PRIORITY OF CATEGORIES TO RECEIVE VR SERVICES UNDER THE ORDER

First Priority: Most Significantly Disabled (MSD)

Second Priority: Significantly Disabled (SD)

Third Priority: Non-Significantly Disabled (NSD)

DESCRIPTION OF PRIORITY CATEGORIES

First Priority: Most Significantly Disabled (MSD)

- The physical, mental, or sensory impairment(s) must seriously limit three or more of the individual's functional capacities; and
- The individual must be expected to require two or more vocational rehabilitation services that are expected to last six months from the date of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) or be needed on an ongoing basis to reduce an impediment to employment.

Second Priority: Significantly Disabled (SD)

- The physical, mental, or sensory impairment(s) must seriously limit one or more of the individual's functional capacities; and
- The individual must be expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services that are expected to last six months from the date of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) or be needed on an ongoing basis to reduce an impediment to employment.

Third Priority: Non-Significantly Disabled (NSD)

- The individual has a physical, mental, or sensory impairment that does not meet the definition for MSD or SD.

2. JUSTIFICATION FOR ORDER OF SELECTION

Because OVR does not believe it will be able to serve all eligible individuals with the available resources, it has adopted an Order of Selection.

3/4. SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS AND THE TIME WITHIN WHICH THE GOALS WILL BE ACHIEVED

Given the projections of flat funding at both the Federal and State level, OVR will strive to maintain current service levels. As of December 1, 2014, OVR had a waiting list of about 25 customers whose severity of disability was either classified in the second or third priority. Based on actual FFY 2014 figures, OVR's outcome and service goals under the Order of Selection are projected as follows for FFY 2016:

- For the Most Significantly Disabled category, the number accepted is expected to be 16,000, while the number served will be 55,000. The number rehabilitated will be 8,575, of which 8,300 will be the number rehabilitated into the competitive labor market. The total cost of services for FFY 2016 is expected to be \$64,982,277, which will be revised following notification of the FFY 2016 Appropriation.
- For the Significantly Disabled category, the number accepted is expected to be 25 (newly accepted, but placed on a waiting list) while the number served will be 15. The number rehabilitated will be 3, of which 2 will be the number rehabilitated into the competitive labor market. The total cost of services for FFY 2016 is expected to be \$17,722, which will be revised following notification of the FFY 2016 Appropriation.

- For the Non-Significantly Disabled category, the number accepted is expected to be 0 (newly accepted, but placed on a waiting list) while the number served will be 0. The cost for FFY 2016 is expected to be 0.

In total, the number accepted is expected to be 16,000, while the number served will be 55,015. The number rehabilitated will be 8,578, of which 8,302 will be the number rehabilitated into the competitive labor market. The service cost for FFY 2016 is expected to be \$65,000,000, which will be revised following notification of the FFY 2016 Appropriation.

Throughout the year, OVR senior management will evaluate the agency's available resources on a regular basis to serve individuals with disabilities considered to be Significant Disability (SD). If resources are available, the OVR District Offices will be informed that they can move individuals from waiting into an active status with OVR. Persons on the SD level will be served according to their date of application. If no resources are available, individuals will remain on the SD list until the next re-evaluation.

The time frame in which goals are to be achieved is approximately 30 months for both MSD and SD priority of service categories.

5. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES

In keeping with federal mandates, it is the policy of OVR to operate on an Order of Selection when the agency is unable to provide services to all eligible individuals in the same state who apply for services. The Order of Selection in Pennsylvania gives priority first to individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities (MSD); secondly, to individuals with Significant Disabilities (SD); and third to individuals with Non-Significant Disabilities (NSD). All new applicants for services must be notified about the Order of Selection. Significance of disability is defined based upon the presence of functional capacities and the requirement of multiple vocational rehabilitation services, defined as two or more services that are expected to last 6 months from the date of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) or be needed on an ongoing basis to reduce an impediment to employment.

6. 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

After dialogue with the Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council and the State Board of Vocational Rehabilitation, OVR has determined that pending a state budget increase, if granted in FY 2015-16 and maintained in FY 2016-17, then OVR will consider the agency's option to serve eligible individuals with disabilities outside the current order of selection who have an immediate need for equipment or services to maintain employment. If no additional funding is received, then OVR will maintain its current Order of Selection while continuing to evaluate the agency's available resources on a regular basis.

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.

- (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*
 - (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.*

OVR will use Title VI, Part B Funds to provide Supported Employment (SE) services to customers throughout the commonwealth. Services are provided by way of contracts with community based rehabilitation providers using an individualized, performance-based job coaching model. Title I Funds will be used to provide Supported Employment services after Title VI, Part B Funds have been exhausted.

SE services are a vital part of OVR programming. SE services secure employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities who would not experience an employment outcome from less intensive job placement methods. It is anticipated that approximately 6,900 Pennsylvanians with the most significant disabilities will receive SE services in FFY 2015. Of this number, an anticipated 850 individuals will receive services funded out of the Title VI, Part B Funds projected for distribution to Pennsylvania in FFY 2016.

OVR is preparing to revise its SE policy during FFY 2015. OVR will consider providing more intensive evaluation throughout the life of a case to ensure that services will be provided to customers most in need. Increasing communication among VR partners is another area under consideration. The SE policy revision will focus on achieving a higher level of long-term stability as part of successful employment outcomes through SE funding.

OVR plans to continue to expand SE services for underserved populations. This includes providing quality services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, to increase successful outcomes for transition-aged youth, and to ensure accessibility of services for all potential customers. OVR plans to enhance OVR partnerships with provider agencies such as the Office of Developmental Programs, the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and the Office of Long Term Living. These agencies provide the necessary long-term supports needed to ensure the employment success of the individual with a disability.

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)):

The methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities.

The 2016 state plan will need to focus on the implementation of WIOA, which reauthorizes the Rehabilitation Act in Title IV. The Act calls for increased emphasis on services to transition-aged youth, business services, and collaborations with other agencies and partners. This emphasis will result in expanded and improved services and outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

The concept of pre-employment transition services is introduced through WIOA. OVR will be required to perform the following activities under pre-employment transition services:

- 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; and
- 5) Instruction in self-advocacy, which may include peer mentoring.

The provision of the above services will result in reaching students earlier to maximize their educational opportunities and best plan for transition to employment or postsecondary educational opportunities.

The second area of major emphasis in WIOA is business services. OVR has started to plan and implement a new Business Services Division with the following goals:

- Provide singularity of focus and resources to better understand and respond to business needs in a dual customer service model (talent supply and demand side).
- Make OVR the lead state agency and preferred resource for businesses or organizations to recruit and on-board people with disabilities through a single point of contact (SPOC) model.
- Promote agency-wide consistency and quality of business services, communication and stakeholder outreach through training, resources, collaboration, and development of innovative web, social media and print-based branding.
- Increase alignment with the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) VR-National Employment Team (VR-NET) through the Business Services Division offering agency-wide consistency in delivery of high quality business services utilizing emerging practices in an evolving, national VR community of practice.
- Significantly increase the availability and number of successful agency-wide career employment outcomes or appropriate self-employment for all OVR consumer customers in emerging occupations, business and labor markets.

We will have one business services representative in each OVR District Office who will work as part of the business services team to focus on the above objectives.

The third major focus in WIOA is on collaboration. OVR will continue to develop, initiate or expand upon collaborative relationships with community stakeholders and partners and other state agencies to promote and expand opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Finally, WIOA emphasizes the importance of Assistive or Rehabilitative Technology. OVR has hired a Business Analyst to serve as an Assistive Technology Specialist to assist staff with the maximization of assistive technology and how it can assist OVR customers to achieve their educational and employment goals. We are also committed to expanding the capacity to serve more customers and provide technical assistance regarding available assistive technology through a tele-rehabilitation pilot with the Center for Assistive and Rehabilitative Technology (CART) and the University of Pittsburgh located at our comprehensive rehabilitation center, Hiram G. Andrews Center (HGAC).

How a broad range of assistive technology services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process and on a statewide basis.

The Center for Assistive and Rehabilitative Technology (CART) at the Hiram G. Andrews Center (HGAC) in Johnstown, PA is an available assistive technology (AT) resource to OVR customers throughout the commonwealth. Highly trained professionals evaluate and support people in the following areas of assistive technology: positioning and mobility, computer access, augmentative communication, environmental controls, driver training, vehicle modification, devices for activities of daily living (ADL), devices for visual and/or auditory impairment and home and work modifications. The Learning Technology Program (LTP) assesses student's needs in the classroom and trains them in the use of assistive technology, if necessary.

The Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Lending Library (PATLL) provides the opportunity for any Pennsylvanian to borrow and assess AT devices prior to purchase. The library is located on the HGAC's campus, and the services are free to all Pennsylvanians with disabilities.

Specific AT policies include: the Home Modification Policy, the Vehicle Modification Policy and the Farming and Agriculture Rehabilitation Management (FARM) policy. These policies provide a wide range of AT evaluation and services detailed to meet the needs of OVR customers in removing environmental barriers to employment.

A separate policy related to the provision of AT services and devices has been identified as a needed guide for OVR to address the increasing demand for "off the shelf" technology to provide parameters to meet the AT needs of VR customers in a cost-effective and consistent manner. The planning for this policy will likely take place in 2015.

The VR customer is provided AT services and devices are provided as the above listed resources are utilized by the VR counselor and customer throughout the rehabilitation process. Assessment always precedes use of any AT device or service to ensure provision of such items is appropriate and timely to meet the vocational needs of the individual.

OVR uses a number of vendors who are Rehabilitation Engineers and Assistive Technology Specialists on a "fee-for-service" basis throughout the commonwealth. Most providers can travel to the OVR customer's home and/or worksite to provide AT evaluation and training services. Staff from HGAC's CART will also travel to various parts of the commonwealth to assess an OVR customer's AT needs as well as to facilitate training when appropriate.

In accordance with OVR's policies, OVR purchases AT devices and services to support its customers in their vocational goals. OVR also provides information and referral services regarding other resources when the agency is unable to provide funding for AT devices and services. OVR's Statewide AT Coordinator regularly distributes information electronically to OVR's District Offices regarding non-VR funded AT services, programs, and resources.

OVR collaborates with the Pennsylvania Institute on Assistive Technology (PIAT) at Temple University to participate in training, maintain the PATLL, and develop AT resources for Pennsylvanians with disabilities.

Low interest loans are available through the Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation (PATF) to customers who have a disability or any older or state resident who has need for AT.

OVR also collaborates with BWPO via the PA CareerLink® centers to better assist veterans who have disabilities in obtaining AT to remove barriers in locating and maintaining employment. The Statewide Veterans Coordinator attends PA Cares meetings monthly in order to learn about assistive technology/training programs offered by various community and state agencies and higher education institutions. This information is transmitted statewide to OVR Veteran Coordinators and Veteran Counselors in each field office who provide AT equipment and training to OVR customers who are veterans with disabilities.

OVR has collaborated with Penn State's AgrAbility Program and the Department of Agriculture in developing a policy to address the rehabilitation needs of farmers/ranchers with disabilities. This policy is known as Farming and Agriculture Rehabilitation Management (F.A.R.M.) which is designed to assist farmers with disabilities. VR counselors, with technical assistance and guidance from Pennsylvania's AgrAbility Program, are able to assess the rehabilitation needs of farmers/ranchers with disabilities in order to provide the specialized rehabilitative and assistive technologies they may need to maintain their employment.

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.

OVR District Office staff provides outreach activities designed to educate and inform individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities. Each District Office will develop a forward thinking strategy of outreach for the year. Outreach activities will include information sessions regarding OVR services and how to access such services, including presentations where individuals who are minorities are the target audience. Some of these will include presentations at community agencies that target the Latino population and participation in Asian-American events.

OVR has recently awarded, through an Innovation and Expansion project, the development of an Industry Integrated Employment and Training Program designed specifically for Latino Adults with Significant Disabilities in Berks County. This project will expand services to this targeted population.

OVR will continue to identify and expand key documentation and literature in Spanish, and further, will continue the use of language line for more effective communication with customers from different ethnic backgrounds to overcome language barriers.

OVR, in collaboration with the Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) and the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) developed a Support Service Provider Initiative (SSP) for individuals who are deaf/blind. The purpose is to expand opportunities for individuals who are deaf blind in accessing educational, community and employment services. This collaborative effort will include the centers for independent living and the Helen Keller National Center. This significantly unserved population will now greatly benefit from this crucial service to promote independence.

OVR District Office staff provides outreach activities designed to educate and inform individuals with disabilities who are unserved or underserved. These targeted outreach activities will be designed to

provide information about accessing OVR services. Early Reach Coordinators (ERC) will be conducting similar activities in schools to reach unserved or underserved students.

As a result of Section 511 in the re-authorization of the Rehabilitation Act in WIOA, OVR will be required to evaluate an individual with a disability who is age 24 or younger prior to them entering sub-minimum wage work. This will ensure this group of underserved youth has full opportunities to enter community integrated competitive employment.

Neither a local educational agency, as defined in § 397.5(b)(1), nor a State educational agency, as defined in § 397.5(b)(2), may enter into a contract or other arrangement with an entity, as defined in § 397.5(d), for the purpose of operating a program under which a youth with a disability is engaged in subminimum wage employment.

OVR is developing standard procedures to meet the requirements of this section that state that no entity may compensate an individual with a disability who is age 24 or younger at a wage referred to as subminimum wage until the individual has received pre-employment transition services and has applied for vocational rehabilitation services. For individuals who are already in the subminimum wage setting as of July 22, 2016, OVR will be providing career counseling.

In addition, OVR is conducting outreach to local education agencies in order to educate them about the proposed regulations regarding the use of subminimum wage and OVR efforts that focus on:

1. Presenting information at transition coordinating council meetings, special education administrators' meetings, statewide webinars with PaTTAN, and at the Special Education Advisory Panel meetings.
2. Developing alternate service delivery models for individuals with significant disabilities who may have traditionally entered into subminimum wage employment.
3. Developing innovative and collaborative programs and services such as Discovery and Customized Employment as well as funding for Comprehensive Transition Programs that will help divert individuals away from subminimum wage employment.
4. Revising the Supported Employment policy to ensure that these particular services truly meet the needs of the population it was intended to serve and to increase job stability and longevity in a competitive integrated environment.

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).

OVR will continue to develop the activities performed by Early Reach Coordinators to reach students with disabilities and their families earlier in the transition process (age 14–16). The Early Reach Initiative will be expanded in designated District Offices throughout the commonwealth due to increased demand. OVR will continue to explore opportunities to enter into Interagency Agreements and local Letters of Understanding to develop, expand and deliver pre-employment transition services and to update our statewide MOU to ensure that pre-employment transition services and general “School to

Work” Transition services are delivered in an effective and consistent manner. OVR will continue to develop and expand innovative service delivery models such as Discovery, Customized Employment, Project SEARCH and Project PAS to ensure that students with disabilities are able to successfully transition from school to postsecondary life.

If applicable, plans for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs within the State.

In response to WIOA, OVR is planning to pilot customized employment (CE) scenarios that involve the use of supported employment (SE) services. This would be an improvement to community rehabilitation programs as providers would be required to be certified in order to provide CE services. This blend of CE and SE is intended to improve employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities (MSD). The OVR SE policy is in the process of revision to reflect the new WIOA regulations. We hope to improve community rehabilitation program (CRP) outcomes for those with the MSD by increasing communication among partners and providing supports for as long as needed and required.

Letters of Understanding (LOUs) will continue to be developed with new providers in an effort to offer an array of service choices for OVR customers throughout the state. OVR is in the process of renewing existing LOUs. This involves a review of overall quality of services and of past OVR customer success. As provision of quality customer service is important to OVR, we are developing a plan that will monitor all OVR providers, not just those with LOUs.

Strategies to improve the performance of the State with respect to the performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA.

OVR reviews the performance standards and indicators monthly. As an agency we constantly strive to meet or exceed the standards and indicators through training, policy development, and the addition or creation of new and innovative programs that will benefit our customers. We are also going through an extensive CSNA that will help guide us regarding service provision and to address system gaps to ensure that as many positive outcomes are achieved as possible. We are also exploring services such as customized employment and implementing interagency agreements that will assist with federal match generation to serve additional customers. OVR will continue to monitor the standards and indicators and incorporate stakeholder input into our program to ensure a cycle of constant reflection and program improvement.

Strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce development system in assisting individuals with disabilities.

Local OVR Veterans’ Counselors and Coordinators continue to work collaboratively with the Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) and Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialists (DVOPS) within the PA CareerLink® system to coordinate services for veterans with disabilities. OVR regularly participates in the PA CARES Consortium with other agency partners including BWPO and the VA Vocational Rehabilitation & Education (VA-VRE) Program to ensure access to services to all veterans through information and referral services. In addition, OVR has sponsored employees in Forensic Training related to Veterans with mental health, traumatic brain injury and/or substance abuse issues.

How the agency's strategies will be used to:

Achieve goals and priorities by the State, consistent with the comprehensive needs assessment;

Any projections, program continuations, etc. in this Attachment are subject to the availability of supporting funding in the Plan year. Goals were developed jointly with the PaRC on December 8, 2014 and jointly agreed to revisions.

Goal #1: Increase Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities

1. Expand the availability of apprenticeships, internships and on the job training (OJT) for people with disabilities.

OVR is planning to increase workplace skill and employment opportunities for Adults and Youth through several new initiatives. In 2014 OVR initiated a wage reimbursement On-the-Job Training (OJT) targeting youth 25 years of age or younger who enter active plan status. This initiative will help youth gain work experience prior to career placement and during the process of rehabilitation while they are in secondary or postsecondary education. This involves OVR reimbursing wages of students while they participate in full- or part-time, limited seasonal or summer employment, internships or apprenticeships. OVR also initiated a thirty day 100 percent wage reimbursed OJT for all ages of OVR consumer customers. This initiative may help offset a small- to mid-sized business or organizations costs in hiring and on-boarding additional workforce talent.

BSOD will work closely with the Business Services Committee and local Eastern and Western combined Agency District Office Business Services teams to develop apprenticeship, internship and paid time-limited job experiences through use of on-the-job wage reimbursement agreements with both public and private employers and local trade unions. Outreach will be organized by development of combined bureau District Office regional plans with involvement of Eastern and Western Business Outreach Specialists. Combined bureau District Office Single Points of Contact (SPOC's) will use an Excel spreadsheet to track local employer contacts that use an OJT as part of employment experience and on-boarding of permanent new hires.

2. Partner with the Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations (BWPO) to ensure programmatic and physical accessibility of the PA CareerLink® for equal access for people with disabilities.

OVR will analyze WIOA and implement a strategy for partnership with BWPO that satisfies all aspects of its language. OVR's strategy for partnership will focus on increased awareness of individuals with disabilities and the vocational rehabilitation process. This will ensure that individuals with disabilities receive consistent and relevant information, services and referrals within BWPO's infrastructure. OVR must also ensure that people with disabilities have unabated physical and attitudinal access to the critical services that BWPO offers, including those found within the PA CareerLink® centers. OVR strives for increased collaboration and improved communication strategies between our two agencies.

3. Create and expand interagency agreements between OVR and local Career and Technology Centers and other community-based organizations.

Effective October 1, 2014 OVR entered into an interagency agreement with the Berks County Career & Technology Center (CTC) to jointly fund two positions, a School-to-Work Coordinator and a Job Trainer

who will serve OVR eligible youth with disabilities in order to increase and improve their community-integrated, competitive employment outcomes. If successful, this model will be replicated at other CTCs of which there are 85 across the commonwealth. Progress monitoring is being conducted and outcomes will be reported at the 2015 PA Community of Practice on Transition Conference as well as annual conferences held for career and technology education professionals.

Another interagency agreement with Greene County Human Services and Intermediate Unit #1 will jointly fund one School-to-Work Coordinator position that will be dedicated to serving OVR eligible youth with intellectual disabilities who are between the ages of 14 and 21 who are enrolled in local education agencies within Greene County. The agreement targets more effective vocational evaluation, increased service coordination, and interagency collaboration with the goal of achieving increased and improved community-integrated, competitive employment outcomes.

Goal #2: Increase/Improve Transition Services for Students with Disabilities

1. Increase pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities.

The term “pre-employment transition service” is new in WIOA. OVR is well positioned to respond to expanding pre-employment transition services in Pennsylvania as defined in WIOA. OVR continues to implement the following initiatives that focus on services needed by transitioning youth with disabilities in Pennsylvania:

- Annual Transition Conference planning and staff participation
- Designated Transition VR Counselors
- Transition Coordinating Council participation
- Early Reach Coordinators in each district office
- Project Search
- Project PAS
- IEP staff participation for appropriate students
- Transition Policy and Guidelines for staff
- Jobs for All - On the Job Training
- Business Services Representatives to assist with job placement
- Access College – Employment Success grant to D.R.E.A.M. Partnership
- Discovery Pilot in three district offices

Comprehensive efforts to implement WIOA and the corresponding “pre-employment transition services” as outlined in the new law will be determined by the regulations as promulgated by the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

2. Increase opportunities for students to gain workplace skills and community-integrated work experiences.

OVR continues to increase workplace skill and employment opportunities for youth through several new initiatives. As discussed previously, in 2014, OVR initiated a wage reimbursement On-the-Job Training (OJT) program targeting youth 25 years of age or younger who enter active plan status. This initiative will help youth gain work experience prior to career placement and during the process of rehabilitation while they are in secondary or postsecondary education. OVR will reimburse wages of students while

they participate in full- or part-time, limited seasonal or summer employment, internships or apprenticeships. The Jobs for All- OJT can assist employers to hire and provide employment opportunities for OVR transition customers while they are still in school to assist them in building their workforce talent and experience. The key to the success of the Jobs for All - OJT will be flexibility with business and industry in meeting their unique needs while offering youth a chance to join the workforce for a time-limited, paid work experience. Ultimately, we hope that the soft skills learned, the coordination of transportation and technology to get to and from work, the performance of job tasks, and the value of having paid, real work experiences on their resumes will enable young people with disabilities to eventually achieve an employment outcome in their IPE targeted career goal.

OVR has also developed two blended funding interagency agreements, Work Partners with Berks Career and Technology Center and Greene County Human Services and Intermediate Unit #1 to jointly fund newly created staff positions at the respective sites. At Work Partners, a School to Work Coordinator and job coach will work with OVR eligible Service Occupation students to develop workplace skills via career instruction and to develop practicum and internship work based experiences leading to permanent, community-integrated, competitive employment. At Greene County, a School to Work Coordinator position was developed to provide OVR eligible transition aged youth with disabilities various work-based educational experiences, on-the-job support, independent living skills and community involvement oriented toward competitive integrated employment.

3. Enhance collaborative relationships with the Department of Human Services (DHS), Department of Education (PDE) and higher education.

OVR has regular meetings and conference calls with our partners at DHS and PDE. OVR participates in educational opportunities through PA Training and Technical Assistance Network (PATTAN) both by providing training on relevant OVR topics and by attending trainings relevant to OVR's Transition Program. OVR works with postsecondary education entities by supporting and promoting the Promoting Academic Success (PAS) program. OVR works closely with the Intermediate Units on Project SEARCH. The Office of Developmental Programs is becoming increasingly involved with Project SEARCH. OVR has been an active participant in the Office of Developmental Programs "Futures Planning." OVR maintains these relationships by recommending and attending professional conferences with training relevant for all collaborating agencies.

OVR representatives regularly attend the Special Education Advisory Panel, Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Council, and the Pennsylvania Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Project with members of other agencies in order to collaborate with agency partners in order to coordinate services to mutual customers.

OVR issued a "Joint Bulletin" with the Office of Developmental Programs to better direct the referral process as well as to provide direction on the requirements for documentation by the supports coordination organizations.

OVR has issued funding to the D.R.E.A.M. Partnership from the Access College- Employment Success (ACES) grant to develop and implement college certificate programs for persons with intellectual disabilities. The grant stipulates that the programs developed will focus on employment, following the Transition and Post-Secondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID) model and

utilizing the Think College guidelines. OVR is collaborating with other state VR programs to seek guidance on the development of agency policy on the provision of financial aid to such programs.

4. Expand BBVS Overbrook School for the Blind Summer Transition Initiative to create summer employment opportunities for transition age students who are blind.

The Transitional Vocational Initiative summer program is now being expanded to three weeks. The third additional week will involve students actually working in jobs in the community that they shadowed the prior week.

5. Research best practices for the implementation of peer mentoring opportunities.

OVR will collaborate with the Centers for Independent Living (CILs) to identify service gaps in the area of peer mentoring, specifically as it relates to transition services for young adults with disabilities. Once specific need areas are identified, OVR will research best practices for transition youth peer mentoring.

Goal #3: Increase community education and outreach.

1. Work with the PaRC to share best practices and outreach methods to increase participation in the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings.

OVR is very interested in receiving input and welcomes advice from the PaRC on how to increase participation in the district office CACs. In addition, OVR intends to share district office CAC best practices at statewide and regional meetings that bring together district office management staff. District office CAC minutes are shared with the PaRC for its reference and are available to identify promising practices. However, the intent of the district office CAC is to be locally-run, consumer-driven, and responsive to local CAC member recommendations. Therefore, each CAC is autonomous and develops strategic planning that is relevant to local concerns, issues and priorities, with input from OVR local management. OVR supports sharing of CAC information while preserving each CAC's autonomy to develop local goals.

2. Continue to grow OVR's social media presence.

OVR has already connected with 340 followers on LinkedIn and 580 on Facebook as part of our agency's social media initiative, which was launched in October 2013. OVR has been delivering content on a more frequent basis since the platforms became available. Information is gathered from local district offices, statewide events and national sources. Social media posts have highlighted OVR-sponsored activities and events, agency accomplishments, customer success stories and other information pertinent to our consumer and business customers. OVR will increase and refine our social media presence moving forward, with a continued emphasis on delivering quality content and relevant information to all of our customers in a timely manner. OVR will continue to evolve with the changing social media landscape and adapt our strategies, as necessary, in order to ensure that the material we provide is accessible and impactful. OVR has also added an Administrative Office position to the Business Services and Outreach Division, which will focus on direct marketing, branding and public outreach using print, web applications and social media. This new position will allow a dedicated staff member with experience and expertise in the field to focus on the proper evolution and growth of OVR's social media strategy.

3. Educate staff on accessibility and technology based upon universal design principles.

OVR is committed to ensuring that staff members utilizing assistive technology (AT) are knowledgeable and proficient in its use. AT utilized by staff include screen readers, screen magnifiers, speech recognition software, and more. OVR offers trainings, presentations, conferences, and customized training materials to staff to ensure the highest level of proficiency. OVR employs staff who provide direct instruction to individuals with a broad range of disabilities, and through the above mentioned offerings, staff can gain information and experience used during direct instruction. Additionally, OVR has AT coordinators in Central Office and in each district office to be an educational resource to field staff, partners, customers and their families. These resources can assist staff and customers to use AT that is not limited in design, but have longer use and more effective use due to its universal design. The Center for Assistive Rehabilitation Technology Lending Library at the Hiram G Andrews Center is another educational resource which OVR staff can access to learn about AT universal design and incorporate this knowledge in AT recommendations to the OVR customer.

Support innovation and expansion activities; and

OVR continues to support innovation and expansion approaches through ongoing Letters of Understanding (LOU) that are developed between community rehabilitation providers and OVR to support the expansion of services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities. This allows us to constantly evaluate and develop new service activities that bring about innovative approaches to serving customers with disabilities more effectively.

OVR continually considers the development of new and emerging services with existing community rehabilitation providers to meet the needs of our customers. As funds are available, OVR will develop a Request for Quote (RFQ) for Innovation and Expansion Projects to provide new strategies and programs to improve employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities. These projects will target expansion of employment services into rural and underserved counties, job readiness and job placement of customers with the most significant disabilities who have traditionally been underserved, transition services for students with disabilities, pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities, replication of Project SEARCH for students or youth with disabilities, and/or the development of Industry Integrated Employment programs, as well as other innovative strategies identified by local OVR staff. OVR anticipates that potential contracts would generally be up to \$150,000 for the initial project year. Higher contract awards could be accepted for proposals of exceptional activity, as funds are available.

Innovation and Expansion funds will be used to support the funding of the State Rehabilitation Council.

Innovation and Expansion funds have not been used to support the Statewide Independent Living Council's resource plan as other sources of funding have been available. Centers for Independent Living have received funds for innovation and expansion projects in the past.

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.

OVR continues to collaborate with other supported employment (SE) funding sources to overcome issues of dwindling resources. OVR participates in a cross-agency workgroup with the Office of

Developmental Programs (ODP), the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS), and the Office of Long-Term Living (OLTL) to address systemic barriers to employment for persons with disabilities. OVR is taking proactive steps with ODP to develop and use communication tools for interagency collaboration. Our intention is to provide seamless services to those individuals who can benefit from multiple service providers/funders and, at the same time, to allow for successful and stable community integrated and competitive employment. OVR is participating on a Cross Agency Workgroup with ODP, OMHSAS, and OTL to address systemic barriers to employment for persons with disabilities, particularly those identified with regard to service definitions, funding, and legislation for supported employment. OVR is actively looking for ways to provide more opportunities to support individuals in competitive, community-integrated employment who have multiple sources of funding and who may not have considered competitive, community-integrated employment previously.

The inclusion of customized employment services as a tool used alongside SE services can allow more intensive services to be offered for individuals with disabilities who are seeking competitive, community-integrated employment and historically may not have been able to benefit from VR services. Additionally, the OVR SE policy is under review both to address these issues and to align with new WIOA provisions. Any recommendations for revision will address the use of the most appropriate and cost effective services for VR customers and how best to plan for sustaining employment as VR services fade and eventually come to an end. OVR is working with various Centers for Independent Living (CILs) across the state to develop SE services that are provided by vendors who can offer a full range of independent living supports beyond employment. The intention of collaborating with CILs is to ensure that individuals who are using VR services are getting a full range of services fostering rehabilitation and independence at the same time to the benefit of the VR customer.

Evaluation and Reports of Progress: VR and Supported Employment Goals

Describe:

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.*
- (B) Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.*

Goal I: Increase Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities

- 1) Increase the number of Business Enterprise Program (BEP) locations as well as people who go through training in the BEP.

BEP analyzed the Hadley online training and made plans to test the system to see what could be eliminated from the HGAC program. The online Hadley training program was tested by a representative of the Elected Committee, as well as BEP staff, to determine the best utilization for online training for customers. BEP also continued to review the training program at HGAC to ensure training materials and equipment were current and relevant to customers in the program. BEP continued to do outreach and interview candidates for the program. BEP also continued to investigate online training opportunities to increase customer participation in the BEP program. Additionally, BEP collaborated with the Elected Committee of Blind Operators to consider and promote opportunities for individuals who are blind.

- 2) Partner with the Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations (BWPO) to train or retrain PA CareerLink® on disability awareness and OVR fundamentals.

OVR developed an "Introduction to OVR" training, which was made available on the Employee Self Service training site in 2013. This training provides a general summary of OVR, the VR process and how to initiate services. OVR also developed "Disability Awareness, Etiquette and Sensitivity: A Training Program for PA CareerLink® Personnel" which was updated and made available in 2014. This training summarized the effective "Ten Commandments of Communicating with People with Disabilities" training video. OVR staff have also provided numerous in-person training events for PA CareerLink® personnel at local sites which covered topics such as the VR process, AT, disability awareness and sensitivity topics, the 2008 ADA Amendments Act, and the new rules for Section 503 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the 1974 Vietnam Era Veteran Readjustment Assistance Act (VEVRAA) guiding businesses with federal contracts on the hiring for individuals with disabilities and protected veterans. OVR staff members actively participate on the PaRC PA CareerLink® subcommittee which is focused on making PA CareerLink® centers programmatically and physically accessible to individuals with disabilities. Currently, a Regional Manager, a District Administrator and a VR Specialist participate on this subcommittee.

- 3) Evaluate the cost-effectiveness and structure of current Supported Employment (SE) programs.

OVR established a goal of providing services to 875 customers via Title VI, Part B Funds distributed to Pennsylvania in FFY 2014. This goal was based on the Title VI, Part B allotment for FFY 2013 divided by the average cost per rehabilitation case for the previous year. 663 customers received Supported Employment services via the available \$818,794 Title VI, Part B funds. The reason in the discrepancy of the goal and the actual numbers was that cost for services increased while the amount of Title VI, Part B funds were less than anticipated. However, the number of VR customers served through SE services did not decrease. In fact, the number increased. Unfortunately, the amount of funds available was not sufficient to reach the intended goal. During FFY 2014, SE services were provided to 6,967 individuals with disabilities. Of that number, 1,492 were placed of which 1,458 were placed in competitive employment and 1,145 were working 20 hours or more a week. Reviewing OVR SE data allowed field staff to analyze trends and patterns to determine where in the VR process customers experienced challenges to success in community, competitive, and integrated employment. Review of data also allowed for a better understanding of which customers are receiving supported employment services. This knowledge assisted OVR staff in being able to clarify issues, address them and in turn increase the success of customers receiving supported employment services. Overall, SE services are the most effective cost service used by OVR. In 2013/14 the successful closure rate of customers via SE services was over 60 percent.

Goal II. Increase/Improve Transition Services for Students with Disabilities

- 1) Continue collaborative activities that include projects with the PA Community on Transition Employment Practice Group and development of joint training modules for OVR and Department of Education staff, families, advocates, educators and youth.

OVR continued to work through the Community of Practice State Leadership Team (SLT) on Transition to provide trainings on OVR services and procedures to all of our partner agencies. This was done through SLT sponsored webinars, the Statewide Transition Conference and monthly SLT meetings when OVR provided updates to the members on activities, programs and new initiatives within OVR. Local District Office staff participated in School to Work Transition Council meetings and provided guidance to families, advocates, educators and youth. OVR staff also regularly provided informational trainings to county and regional service providers to keep them updated and aware of OVR's mission. The Early Reach Coordinators continued to reach out to schools and provide information to educational staff, families, and students about OVR services. Through our participation in the annual Statewide Transition Conference, OVR developed sessions which were presented to all attendees on OVR programs and policies.

- 2) Continue the Cognitive Skills Enhancement Program (CSEP) to assist District Offices in the transition needs of students with disabilities and to reflect the stated needs of VR Counselors; and continue to offer CSEP as a service to OVR customers who wish to pursue postsecondary training at HGAC or elsewhere.

Hiram G Andrews Center continued to work collaboratively with the University of Pittsburgh in offering the Cognitive Skills Enhancement Program (CSEP). The program continued to have a full complement of students throughout 2014, serving customers from OVR District Offices across the state. There were 45 students enrolled in CSEP during 2014. The majority completed CSEP and moved into employment or a vocational training program at HGAC or another postsecondary institution.

- 3) Continue implementation of Articulation Agreements between the Commonwealth Technical Institute at HGAC and secondary schools to improve accessibility of post-secondary programs at HGAC to eligible high school students.

The Commonwealth Technical Institute continued to pursue articulation agreements as a Perkins-Funded Postsecondary Institution with Secondary Schools with Department of Education-Approved Career and Technical Education Programs of Study. In 2014, articulation agreements were completed for Building Maintenance, Small Engine Mechanic Technology, AST Computer Technology/Computer Systems Technology, AST Culinary Arts, Automobile/Automotive Mechanics and Carpentry programs with effective dates through 2017.

- 4) Begin working with students starting at age 14 (and their parents) so they know what services we offer and how they can maximize their high school experience, whether through general education or special education, to increase their opportunity for success when they transition to adult life through higher education or employment.

In order to assist youth with disabilities better prepare for their transition into the world of work and independence, OVR started a new initiative called Early Reach. Early Reach is an outreach initiative intended to promote successful outcomes for youth with disabilities by increasing awareness of OVR services and the benefits of early career planning. The initiative adds a new position called an Early Reach Coordinator (ERC) to the rehabilitation team in OVR's fifteen district offices.

The ERCs reach out to youth with disabilities, their parents, local schools and community agencies that serve youth. The purpose of this outreach is to connect with youth with disabilities early, beginning at age 14, so that they know more about OVR services and can better prepare for vocational choices and living independently. In addition, ERCs are knowledgeable about other services that are available to youth with disabilities who are transitioning from school to adult life. An ERC is available in each of the 15 OVR BVRs District Offices.

- 5) Maintain and strengthen specific working relationships between Department of Human Services (DHS), Department of Education (PDE) and OVR on transition-related issues, including reviewing and updating transition policies.

OVR continued to collaborate with its partners in DHS and PDE on a number of interagency initiatives. OVR continued to be represented on the Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Council and the Pennsylvania Special Education Advisory Panel. OVR continued to co-lead the PA Community of Practice on Transition with the Bureau of Special Education on which representatives from all MOU partners serve. OVR also worked with partners in the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Project in order to promote employment for youth with disabilities across all public agencies.

- 6) Develop a social media plan, as well as traditional outreach materials, tailored to students and families.

OVR has already connected with 340 followers on LinkedIn and 580 on Facebook as part of our agency's social media initiative, which was launched in October 2013. OVR has been delivering content on a more frequent basis since the platforms became available. Information is gathered from local district offices, statewide events, and national sources. Social media posts have highlighted OVR-sponsored activities and events, agency accomplishments, customer success stories and other information pertinent to our consumer and business customers. OVR will increase and refine our social media presence moving forward, with a continued emphasis on delivering quality content and relevant information to all of our customers in a timely manner. OVR will continue to evolve with the changing social media landscape and adapt our strategies, as necessary, in order to ensure that the material we provide is accessible and impactful. OVR has also added an Administrative Office position to the Business Services and Outreach Division, which will focus direct marketing, branding, and public outreach using print, web applications, and social media. This new position will allow a dedicated staff member with experience and expertise in the field to focus on the proper evolution and growth of OVR's social media strategy.

- 7) Develop a transition resource manual (tool kit) for OVR staff.

The OVR Transition Resource Manual has been developed and posted electronically on the agency's shared drive. It will be monitored and updated as necessary as resources and tools are further developed. Training was provided in the spring of 2015.

- 8) Expand the capacity of programs targeted toward transitioning students to postsecondary or employment opportunities.

The Business Services and Outreach Division (BSOD) launched the Jobs for All - OJT for time-limited, paid work experiences to help OVR consumers under age 25 to increase their access to work while in school and active plan status, prior to achieving their OVR IPE placement goal. Training on the use of the Jobs for All - OJT was provided to all staff via a video conference presentation in June 2014. Sites developed and used by counselors since launch in October have included: Allegheny National Forest, Allied Barton Security Services LLC, Juniper Village at Meadville, Great Lakes Cast Stone, Prime Lawn Care Service, Faith in Action, Grandma's House Childcare, Sterling Technologies, Inc., Luxe Salon and Spa, K&D Auto Electric, Inc., Windber Medical Center, Under the Horizon, Golden Living Center-Oil City, Starbucks Coffee Co. and Landis Homes.

Goal III: Improve Community Education and Outreach

- 1) Develop a public awareness and outreach strategy.

Members of the Executive Team met in December 2014 to consider a draft Invitation for Bid (IFB) to retain a marketing and advertising agency to review current outreach materials and web site and social media content with a goal to create a strategic plan for increased name recognition, increased business/employer recognition and improved consistency of the OVR message on services to consumer and business customers.

- 2) Combine OVR's and Pennsylvania State Rehabilitation Council's (PaRC) Customer Satisfaction Surveys.

This was completed in September of 2014 and was implemented in CWDS. The surveys are sent to customers exiting the VR program as successful closures electronically via e-mail. Their responses are compiled within CWDS for analysis.

- 3) Strengthen relationship with Citizen Advisory Committees (CAC) and ensure that CAC activities are posted on the PaRC web site.

All district offices send meeting information (date, time, location, agenda and approved minutes) which are then posted on the PaRC website on a monthly basis.

- 4) Continue an emphasis on OVR's employer outreach to promote the employment of individuals with disabilities.

Presentations on the new Business Services and Outreach Division have been made at the 2014 Pennsylvania Workforce Development Annual Conference, Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation National Employment Teams (CSAVR NET), Central Penn Business Journal (CPBJ) Summer Business Profiles Edition, Pittsburgh Regional Governors Jobs 1st Employment Summit, L&I North-Central and Southwestern On-the-Road Economic Development outreach events with L&I Secretary and workforce teams, Rehabilitation Community of PA (RCPA) 2014 Annual Conference, 2014 PA Disability Employment and

Empowerment Conference (PADES), University of Scranton North Eastern U.S. Disability Employment Conference, local Society of Human Resources (SHRM) and Chamber of Commerce meetings, NDEAM regional Business and Employer Outreach Events, combined PA OVR BSOD and local PA CareerLink®/WDB employer presentations on ADA and Section 503 regulations on individual with a disability federal contractor hiring goals, and through use of OVR Social media pages.

- 5) Increase outreach to OVR stakeholder groups and the public to increase dialog, public awareness of OVR services, and expand opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

OVR expanded its participation in National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). In 2014, OVR created, sponsored, or took part in 65 NDEAM-associated events, including job fairs, trainings and special presentations – an increase of 15 events (thirty percent) from the previous year's activities. A detailed social media plan was operationalized, including an OVR Facebook page and LinkedIn platform, which expanded knowledge-sharing among VR professionals and outreach to current and potential customers. These platforms were especially helpful in publicizing NDEAM events. Each District Office was required to submit an annual stakeholder outreach plan in advance, as well as quarterly updates on the plan status. District Offices were also instructed to attend and participate in their local WIB meetings and provide updates.

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:

- 1) Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.*
- 2) Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.*

OVR established a goal of providing services to 875 customers via Title VI, Part B Funds distributed to Pennsylvania in FFY 2014. This goal was based on the Title VI, Part B allotment for FFY 2013 divided by the average cost per rehabilitation case for the previous year. 663 customers received Supported Employment services via the available \$818,794 Title VI, Part B Funds. The reason in the discrepancy of the goal and the actual numbers was that cost for services increased while the amount of Title VI, Part B funds were less than anticipated. This did not decrease the number of VR customers served through SE services, in fact the number increased, it is just the amount of Title VI, Part B funds available was not sufficient to reach the intended goal.

During FFY 2014, Supported Employment services were provided to 6,967 individuals with disabilities. Of that number, 1,492 were placed of which 1,458 were placed in competitive employment and 1,145 were working 20 hours or more a week. Reviewing SE data allowed field staff to analyze trends and patterns in the rehabilitation process in which customers experienced challenges to success in community, competitive, and integrated employment.

Review of data also allowed for a better understanding of which customers are receiving SE services. This knowledge assisted OVR staff to clarify issues, address them and, in turn, increase the success of

customers receiving SE services. Overall, SE services are the most effective cost service used by OVR. In 2013/4 the successful closure rate of customers receiving SE services was over 60 percent.

OVR will use Title VI, Part B Funds to provide Supported Employment services to customers throughout the commonwealth. Services are provided by way of contracts with community-based rehabilitation providers using an individualized, performance-based job coaching model. Once the Title VI, Part B Funds have been exhausted, Title I Funds are used to provide Supported Employment services.

Supported Employment (SE) services are a vital part of OVR programming. SE services secure employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities who would not experience an employment outcome from less intensive job placement methods. It is anticipated that approximately 6,800 Pennsylvanians with the most significant disabilities will receive SE services in FFY 2014. Of this number, approximately 875 individuals will be funded out of the \$926,000 Title VI, Part B Funds anticipated for distribution to Pennsylvania in FFY 2015.

OVR is preparing to make revision to its supported employment policy during FFY 2014. Changes that may be considered include: looking to provide ongoing evaluation to ensure services are being provided to those customers most in need; increasing communication among VR partners; and achieving a higher level of stability as part of successful employment outcomes through supported employment funding.

An important goal for OVR is to continue to expand SE services for underserved populations. This goal includes providing quality services to rural areas, to continue to increase successful outcomes for transition-aged youth and to ensure accessibility of services for all potential customers. Another goal is to enhance OVR partnerships with provider agencies such as ODP, OMHSAS and OLTL. These agencies provide the necessary long-term supports needed to ensure the employment success of the individual with a disability.

The VR program's performance on the performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA.

These are new indicators, so we have not been able to capture that data for 2014. However, we are putting reports in place so that we will have this information ready for the next VR portion of the State Plan.

How the funds reserved for innovation and expansion (I&E) activities were utilized.

OVR continues to support innovation and expansion approaches through ongoing Letters of Understanding (LOU) that are developed between community rehabilitation providers and OVR to support the expansion of services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities. This allows us to constantly evaluate and develop new service activities that bring about innovative approaches to serving customers with disabilities more effectively.

OVR continually considers the development of new and emerging services with existing community rehabilitation providers to meet the needs of our customers. As funds are available, OVR will develop a Request for Quote (RFQ) for Innovation and Expansion Projects to provide new strategies and programs

to improve employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities. These projects will target expansion of employment services into rural and underserved counties, job readiness and job placement of customers with the most significant disabilities who have traditionally been underserved, transition services for students with disabilities, pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities, replication of Project SEARCH for students or youth with disabilities, and/or the development of Industry Integrated Employment programs, as well as other innovative strategies identified by local OVR staff. OVR anticipates that potential contracts would generally be up to \$150,000 for the initial project year. Higher contract awards could be accepted for proposals of exceptional activity, as funds are available.

Innovation and Expansion funds will be used to support the funding of the State Rehabilitation Council.

Innovation and Expansion funds have not been used to support the Statewide Independent Living Council's resource plan as other sources of funding have been available. Centers for Independent Living have received funds for innovation and expansion projects in the past.

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.*
- 2) The timing of transition to extended services.*

OVR provides SE services to Pennsylvanians with disabilities through a network of community-based Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs). Services provided through these vendors/partners are described below:

Background

Beginning in the early 1980s, OVR developed a system of SE services using a fee-for-service payment system. Initially, 17 CRPs of SE services were funded through a 5-year, OSERS, Title III supported employment State Change Grant. The number of SE CRPs approved to provide services to OVR has since grown to over 100. There are over 50 SE CRPs contracted specifically with OVR's Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services (BBVS) program. SE services are now provided statewide and include time-limited and, to a much lesser degree, time-enduring services.

OVR SE services include transitional employment through the Clubhouse model for persons with significant mental health disabilities. Also, SE services have been provided on a broader basis since the late 1990's to persons who are deaf via contracting with SE CRPs fluent in American Sign Language. The use of SE for customized employment (CE) cases is being piloted in 2015 to expand the breadth of SE services OVR offers. The use of CE in addition to SE will allow OVR to assist individuals who require very intensive services but are interested in and working towards competitive community integrated employment. OVR District Offices continue to work with other key state and private agencies, such as OHMSA), ODP, OLTL and PDE. In addition, OVR partners with private community service CRPs to expand and develop all types of community-integrated competitive employment as defined by the individual needs of customers.

OVR currently uses what is commonly known as the milestone SE method. OVR has termed its version "Performance Based Job Coaching" (PBJC) and has used this method of funding community-based SE vendors since 1999. This format was based upon research completed by OVR in the mid-1990's to determine best practices for SE service provision. The above-mentioned format was reviewed in 2013 and 2014 for areas of improvement. Additionally, OVR has reviewed SE data for a three-year funding cycle to determine what policy revisions should be considered to improve the provision of SE services.

Quality Standards

OVR provides technical assistance and training for its staff through the use of seminars, conferences, and training programs. SE services provided by community based service CRPs are reviewed at least every 5 years to look at relevance and costs related to such services.

Staff from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), OVR and the Pennsylvania Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (PARF) developed statewide standards for OVR and CRPs of SE services. These standards continue to guide all contracts and contract reviews for provision of SE services. The standards (as updated) are as follows:

1. The population to be served
 - a. Individuals served are those eligible for the state/federal VR program.
 - b. Targeted consumers are individuals with disabilities needing services to obtain, retain, or prepare for community based competitive employment that is consistent with their capacities and abilities.
 - c. The SE program is responsive to customer needs and to the employment opportunities available in the community.
2. Outcomes for SE Program Participants
 - a. The program encourages, promotes, and provides for integration in the competitive work force.
 - b. Skill acquisition challenges the individual's potential to be productive as defined by the employer and employment market.
 - c. The number of hours worked by the participants should be the maximum hours possible based upon the unique strengths, resources, interests, concerns, abilities and capabilities of individuals with the most severe disabilities. The maximum number of employee benefits possible must be sought as well. A competitive employment situation is the intended result, and ideally, it is a position that is full-time with benefits and provides the best opportunity for independence.
3. The SE Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP) Organization
 - a. The CRP mission statement is consistent with the planned services.
 - b. There is evidence that the CRP has the ability to deliver vocational rehabilitation services in the form of community based work assessments, job readiness training, job development, job placement, job analysis, job skills training, on-the-job supports, itinerant supports and extended services among others.
 - c. The CRP demonstrates prior experience or otherwise presents the capability to deliver services, such as linkages with other services, adequate staff, training for staff and other supports for staff, etc.

- d. The CRP has a method in place to measure and report the outcomes of services, e.g., automated or alternative method of service reporting and tracking.
 - e. There are job descriptions for all service CRP staff.
 - f. Staff development is an integral part of the CRP's budget or annual plan.
 - g. The CRP demonstrates that individuals with disabilities have a substantial role in the establishment of organizational policy and delivery of services.
4. The Service Design
- a. The CRP presents for consideration:
 - i. Definitions of Services
 - ii. Staffing pattern that includes individuals with disabilities
 - iii. Model to be used including plan for community integration, job development, placement, training and extended services
 - iv. Linkage with OVR and other funding sources (DHS, PDE)
 - v. Consistent opportunities for informed customer choice
5. Local Linkages:
- a. The CRP demonstrates a knowledge and ability to develop and maintain linkages with other ancillary services in the community, e.g., the L&I BWPO, the PDE Bureau of Special Education (BSE), the DHS (OMHSAS, ODP), the PA Department of Aging (Office of Long Term Living (OLTL), Drug and Alcohol Single County Authorities (SCA), Chambers of Commerce and other extended service agencies and organizations.
 - b. OVR reviews, discusses, and works closely with the CRP for mutually responsive programs. The OVR counselor is integral to customer progress, service delivery, and placement activities occurring in concert with the CRP. A process is in place to measure and report the outcome of services.

Scope and Extent

SE services provided to individuals include: evaluations, skills training, job modification and/or customization, transportation and transportation training services, coordination of ancillary services, advocacy and socialization skills, among others. All services are provided on an individual basis and are tailored to the individual's needs to achieve a specific vocational goal.

Pennsylvania has established local mechanisms through which funding for intensive training and extended services is available for all eligible populations. Populations receiving SE includes individuals with developmental disabilities, mental health issues, physical disabilities, blindness, deafness, autism and traumatic brain injury, among many other needs. SE services are also available within the special education, mental health and developmental disability systems. OVR is actively engaged in collaborative relationships with those systems to ensure the provision of effective services, to reduce duplication of efforts, to share resources, and to improve employment outcomes for those served mutually by multiple systems.

In Pennsylvania, three major sources of extended service funding are available to ensure availability to customers who require long term support such as those who receive services from ODP and OLTL. OVR also has a limited amount of funds for customers who do not have other sources of long-term funding. These funds are the VR state SE funding. They are intended for customers who need extended services

and who have no other source for extended services after the intensive supports are faded from the employment situation.

Actual funding available from ODP and OLTL varies from county to county depending upon each county's situation. Other resources sought for extended service funding are natural supports, SSA work incentives, private foundations, etc.

Timing of the Transition to Extended Services

The timing of the transition of an individual with a disability to extended services is dependent upon the needs of the customer and the employer, and in most cases, available funding from one of the DHS agencies (OMHSAS, ODP and OLTL). Extended services may not be needed for the individual who has appropriate natural supports such as the employer, co-workers, family, and friends. However, extended services must be offered for situations where natural supports for the needs of the employee are missing or incomplete.

The determination of the need for extended services begins at the assessment stage of the VR plan. At that time the rehabilitation team, OVR staff, the individual, the individual's family, and, if applicable, the individual's Case Manager/Supports Coordinator determine what resources are needed for long-term supports. This team collaboratively determines what resources are available to meet the extended services need.

Due to the intensive and short-term nature of OVR supports, other partners (including funders) must be involved to ensure long-term success for the worker with a disability. The rehabilitation team must plan carefully for the needs of an individual with a disability to determine the best time for the employee with a disability to transition to extended services. The sooner the team can be assembled and focused on supporting the customer, the better the transition to extended services will be to meet the needs of the customer and employer.

Career and Technical Education Programs Authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006

Planning, Coordination and Collaboration Prior to State Plan Submission

The State must conduct public hearings in the State, after appropriate and sufficient notice, for the purpose of affording all segments of the public and interested organizations and groups (including charter school authorizers and organizers consistent with State law, employers, labor organizations, parents, students, and community organizations), an opportunity to present their views and make recommendations regarding the State Plan. (section. 122(a)(3))

Consistent with federal requirements, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) held regional public hearings for the commonwealth's most recent [Perkins State Plan](#) in 2007. In collaboration with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry (L&I), PDE will ensure that relevant organizations and groups (including charter school authorizers and organizers consistent with state law, employers, labor organizations, parents, students, and community organizations) are included in any public hearings held relevant to career and technical education (CTE) components within the state's Combined Plan. (Pages 10-11, [Perkins State Plan](#))

The State must include a summary of the above recommendations and the eligible agency's response to such recommendations in the State Plan. (Section 122(a)(3))

The state included the recommendations from the hearing. Information on the procedure followed can be found in the federal [Perkins State Plan](#) located on the Pennsylvania Department of Education website. (Pages 11-12)

The State must develop the State Plan in consultation with academic and career and technical education teachers, faculty, and administrators; career guidance and academic counselors; eligible recipients; charter school authorizers and organizers consistent with State law; parents and students; institutions of higher education; the State tech prep coordinator and representatives of tech prep consortia (if applicable); entities participating in activities undertaken by the State boards under section 101 of the WIOA; interested community members (including parents and community organizations); representatives of special populations; representatives of business and industry (including representatives of small business); and representatives of labor organizations in the State. The State also must consult the Governor of the State with respect to development of the State Plan. (section 122)

Pennsylvania's Perkins State Plan was developed in collaboration with then Governor Edward Rendell's administration as well as other state agencies and stakeholders. Governor Tom Wolf has made CTE a priority for his new administration and his staff has worked collaboratively with PDE and other agencies to ensure that the commonwealth's CTE programs are aligned with the overarching goal of "Schools That Teach, Jobs That Pay, and Government That Works."

Per federal requirements, Pennsylvania formed a statewide committee comprised of mandated representatives, including academic and CTE teachers, faculty, and administrators; career guidance and academic counselors; educational institutions and entities (K-12 and postsecondary); parents, students, and other community members; representatives of special populations, business and industry, and labor organizations; as well as entities participating in activities undertaken by state boards under section 101 of WIOA. (Pages 87-88)

The State must develop effective activities and procedures, including access to information needed to use such procedures, to allow the individuals and entities listed in item 3 above to participate in State and local decisions that relate to development of the State Plan. (section 122(b)(2))

The state developed activities and procedures to allow the mandated individuals and entities to participate in state and local decisions. Pennsylvania's Perkins State Plan details how the planning documents were distributed and made available to stakeholders. (Page 12)

The State must develop the portion of the State Plan relating to the amount and uses of any funds proposed to be reserved for adult career and technical education, postsecondary career and technical education, tech prep education, and secondary career and technical education after consultation with the State agency responsible for supervision of community colleges, technical institutes, or other 2-year postsecondary institutions primarily engaged in providing postsecondary career and technical education, and the State agency responsible for secondary education. If any of those State agencies finds that a portion of the final State Plan is objectionable, that State agency must file its objections with the eligible State agency. The eligible State agency must respond to any objections it receives in the State Plan that it submits to the Secretary of Education. (section 122(e)(3))

Pennsylvania's Perkins State Plan responded to the required and permissible uses of funds as well as reserved funds. PDE is the state agency responsible for secondary and postsecondary CTE. Included in the planning were the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Offices of Postsecondary and Higher Education, and Elementary and Secondary Education. More detailed information regarding committee make-up and processes followed is available in Pennsylvania's federal Perkins State Plan. (Page 87-88)

Program Administration

The State must prepare and submit to the Secretary a State Plan for a 6-year period. (section 122(a)(1))

A six-year State Plan was not submitted. Federal regulation provided the opportunity to submit a transition plan for the first year of operation and five-year state plan. In 2007, Pennsylvania submitted a one-year transition plan followed by a five-year Perkins State Plan, as outlined in U.S. Department of Education (USDE) guidance and federal regulation. Pending reauthorization of the Perkins Act and per federal requirements, PDE has continued to provide annual updates to USDE regarding its Perkins activities in lieu of a revised State Plan.

The State Plan must include information that describes the career and technical education activities to be assisted that are designed to meet or exceed the State adjusted levels of performance, including a description of—

- *The career and technical education programs of study, that may be adopted by local educational agencies and postsecondary institutions to be offered as an option to students (and their parents as appropriate) when planning for and completing future coursework, for career and technical content areas that: (i) Incorporate secondary education and postsecondary education elements; (ii) Include coherent and rigorous content, aligned with challenging academic standards, and relevant career and technical content in a coordinated, non-duplicative progression of courses that align secondary education with postsecondary education to adequately prepare students to succeed in postsecondary education; (iii) May include the*

opportunity for secondary education students to participate in dual or concurrent enrollment programs or other ways to acquire postsecondary education credits; and (iv) Lead to an industry-recognized credential or certificate at the postsecondary level, or an associate or baccalaureate degree;

Within the Perkins State Plan, PDE describes the process used to by the commonwealth to develop programs of study. The programs of study that were developed include both secondary and postsecondary education elements, per federal requirements.

The federal Perkins State Plan outlines the current state regulations that require school entities to ensure students are academically and technically prepared for success in postsecondary education. The state regulations mandate all approved CTE programs to be coordinated, non-duplicative progression of courses that articulate with postsecondary education.

State regulation requires all approved CTE programs to provide dual or concurrent enrollment programs as well as other ways to acquire postsecondary education credits for secondary technical coursework.

The design of the state developed programs of study ensured the programs of study were aligned to national industry standards and state licensing requirements where they existed. State regulation requires every secondary approved CTE program to align to and offer students the opportunity to earn an industry-recognized credential or certificate at the secondary level. All postsecondary level components of the state developed program of study provide the CTE graduate with a certificate or degree. (Pages 14-17)

- *How the State, in consultation with eligible recipients, will develop and implement the career and technical programs of study described in (a) above;*

Pennsylvania's statewide ad hoc committee assisted the state in developing the programs of study. Additional information regarding this process is available in the federal Perkins State Plan. (Page 17)

- *How the State will support eligible recipients in developing and implementing articulation agreements between secondary education and postsecondary education institutions;*

Because the state developed the programs of study, PDE developed a statewide articulation agreement. The Department as well as the Perkins postsecondary recipients sign the articulation agreements. These articulation agreements assure eligible secondary CTE students a minimum of nine college credits for their secondary technical coursework at any of the Perkins funded postsecondary institutions. (Pages 18-19)

- *How programs at the secondary level will make available information about career and technical programs of study offered by eligible recipients;*

Each entity offering approved secondary CTE programs must identify the CTE programs of study in their course catalogs. PDE conducts annual reviews of recipients to ensure compliance with this and other requirements. Annual reviews include the examination of course catalogs to verify the student course

catalog includes information on the programs of study. Postsecondary entities must include information on the program of study in their course catalogs and websites. *(Pages 18-19)*

- *The secondary and postsecondary career and technical education programs to be carried out, including programs that will be carried out by the eligible State agency to develop, improve, and expand access to appropriate technology in career and technical education programs;*

Pennsylvania's federal Perkins State Plan provides a description of state requirements regarding the development, improvement and expansion of programs that help student's access appropriate technology in CTE programs. There are multiple requirements for both secondary and postsecondary entities. The State Plan also describes the technical assistance provided by the Department. *(Pages 19-20)*

- *The criteria that the eligible State agency will use to approve eligible recipients for funds under the Act, including criteria to assess the extent to which the local plan will: (i) Promote continuous improvement in academic achievement; (ii) Promote continuous improvement of technical skill attainment; and (iii) Identify and address current or emerging occupational opportunities;*

Pennsylvania's federal Perkins State Plan describes academic preparation at secondary and postsecondary levels of the program of study in great detail. The state collects and analyzes data related to academic preparation and requires each Perkins applicant to promote continuous improvement through their review and analysis of the accountability measures.

The federal Perkins State Plan also describes technical preparation at secondary and postsecondary levels of the program of study. The state collects and analyzes data related to technical preparation. Each Perkins applicant must also promote continuous improvement through their review and analysis of the accountability measures.

Finally, PDE works closely with L&I to align secondary and postsecondary CTE programs to current and emerging occupations. Additional information about these interagency alignment efforts is described in the federal Perkins State Plan. *(Pages 20-22)*

- *How programs at the secondary level will prepare career and technical education students, including special populations, to graduate from secondary school with a diploma;*

Pennsylvania's federal Perkins State Plan addresses each special populations category, including: 1) individuals with disabilities; 2) individuals from economically disadvantaged families; 3) non-traditional students preparing to enter an industry dominated by one gender; 4) single parents (including pregnant students); 5) displaced homemakers; and 6) English language learners/limited English proficient students. In addition, the federal Perkins State Plan details actions taken by PDE to ensure all students enrolled in CTE graduate from secondary school with a diploma. *(Pages 22-23)*

- *How such programs will prepare career and technical education students, including special populations, academically and technically for opportunities in postsecondary education or entry*

into high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand occupations in current or emerging occupations, and how participating students will be made aware of such opportunities;

Pennsylvania's federal Perkins State Plan addresses each of the special populations categories and actions taken by PDE to ensure students enrolled in CTE are academically and technically prepared for opportunities in postsecondary education portion of the state developed program of study and for high demand occupations. The description includes collaboration efforts between PDE and L&I as well as relevant state regulations. (Pages 23-24)

- *How funds will be used to improve or develop new career and technical education courses: (i) At the secondary level that are aligned with rigorous and challenging academic content standards and student academic achievement standards adopted by the State under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended; (ii) At the postsecondary level that are relevant and challenging; and (iii) That lead to employment in high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand occupations;*

Pennsylvania's federal Perkins State Plan outlines each of the required uses and permissible uses of funds for local entities, including how these entities will align CTE programs with academic content standards. The State Plan also outlines how PDE provides in-service and pre-service programs for teachers and instructors.

The federal Perkins State Plan also describes each of the required and permissible uses of funds for local entities. This includes requirements that funds are used to ensure the postsecondary portion of the program is relevant and challenging.

Finally, Pennsylvania's State Plan describes how PDE and L&I work together to align programs to statewide and regional high-priority occupations – job categories that are in demand by employers, have higher skill needs, and are most likely to provide family-sustaining wages. These efforts are part of the commonwealth's broader workforce development efforts. (Pages 25-29)

- *How the State will facilitate and coordinate communications on best practices among successful recipients of tech prep program grants under Title II and other eligible recipients to improve program quality and student achievement;*

Pennsylvania's federal Perkins State Plan describes how the state facilitates and coordinates communications on best practices to the field. For example, annual local applications collect best and promising practices, while an annual conference disseminates those practices as well as other evidence-based and emerging strategies to help students succeed. (Pages 29-30)

- *How funds will be used effectively to link academic and career and technical education at the secondary level and at the postsecondary level in a manner that increases student academic and career and technical achievement; and*

Pennsylvania's Perkins State Plan describes how the Tech Prep consortia identify committees that will assist the state in developing statewide programs of study. The statewide committee addresses both academic and technical preparation of students enrolled in CTE, and is comprised of representatives from secondary and postsecondary institutions. (Pages 30-31)

- *How the State will report on the integration of coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards in career and technical education programs in order to adequately evaluate the extent of such integration. (section 122(c)(1)(A)-(L))*

PDE conducts monitoring visits of each approved secondary CTE program as well as reviews of Perkins recipients based on selection criteria. In addition, PDE requires that each eligible entity address how they comply with requirements to integrate academic and CTE content in the annual Local Plan application. (Page 31)

The State plan must describe how comprehensive professional development (including initial teacher preparation and activities that support recruitment) for career and technical teachers, faculty, administrators, and career guidance and academic counselors will be provided, especially professional development that—

- *Promotes the integration of coherent and rigorous academic content standards and career and technical education curricula, including through opportunities for academic and career and technical teachers to jointly develop and implement curricula and pedagogical strategies;*

PDE offers a number of professional development programs for all educators across the commonwealth, including CTE instructors and postsecondary partners. The federal Perkins State Plan describes the professional development programs provided to secondary and postsecondary staff regarding integration of academic and technical content. (Pages 31-32)

- *Increases the percentage of teachers that meet teacher certification or licensing requirements;*

Pennsylvania's federal Perkins State Plan describes activities to increase the number of teachers meeting/exceeding the state's teacher certification and licensing requirements. (Page 32)

- *Is high quality, sustained, intensive, and focused on instruction, and increases the academic knowledge and understanding of industry standards, as appropriate, of career and technical education teachers;*

Pennsylvania's Perkins State Plan describes efforts to incentivize high-quality, sustainable, intensive, and instruction-driven professional development opportunities provided to secondary and postsecondary staff regarding integration of academic and technical content as well as the state requirement for continued professional education. (Page 32)

- *Encourages applied learning that contributes to the academic and career and technical knowledge of the student;*

Pennsylvania's Perkins State Plan highlights the state's applied learning requirements. Under these guidelines, CTE programs must be 1) project based, and 2) aligned with industry standards through input from businesses/employers. (Pages 32-33)

- *Provides the knowledge and skills needed to work with and improve instruction for special populations; and*

PDE works collaboratively with state, regional, and community partners to ensure that all students, including those with special needs or barriers, can succeed in the classroom, career pathways, and as engaged citizens. The federal Perkins State Plan describes how the state's professional development programs provide the knowledge and skills needed to effectively support students in special population categories. (Pages 33-34)

- *Promotes integration with professional development activities that the State carries out under Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended, and Title II of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. (section 122(c)(2)(A)-(G))*

PDE offers a number of professional development programs for all educators across the commonwealth, including CTE instructors and postsecondary partners. The federal Perkins State Plan describes how professional development provided by the state is integrated with professional development programs provided under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) as well as Title II of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA). (Page 34)

The State Plan must describe efforts that the eligible State agency and eligible recipients will make to improve—(A) the recruitment and retention of career and technical education teachers, faculty, and career guidance and academic counselors, including individuals in groups underrepresented in the teaching profession; and (B) the transition to teaching from business and industry, including small business. (section 122(c)(3)(A)-(B))

Pennsylvania's Perkins State Plan describes how the state recruits and retains CTE instructors and faculty, including the active recruitment of teachers from underrepresented groups (economically disadvantaged, single parent, migrant, ESL, non-traditional, etc.). PDE strongly believes a diversified teacher workforce can help students who face similar obstacles.

In addition, the State Plan identifies how the state assists CTE instructors in transitioning from their roles within business/industry to the classroom. Research from the commonwealth indicates that secondary CTE instructors are typically older (37 years old, on average) when entering the teaching profession than their non-CTE peers. While these individuals bring significant and valuable life experience – including professional and technical skills – to their new roles as instructors, they often require additional supports to help them successfully transition to – and remain in – the classroom. These programs have bolstered the state's CTE instructor retention rate, with 90 percent of teachers remaining in the profession. (Pages 35-36)

The State Plan must describe efforts that the eligible State agency and eligible recipients will make to improve the transition of subbaccalaureate career and technical education students into baccalaureate degree programs at institutions of higher education. (section 122(c)(4))

Pennsylvania's Perkins State Plan describes PDE's collaboration with two- and four-year postsecondary institutions to fulfill the state's Transfer and Articulation provisions (Act 114), ensuring Perkins recipients can incorporate stackable credentials into approved programs. This includes connecting subbaccalaureate to baccalaureate degree programs. (Page 36)

The State Plan must describe how the eligible State agency will actively involve parents, academic and career and technical education teachers, administrators, faculty, career guidance and academic counselors, local business (including small businesses), and labor organizations in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of career and technical education programs in the State. (section 122(c)(5))

Pennsylvania utilizes numerous means to involve diverse partners in the development and implementation of CTE programs. PDE has established working relationships with various state agencies and community organizations focused on education and workforce development, including PA Partners, PACTEC, Transition Council, PA VSNP, and PACTA.

PDE also conducts on-site evaluations of Perkins recipients. Parents and students are also interviewed as part of this on-site evaluation process.

Additional information regarding how the state involves stakeholders in state-developed CTE programs is described in the federal Perkins State Plan. (Page 36)

The State Plan must describe efforts that the eligible State agency and eligible recipients will make to—

- *Improve the academic and technical skills of students participating in career and technical education programs, including by strengthening the academic and career and technical components of career and technical education programs through the integration of academics with career and technical education to ensure learning in—(i) The core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended); and (ii) Career and technical education subjects;*

The commonwealth's Perkins State Plan describes how performance measures at the state and local levels are aligned with rigorous standards in core academic subjects as well as technical competencies. CTE programs of study are aligned with the state's core academic subjects and standards. (Page 37)

- *Provide students with strong experience in, and understanding of, all aspects of an industry; and*

The state and local recipients strive to address all aspects of the industry as part of the CTE program of study. Additional information is available in the federal Perkins State Plan. (Page 37)

- *Ensure that students who participate in career and technical education programs are taught to the same challenging academic proficiencies as taught to all other students. (section 122(c)(7)(A)-(C))*

Pennsylvania's Perkins State Plan describes how the state and the recipients ensure all students enrolled in CTE engage in the same rigorous, challenging academic coursework as students across the commonwealth. (Page 38)

The State Plan must describe how the eligible State agency will provide local educational agencies, area career and technical education schools, and eligible institutions in the State with technical assistance. (section 122(c)(15))

PDE provides technical assistance to all funded secondary and postsecondary approved programs on an ongoing basis. The Department's Bureau of Career and Technical Education (BCTE) leads these efforts, and helps coordinate responses to individual requests for assistance as well as larger statewide training and technical assistance events, such as the annual Pennsylvania Career and Technical Education Conference. PDE also helps facilitate peer-to-peer coordination between individual entities that need assistance and those that have been successful in implementing best practices. More detailed information regarding these efforts is available in the Perkins State Plan. (Page 38)

The State Plan must describe how career and technical education in the State relates to the State's and region's occupational opportunities. (WIOA section 122(c)(16))

PDE works with L&I to align each CTE program of study to regional high priority occupations. State agencies utilize labor market data at the state, regional, and local levels to coordinate funding and development efforts. This interagency collaboration is detailed in Pennsylvania's Perkins State Plan. (Pages 38-39)

The State Plan must describe the methods the eligible State agency proposes for the joint planning and coordination of programs carried out under this legislation with other Federal education programs. (section 122(c)(17))

Information on coordination and joint planning is available in the federal Perkins State Plan. (Page 39)

The State Plan must provide a description and the information specified "in subparagraphs (B) and (C)(iii) of section 102(b)(2), and, as appropriate, section 103(b)(3)(A), and section 121(c), of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (Public Law 113-128) concerning the provisions of services only for postsecondary students and school.

The federal Perkins State Plan defines the role of postsecondary CTE in the commonwealth's one-stop career center delivery system. While Pennsylvania's Perkins State Plan was approved before WIOA was passed, and therefore does not include a description of alignment with WIOA's requirements, PDE is working closely with L&I and other state agencies to ensure that its efforts are aligned, as needed. (Page 40)

The State Plan must include a copy of the eligible State agency's local applications or plans for secondary and postsecondary eligible recipients, which will meet the requirements in section 134(b) of the Act.

A copy of the local plan application is included in the federal Perkins State Plan. (Appendix)

The State Plan must provide a description of the State's governance structure for vocational and technical education.

A description of the state's governance structure is provided in the federal Perkins State Plan. (Page 40)

The State Plan must provide a description of the role of postsecondary career and technical education in the one-stop delivery system established by Title I of WIOA.

The role of postsecondary CTE in the one-stop delivery system is described in the federal Perkins Plan. While Pennsylvania's Perkins State Plan was approved before WIOA was passed, and therefore does not include a description of alignment with WIOA's requirements, PDE is working closely with L&I and other state agencies to ensure that its efforts are aligned, as needed. (Pages 40-41)

Provision of Services for Special Populations

The State Plan must describe the eligible State agency's program strategies for special populations listed in Section 3(29) of the Act, including a description of how individuals who are members of the special populations—

- *Will be provided with equal access to activities assisted under the Act.*

PDE strives to ensure the agency's strategy for special populations is in strict compliance with all laws and regulations for special populations and in developing the potential of each student to meaningfully engage and succeed in the classroom, career pathways, and as responsible individuals and citizens. Pennsylvania's Perkins State Plan provides a description of how students classified under the special populations categories will be provided with equal access to CTE. (Page 42)

- *Will not be discriminated against on the basis of their status as members of special populations; and*

PDE incorporates appropriate requirements of civil rights law and regulations into program assurances, as well as initial evaluations and on-site reviews of secondary and postsecondary recipients. The federal Perkins State Plan provides a more detailed description of how the state works to prevent discrimination of members of special populations. (Page 42)

- *Will be provided with programs designed to enable the special populations to meet or exceed State adjusted levels of performance, and how the eligible State agency will prepare special populations for further learning and for high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand occupations. (section 122(c)(9)(A)-(C))*

The federal Perkins State Plan provides a description of how programs are designed to enable students classified under the special population categories to meet or exceed state levels of performance. (Page 43)

The State Plan must describe how the eligible State agency will adequately address the needs of students in alternative education programs, if the agency has such programs. (section 122(c)(14))

The federal Perkins State Plan details how the needs of students enrolled in alternative education programs will be met. (Page 43)

The State Plan must describe how funds will be used to promote preparation for high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand occupations and non-traditional fields. (section 122(c)(18))

The federal Perkins State Plan identifies how funds are used to promote the preparation of students for high-skill, high-wage and high demand occupations and non-traditional fields. (Page 44)

The State Plan must describe how funds will be used to serve individuals in State correctional institutions. (section 122(c)(19))

The federal Perkins State Plan provides a description of how funds are used to serve individuals in state correctional institutions. (Page 44)

The State Plan must describe how the State will require each applicant for funds to include in its application a description of 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 as contained in section 427(b) of the General Education Provisions Act as amended. For further guidance and examples, see the Notice to All Applicants at <http://www.ed.gov/fund/gran/apply/appforms/gepa427.doc>

PDE requires all eligible recipients to submit a proposal that outlines the actions and use of funds the recipient will follow. Additional information regarding the Department's review and compliance monitoring processes is available in the federal Perkins State Plan. (Page 45)

Accountability and Evaluation

The State Plan must describe procedures the eligible State agency will use to obtain input from eligible recipients in establishing measurement definitions and approaches for the core indicators of performance for career and technical education students at the secondary and postsecondary levels, as well as for any other additional indicators of performance identified by the eligible agency. (section 113(b)(1)(A)-(B), sec. 113(b)(2)(A)-(C))

PDE's strategies to obtain input from recipients regarding performance measurements and other core indicators are outlined in the federal Perkins State Plan. (Pages 47-48)

The State Plan must describe the procedures the eligible State agency will use to obtain input from eligible recipients in establishing a State adjusted level of performance for each of the core indicators of performance for career and technical education students at the secondary and postsecondary levels, as well as State levels of performance for any additional indicators of performance identified by the eligible agency. (section 122(c)(10)(A), sec. 113(b)(3)(B))

The federal Perkins State Plan details how PDE obtains feedback and input from eligible recipients in establishing state levels of performance on each performance indicator. (Page 48)

The State Plan must identify, on the forms in Part C of this section, the valid and reliable measurement definitions and approaches that the eligible State agency will use for each of the core indicators of performance for career and technical education students at the secondary and postsecondary/adult levels, as well as any additional indicators of performance identified by the eligible agency, that are valid and reliable. The eligible State agency must describe how its proposed definitions and measures are valid and reliable. (section 113(b)(2)(A)-(B))

The measures and definitions used for federal reporting on the federal Perkins grant are valid and reliable. A description of the definitions and measures is found in the State Plan. (Page 49)

Section 113(b) of the Act describes the measures that a State must use for student attainment of challenging academic content standards and student academic achievement standards in reading/language arts and mathematics (1S1 and 1S2, respectively) and student graduation rates (4S1). Based on the Department of Education's non-regulatory guidance, the measurement definitions on the Final Agreed Upon Performance Levels (FAUPL) form have been pre-populated for the eligible State agency's convenience. The eligible State agency does not need to describe how these definitions and measures are valid and reliable in the State Plan narrative. A State that chooses to propose other student definitions and measurement approaches in its new State Plan would have to describe how its proposed definitions and measures would be valid and reliable.

The State Plan must describe how, in the course of developing core indicators of performance and additional indicators of performance, the eligible State agency will align the indicators, to the greatest extent possible, so that information substantially similar to that gathered for other State and Federal programs, or for any other purpose, is used to meet the Act's accountability requirements. (section 113(b)(2)(F))

The federal Perkins State Plan describes how the core indicators of performance are the same as those gathered for other state and federal programs where the indicators align (ESEA). More information regarding these efforts is offered in the federal Perkins State Plan. (Page 49)

The State Plan must provide performance levels for each of the core indicators of performance. For performance levels that are required, the States' performance levels, at a minimum, must be expressed in a percentage or numerical form, so as to be objective, quantifiable, and measurable; and require the State to continually make progress toward improving the performance of career and technical education students. (section 113(b)(3)(A)(i)-(II))

The core indicators of performance are provided in the Final Agreed Upon Performance Level document.

Section 113(b)(2) of the Perkins Act requires a State to develop valid and reliable core indicators of performance, to propose performance levels in its State Plan, and to reach agreement with the Department on "adjusted performance levels" for each of the core indicators. In so doing, the Perkins Act prescribes the measures that a State must use for some of the core indicators.

Section 113(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Perkins Act requires a State to measure career and technical education students' attainment of "challenging academic content standards" and "student academic achievement standards" that a State adopted pursuant to section 1111(b)(1) of the ESEA. The Perkins Act further requires a State use its State's academic assessments (i.e. the State's reading/language arts and mathematics tests) implemented under section 1111(b)(3) of the ESEA to measure career and technical education students' attainment of these State standards. Thus, a State's core indicators must include career and technical education students' proficiency in reading/language arts and mathematics as measured under 1111(b)(1) and (3) of the ESEA. Accordingly, under the Perkins Act, a State must report the number or percent of its career and technical education students who score at the proficient level or above on the State's assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics administered under the ESEA to measure the academic proficiency of secondary career and technical education students against the ESEA standards.

To measure attainment of these standards, a State must develop and reach agreement with the Department on "adjusted performance levels," which constitute the State's performance targets for a

program year. Permissible targets (i.e. “adjusted performance levels”) would be a State’s “annual measurable objectives” (AMOs) from its State’s ESEA accountability workbook. (To ensure that a State’s schools are making “adequate yearly progress” (AYP) as required under section 1111(b)(2)(A) of the ESEA, section 1111(b)(2)(G) of the ESEA requires a State to establish Statewide AMOs, which identify a single minimum percentage of students who are required to meet or exceed the proficient level on the State’s academic assessments each year.) Under the Perkins Act, a State may propose different performance levels (targets) instead of its AMOs as discussed below.

Section 113(b)(2)(A)(iv) of the Perkins Act requires a State to identify a core indicator to measure for its career and technical education students at the secondary level “student graduation rates (as described in section 1111 (b)(2)(C)(vi) of the (ESEA)).” Thus, a State must report the number or percent of its career and technical education students whom the State includes as graduated in its graduation rate described under the ESEA. To ensure that a State’s schools are making AYP as required under section 1111(b)(2)(A) of the ESEA, some States have established Statewide targets for graduation rates under section 1111(b)(2)(C)(vi), and other States have defined AYP only to require improvement in the graduation rate each year.

The Department strongly encourages the State to reach agreement on “adjusted performance levels” required under section 113 of the Perkins Act for the core indicators discussed in (a) and (b) above that are the same as the State’s AMOs or targets that the State adopted to ensure that the State’s schools are making AYP as required under section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA. However, as noted above, the State may not have established targets for graduations rates under the ESEA, or the State may wish to propose performance levels for these core indicators that are different from the State’s targets. If so, the State must provide baseline data using the State’s most recent year’s achievement data or graduation rate under the ESEA, propose performance levels, and reach agreement with the Department of Education on “adjusted performance levels.” (The Secretary of Education is considering whether to issue regulations requiring a State to agree to “adjusted performance levels” under the Perkins Act that are the same as the State’s AMOs or targets for graduation rate under the ESEA. If the Secretary of Education decides to regulate on this issue and adopts final rules, a State may be required to amend its State Plan.

The State Plan must describe the eligible State agency’s process for reaching agreement on local adjusted levels of performance if an eligible recipient does not accept the State adjusted levels of performance under section 113(b)(3) of the Act and ensuring that the established performance levels will require the eligible recipient to continually make progress toward improving the performance of career and technical education students. (section 113(b)(4)(A)(II); sec. 122(c)(10)(B))

The state followed the process developed by USDE. The federal Perkins State Plan details PDE’s compliance with these required processes. (Pages 50-51)

The State Plan must describe the objective criteria and methods the eligible State agency will use to allow an eligible recipient to request revisions to its local adjusted levels of performance if unanticipated circumstances arise with respect to an eligible recipient. (section 113(b)(4)(A)(vi))

The federal Perkins State Plan outlines the objective criteria and methods used to allow revisions to local levels of performance. (Page 51)

The eligible State agency must describe how it will report data relating to students participating in career and technical education programs in order to adequately measure the progress of the students, including special populations and students participating in tech prep programs, if applicable, and how the eligible State agency will ensure that the data reported to it from local educational agencies and eligible institutions, and the data that it reports to the Secretary, are complete, accurate, and reliable. (section 122(c)(13); section 205)

PDE's data reporting system – including data collection and analysis methods – is described in the federal Perkins State Plan. (Pages 51-52)

The State Plan must describe how the State plans to enter into an agreement with each consortium receiving a grant under Perkins IV to meet a minimum level of performance for each of the performance indicators described in section 113(b) and 203(e). (section 204(e)(1))

Pennsylvania's Perkins State Plan outlines the process PDE uses to reach agreement with each Perkins recipient. (Page 52)

The State Plan must describe how the eligible State agency will annually evaluate the effectiveness of career and technical education programs, and describe, to the extent practicable, how the eligible State agency is coordinating those programs with other Federal programs to ensure nonduplication. (section 122(c)(8))

The federal Perkins State Plan describes how PDE evaluates the effectiveness of the CTE programs and how the agency coordinates with other programs. (Pages 52-54)

The State Plan must provide all the information requested on the forms provided in Part C of this section to report accountability data annually to the Secretary of Education under section 113(c)(1)-(2), including:

- *The student definitions that the State will use for the secondary core indicators of performance and the postsecondary/adult core indicators of performance;*

Definitions for secondary and postsecondary core indicators of performance are provided in the federal Perkins State Plan. (Page 82)

- *Baseline data for the core indicators of performance under section 113(b)(2) using data from the most-recently completed program year, except that, for the indicators for which the State must use its standards, assessment, and graduation rates adopted under Title I of the ESEA, if the State chooses to use its AMOs and targets under the ESEA, the eligible State agency will not need to submit baseline data; and*

Pennsylvania's federal Perkins State Plan provides the baseline year data for each of the performance indicators. (Pages 83-86)

- *Proposed performance levels as discussed above, except that, for the indicators for which the State must use its the eligible State standards, assessments, and graduation rates adopted under Title I of the ESEA, if the State chooses to use its AMOs and targets under the ESEA, the eligible*

State agency will only have to confirm this information with the State's OCTAE Regional Accountability Specialist. Upon the eligible State agency's request, the Regional Accountability Specialist will pre-populate the forms in Part C with the State's current AMOs and targets, as appropriate, and send the forms for the eligible State agency to finish completing.

Proposed levels of performance, including alignment with performance measures for other programs, are included in the Perkins State Plan. (Pages 83-86)

The eligible State agency must identify the program areas for which the State has technical skill assessments, the estimated percentage of CTE students who take technical skill assessments, and the State's plan for increasing the coverage of programs and students reported in future program years.

A description of aligning approved CTE programs to industry-based third-party national assessment is found in the federal Perkins State Plan. (Page 55)

Tech Prep Programs

The State Plan must describe the competitive basis or formula the eligible State agency will use to award grants to tech-prep consortia. (section 203(a)(1))

Pennsylvania's Perkins State Plan describes the competitive process used to award Tech Prep grants. (Pages 57-58)

The State Plan must describe how the eligible State agency will give special consideration to applications that address the areas identified in section 204(d). (section 204(d)(1)-(6))

The federal Perkins State Plan details the special consideration PDE gave to Tech Prep applications that address the areas identified in section 204(d). (Page 58)

The State Plan must describe how the eligible State agency will ensure an equitable distribution of assistance between urban and rural consortium participants. (section 204(f))

A description of the strategies PDE used to ensure equitable distribution of assistance to urban and rural consortium participants is in Pennsylvania's Perkins State Plan. (Page 58)

The State Plan must describe how the eligible State agency will ensure that each funded tech prep program—

- *Is carried out under an articulation agreement between the participants in the consortium, as defined in section 3(4) of the Act;*

State regulations mandate all approved secondary CTE programs are articulated to postsecondary CTE programs. In addition, with the state developed programs of study, PDE developed a statewide articulation agreement. Each Tech Prep recipient had to articulate programs of study in order to receive funds. (Pages 58-59)

- *Consists of a program of study that meets the requirements of section 203(c)(2)(A)-(G);*

A description of the programs of study is available in the federal Perkins State Plan. (Page 59)

Includes the development of tech prep programs for secondary and postsecondary education that meet the requirements of section 203(c)(3)(A)-(D);

Funding recipients needed to develop Tech Prep programs that met all requirements of the federal Perkins Act. These Tech Prep consortia requirements are detailed in the federal Perkins State Plan. (Page 59)

- *Includes in-service professional development for teachers, faculty, and administrators that meets the requirements of section 203(c)(4)(A)-(F).*

Each Tech Prep consortia needed to provide in-service programs for required partners as part of the Tech Prep Grant. Additional information regarding these professional development programs is provided in the federal Perkins State Plan. (Page 60)

- *Includes professional development programs for counselors that meet the requirements of section 203(c)(5)(A)-(F);*

Each Tech Prep consortia needed to provide in-service programs for counselors as part of the Tech Prep grant. Additional information regarding these professional development programs is provided in the federal Perkins State Plan. (Page 60)

- *Provides equal access to the full range of technical preparation programs (including pre-apprenticeship programs) to individuals who are members of special populations, including the development of tech-prep program services appropriate to the needs of special populations (section 203(c)(6));*

Funded Tech Prep consortia provide equal access to CTE programs, including pre-apprenticeship programs, to those students who fall under the special populations categories. More information regarding efforts to ensure equal access is available in Pennsylvania's Perkins State Plan. (Page 60)

- *Provides for preparatory services that assist participants in tech-prep programs (section 203(c)(7)); and Coordinates with activities under Title I. (section 203(c)(8))*

Pennsylvania's Perkins State Plan offers information regarding preparatory services that each Tech Prep consortia must provide as part of the grant, including coordination with other program activities under Title I. (Page 61)

The State Plan must describe how the State Plans to enter into an agreement with each consortium receiving a grant under Perkins IV to meet a minimum level of performance for each of the performance indicators described in sections 113(b) and 203(e). (section 204(e)(1))

The federal Perkins State Plan describes how each Tech Prep grant recipient will meet minimum levels of performance on each of the Tech Prep performance indicators. (Page 61)

The State must submit a copy of the local application form(s) used to award tech prep funds to consortia and a copy of the technical review criteria used to select winning consortia, if funds are awarded competitively.

The Tech Prep application is found in the Appendix of the federal Perkins State Plan.

Financial Requirements

The State Plan must describe how the eligible State agency will allocate funds it receives through the allotment made under section 111, including any funds that the eligible State agency chooses to consolidate under section 202(a), will be allocated among career and technical education at the secondary level, or career and technical education at the postsecondary and adult level, or both, including the rationale for such allocation. (section 122(c)(6)(A); section 202(c))

Pennsylvania's federal Perkins State Plan describes PDE's funding allocation methodology for both secondary and postsecondary CTE programs. (Page 63)

The State Plan must provide the specific dollar allocations made available by the eligible agency for career and technical education programs under sections 131(a)-(e) and how these allocations are distributed to local educational agencies, area career and technical education schools, and educational service agencies within the State. (section 131(g); section 202(c))

A list of the Perkins allocations is found in the federal Perkins State Plan. (Page 63, Appendix)

The State Plan must provide the specific dollar allocations made available by the eligible agency for career and technical education programs under section 132(a) of the Act and how these allocations are distributed to postsecondary institutions within the State. (section 122(c)(6)(A); section 202(c))

A list of the Perkins allocations is found in the federal Perkins State Plan. (Appendix)

The State Plan must describe how the eligible State agency will allocate any of those funds among any consortia that will be formed among secondary schools, and how funds will be allocated among the members of the consortia, including the rationale for such allocation. (section 122(c)(6)(B); section 202(c))

Pennsylvania's Perkins State Plan details PDE's funding allocation methodology for consortia formed among secondary schools. (Page 64)

The State Plan must describe how the eligible State agency will allocate any of those funds among any consortia that will be formed among postsecondary institutions, and how funds will be allocated among the members of the consortia, including the rationale for such allocations. (section 122(c)(6)(B); section 202(c))

Pennsylvania's Perkins State Plan describes how PDE allocates funds among consortia formed among postsecondary institutions. (Page 65)

The State Plan must describe how the eligible State agency will adjust the data used to make the allocations to reflect any change in school district boundaries that may have occurred since the

population and/or enrollment data was collected, and include local educational agencies without geographical boundaries, such as charter schools and secondary schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. (section 131(a)(3))

The Perkins State Plan details PDE's allocation adjustment to reflect any changes in school district boundaries as well as for LEAs without geographical boundaries. (Page 65)

The State Plan must provide a description of any proposed alternative allocation formula(s) requiring approval by the Secretary of Education as described in section 131(b) or 132(b). At a minimum, the eligible State agency must provide an allocation run for eligible recipients using the required elements outlined in section 131(a) and/or section 132(a)(2), together with an allocation run using the proposed alternative formula(s). Also the eligible State agency must include a demonstration that the alternative secondary formula more effectively targets funds on the basis of poverty, as described in section 131(b)(1) of the Act; and/or, in the case of an alternative postsecondary formula, a demonstration that the formula described in section 132(a)(2) does not result in a distribution of funds to eligible recipients that have the highest numbers of economically disadvantaged individuals and that an alternative formula would result in such a distribution.

An alternative allocation formula is not used to distribute federal Perkins funds.

The State Plan must include a detailed project budget, using the forms provided in Part B of this guide.

The budget was submitted as part of the federal Perkins State Plan and can be found in Part B of the State Plan.

The State Plan must provide a listing of allocations made to consortia (secondary and postsecondary) from funds available under sections 112(a) and (c).

A listing of allocations made to consortia from funds available under Sections 112 (s) and (c) are found in the federal Perkins State Plan. (Appendix A)

The State Plan must describe the secondary and postsecondary formulas used to allocate funds available under section 112(a), as required by section 131(a) and 132(a).

The Perkins State Plan provides each secondary and postsecondary formula PDE used to allocate funds. (Pages 66-67)

The State Plan must describe the competitive basis or formula to be used to award reserve funds under section 112(c).

Not applicable – a reserve fund is not used.

The State Plan must describe the procedures used to rank and determine eligible recipients seeking funding under section 112(c).

Not applicable – a reserve fund is not used.

The State Plan must include a description of the procedures used to determine eligible recipients in rural and sparsely populated areas under section 131(c)(2) or 132(a)(4) of the Act.

Pennsylvania's Perkins State Plan provides information regarding eligibility determinations for rural and sparsely populated areas. *(Page 67)*

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF)

Conduct a program, designed to serve all political subdivisions in the State (not necessarily in a uniform manner), that provides assistance to needy families with (or expecting) children and provides parents with job preparation, work and support services to enable them to leave the program and become self-sufficient. [section 402(a)(1)(A)(i) of the Social Security Act].

Pennsylvania will comply with Section 402(a)(A)(ii) of the Social Security Act which states that a parent or caretaker receiving assistance must be engaged in work once Pennsylvania determines the parent or caretaker is job-ready or once he or she has received 24 months of assistance, whichever is easier, consistent with the child care exception at 407(e)(2). The parent or caretaker will be assessed and referred to one of three services:

- Individuals who have some work experience will be referred to the EARN program, which assists with job placement and job training opportunities. At this stage of services, it is anticipated that individuals will be able to access WIOA services such as training programs aligned with a career pathway, an On-The-Job training program or a Transitional Job Program. Individuals with multiple barriers to employment are a priority under WIOA. This priority status will help individuals access the training services they may need to be employed.
- Individuals who need to rectify some barriers such as literacy, soft skills development and support services such as child care and transportation assistance, will be referred to a Work Ready provider. This contracted provider will assist the individual with barrier removal strategies and then refer him or her to the EARN program when he or she is ready.
- Individuals who could benefit from a training opportunity at a community college will be referred to the KEYS program. This program enrolls individuals who are ready to learn in a college setting. Once the individual has completed their education at the community college, he or she will be connected to the PA CareerLink® system for job placement assistance.

Require a parent or caretaker receiving assistance under the program to engage in work (as defined by the State) once the State determines the parent or caretaker is ready to engage in work, or once he or she has received assistance under the program for 24 months, whichever is earlier, consistent with section 407(e)(2). [section 402(a)(1)(A)(ii) of the Social Security Act]

Pennsylvania will comply with Section 402(a)(A)(ii) of the Social Security Act which states that a parent or caretaker receiving assistance must be engaged in work once Pennsylvania determines the parent or caretaker is job-ready or once he or she has received 24 months of assistance, whichever is easier, consistent with the child care exception at 407(e)(2). All individuals will learn about the comprehensive services available to them through the County Assistance Office and the PA CareerLink® system. The PA CareerLink® system will enable individuals to utilize the services of job developers and also connect to the JobGateway® job matching system, which will help individuals apply to jobs at local employers. The PA CareerLink® centers will also help individuals participate in job fairs and other employer recruiting events. Individuals with multiple barriers will receive priority of service designation so training services can be readily available.

Ensure that parents and caretakers receiving assistance under the program engage in work activities in accordance with section 407(e)(2).[section 402(a)(1)(A)(ii) of the Social Security Act]

Pennsylvania will comply with Section 402(a)(A)(ii) of the Social Security Act which states that a parent or caretaker receiving assistance must be engaged in work once Pennsylvania determines the parent or caretaker is job-ready or once he or she has received 24 months of assistance, whichever is easier, consistent with the child care exception at 407(e)(2). The County Assistance Office will assist all individuals who are required to work to find opportunities through the EARN program and the PA CareerLink® system. Both of these services can be accessed locally and each person will be able to get individualized services. These services include job placement assistance, career counseling and training opportunities within a career pathway.

Safeguarding Information

Take such reasonable steps as the State deems necessary to restrict the use and disclosure of information about individuals and families receiving assistance under the program attributable to funds provided by the Federal Government. (section 407(e)(2).[section 402(a)(1)(A)(iv) of the Social Security Act]

Pennsylvania continues to operate its welfare program in a manner that safeguards information about individuals and families receiving assistance. Pennsylvania adheres to the provisions on the safeguarding of information in effect prior to implementation of TANF, with the addition of the following provisions:

- The Department of Human Services (DHS) receives information from the Pennsylvania State Police, the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, the State Department of Corrections, county law enforcement and corrections agencies, and local law enforcement and corrections agencies. This information is used for eligibility purposes, i.e., to identify individuals who have been sentenced for a felony or misdemeanor and have not satisfied the penalty imposed by law, fugitive felons and individuals convicted of drug-related felonies. Information received on individuals who have a drug-related felony conviction is important only insofar as DHS may need to refer the individual to assessment/treatment.
- DHS will furnish the current address of a recipient to a Federal, State or local law enforcement officer who certifies that the location or the apprehension of the recipient is within his official capacity.
- However, DHS will furnish the address only on the request of the officer and only if the officer furnishes the Department with the name of the recipient and states that the recipient is fleeing to avoid prosecution, or custody, or confinement after conviction for a felony or high misdemeanor under State law, or the recipient has information that is necessary for the officer to conduct his official duties.
- DHS will disclose information to entities outside the Department when necessary for restitution or collection of assistance benefits; to cooperate with IV-D agencies to enforce child support orders and paternity determination; or to protect the welfare of children and adults who are unable to manage their own affairs or otherwise protect their rights when the information is needed to get

services the client has requested and the services will advance the client's welfare and the client has authorized the Department to release specific information to the agency.

- DHS will protect the rights of individuals to reasonably ensure that the information will be used for purposes associated with assistance, that the receiving agency will use the information only for the purpose for which it was made available and the standards of confidentiality are at least equal to that of the Department.

Reductions of Out-of-Wedlock Births

Establish goals and take action to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies, with special emphasis on teenage pregnancies, and establish numerical goals for reducing the illegitimacy ratio of the State (as defined in section 403(a)(2)(C)(iii)).

Pennsylvania has several initiatives in place aimed at preventing teen pregnancy (reducing out of wedlock births).

- Through a grant agreement with the Family Planning Council reproductive health services are provided to high school students in Philadelphia and Delaware counties through the Health Resource Center (HRC) Program. Services include: counseling and education about abstinence, health, and sexuality, information about making responsible choices about reproductive health and relationships, STD screening and pregnancy testing, and referrals to school, community based resources, and family planning network for free or low-cost reproductive health services.
- Through a grant agreement with Adagio Health two evidence based teen pregnancy prevention interventions are delivered: Focus on Kids and Reducing the Risk: Building Skills to Prevent Pregnancy, HIV and STDs for middle and high school students. The program serves youth in Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Clarion, Clearfield, Elk, Erie, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Jefferson, Lawrence, McKean, Mercer, Venango, Warren, Washington, and Westmoreland counties. Adagio will conduct process and outcome evaluations of the project, including the number of participants, number of interventions, and changes in STD/HIV knowledge, knowledge of proper condom use, and changes in participants' attitudes regarding risky behaviors.
- In September 2010, Pennsylvania was awarded funding from the Administration for Children and Families for the Personal Responsibility Education Program, a state-wide project that provides programming to adolescents in the following facilities:
 - Licensed psychiatric residential treatment facilities (PRTFs)
 - Licensed residential substance abuse treatment programs
 - Residential programs serving delinquent youth, which includes: residential programs serving delinquent youth licensed by the Department of Human Services Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF); OCYF Youth Development Centers (YDCs); and OCYF Youth Forestry Camps
 - Licensed partial hospitalization or outpatient drug and alcohol facilities
 - Licensed partial hospitalization or outpatient mental health facilities.

The goal of the Personal Responsibility Education Program is to empower adolescents to change their behavior in ways that will reduce their risk of becoming infected with HIV, other STDs, and their risk for pregnancy. Implementation sites will provide education on abstinence, contraception, and at least three adulthood preparation subjects: healthy relationships, adolescent development, and healthy life skills by implementing one of two curricula: Rikers Health Advocacy Program or Street Smart. Training will be provided to staff at implementation sites on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) cultural competency.

- Through Grant Agreements with Pennsylvania's four regional family planning councils, comprehensive reproductive health services are provided to sexually active adolescents 17 years of age and younger. These reproductive health services include routine gynecological care, pregnancy testing, contraceptives, cervical cancer exams, screening and treatment for sexually transmitted infections and education/counseling. These services are provided in every county in the commonwealth through a network of family planning provider sites. Services are focused on adolescents and provided by current contractors. This initiative is funded with 100 percent federal funds.

In 2011, there were 141,300 births in Pennsylvania, of which 58,879 or 41.7 percent were out-of-wedlock. Of the out-of-wedlock births, 10,292 or 17.5 percent were to women 19 years of age or younger. As outlined in the table below, even as the total number of out-of-wedlock births increased or decreased, the number of out-of-wedlock births to women 19 years of age or younger decreased gradually, but consistently, from 2002 to 2011.

Year	Births	Out-of-Wedlock	Out-of-Wedlock – 19 years of age or younger
2011	141,300	58,879 (41.7%)	10,292 (17.5%)
2010	141,681	58,727 (41.5%)	11,355 (19.3%)
2009	144,627	59,194 (40.9%)	12,037 (20.3%)
2008	148,166	60,269 (40.7%)	12,905 (21.4%)
2007	149,717	59,466 (39.7%)	12,966 (21.8%)
2006	148,706	56,749 (38.3%)	12,683 (22.4%)
2005	145,033	52,849 (36.5%)	12,036 (22.8%)
2004	144,494	50,487 (35.2%)	11,772 (23.4%)
2003	145,485	48,985 (33.9%)	11,833 (24.2%)
2002	142,380	47,519 (33.5%)	11,879 (25%)

Education and Training to Reduce Statutory Rape

Conduct a program, designed to reach State and local law enforcement officials, the education system, and relevant counseling services, that provides education and training on the problem of statutory rape so that teenage pregnancy prevention programs may be expanded in scope to include men. [section 402(a)(1)(A)(vi) of the Social Security Act]

Prevention Education/Public Awareness Activities:

The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR) sustains statewide sexual violence primary prevention and awareness campaigns designed to reach a wide audience through the commonwealth. Contemporary messages about self-esteem, healthy relationships as well as the No More campaign are used. PCAR utilizes innovative strategies and materials that incorporate popular culture and active teen feedback. In addition, the campaign further incorporates strategies that are designated to reach targeted adult populations (parents, teachers, guidance counselors, school nurses, rape crisis counselors, advocates, youth leaders, etc.) as secondary audiences who have access and influence in the lives of teens.

The 50 sub-grantees continue to use PCAR's initiatives and materials to enhance prevention education programming within their respective communities.

Continuing initiatives include:

1. *Use of Multi-media including websites, Facebook and Twitter:* PCAR continues its use of several websites which are updated quarterly and as needed. These websites provide information to teens about healthy relationships and sexual violence awareness and prevention, in addition to providing resources for teens to seek help. PCAR is in the process of updating the website to ensure it is relevant to users. PCAR has also developed a Facebook page which it updates daily and has begun using Twitter to communicate upcoming events.
2. *Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM):* The topics of each year's campaign are designed by the communication staff based on topical events and requests from students, rape crisis center staff and allied professionals. The 2013 and 2014 campaigns were entitled "Its time...to talk about it." Each year the campaigns focused on a different age group
3. *Hero Project:* The HERO Project is now a statewide project. The purpose of this campaign is to inform and motivate bystander intervention for child sexual abuse. The web site is www.heroproject.org.
4. *Engaging men:* PCAR continues to provide training and technical assistance to enhance efforts to engage men in the prevention of sexual violence.
5. *Development and Distribution of Print materials:* PCAR continues to provide a number of print materials to Pennsylvania sexual assault centers. Many of these items are also purchased by other human services agencies, both in Pennsylvania and outside of the commonwealth. Approximately 5,000 print materials are distributed each quarter.

6. *Training/Resources to Increase the Capacity of Rape Crisis Center's to Outreach in Their Communities:* This initiative includes PCAR's provision of training at the Annual Sexual Assault Conference, webinars on a variety of primary prevention and intervention topics including trauma informed care and community action, training and technical assistance to rape crisis centers, prevention and public awareness activities.

Many of PCARs initiatives and activities include updates and changes of current programs to ensure continued relevance for both victims and rape crisis centers.

Delivery of Benefits

Implement policies and procedures as necessary to prevent access to assistance provided under the State program funded under this part through any electronic fund transaction in an automated teller machine or point-of-sale device located in a place described in section 408(a)(12), including a plan to ensure that recipients of the assistance have adequate access to their cash assistance. [section 402(a)(1)(A)(vii) of the Social Security Act]

Pennsylvania continues to operate the TANF Program based on the rules and regulations for delivery of benefits in effect prior to implementation. Eligible recipients receive continuing benefits in two semi-monthly cash payments delivered primarily through the Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) System.

Pennsylvania prevents assistance provided under the TANF program from being used in EBT transactions in liquor stores, casinos and adult-oriented entertainment establishments, in which performers disrobe or perform in an unclothed state for entertainment, in the following manner:

- Pennsylvania statute 62 P.S. § 484, enacted December 2009, prohibits the purchase of liquor or alcohol with an EBT card. 62 P.S. § 483 violators will be guilty of a misdemeanor and sentenced to pay a \$100 fine and/or six months in jail. The Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board (PLCB) is responsible for enforcing this at PLCB Wine and Spirits shops. PLCB does not subscribe to Quest point-of-sale devices and cannot accept EBT cash benefits. In addition, there are no ATMs located in PLCB Wine and Spirit Stores.
- In 2010, Pennsylvania's Gaming Commission mandated third party processors to block the use of the EBT card BIN (Bank Identification Number) at their ATMs in all twelve of Pennsylvania's casinos. DHS completed initial testing of the voluntary agreement at four new Pennsylvania casinos in April 2011. The EBT Risk Management Unit (EBT RMU) performs ongoing testing by screening all EBT transactions to identify any conducted at the twelve casino addresses. To date, the EBT RMU found only one transaction at a casino address, and, upon further analysis, learned that the withdrawal was at an ATM at that address but not affiliated with the casino.
- In December 2013, Pennsylvania added language to the signed affidavit page of Pennsylvania's Common Application and Benefits Review forms and on the Agreement of Mutual Responsibility, which prohibits the use of TANF funds through EBT transactions in liquor stores, casinos and places for adult entertainment. Pennsylvania also expresses this language on the electronic COMPASS application process. The Prohibitions and Penalties page of Pennsylvania's Common Application and Benefits Review forms also warns that misuse of the EBT care of PA Access Card, without good cause, may result in a fine, prison or both. DHS has not promulgated

regulation to impose a penalty for using TANF assistance via EBT transaction in liquor stores, casinos or adult entertainment establishments; however, DHS is working with Pennsylvania's General Assembly to draft public law making misuse punishable.

- In order to monitor the misuse of TANF assistance through EBT transactions, the EBT RMU developed a naming convention and address recognition protocol that identifies liquor stores, casinos and adult entertainment establishments. The EBT RMU screens all cash transactions on three randomly selected dates per month using the pre-determined key words. Staff reviews each questionable transaction to determine if the recipient used TANF assistance through EBT transaction in a liquor store, casino, or adult entertainment establishment. Staff reviews each location to see whether it meets the criteria for a retail establishment that provides adult-oriented entertainment in which performers disrobe or perform in an unclothed state for entertainment.

In the initial three months of sampling, the EBT RMU identified no transactions at a liquor store and identified no transactions at casinos or places of adult entertainment. Identifying adult entertainment establishments poses the biggest hurdle. In the next several months, the EBT RMU will test EBT card use at several known establishments to increase familiarity with how the transactions appear in the EBT reports. This test will inform our efforts at identifying and preventing use of TANF assistance through EBT at adult entertainment venues.

DHS has elected to send letters to individuals with prohibited transaction reminding them not to use their TANF assistance at one of the prohibited locations.

Access to Benefits

Pennsylvania continues to provide access to TANF benefits and related services in each of the commonwealth's 67 counties based on the policies and procedures in effect.

During Fiscal Year 1997-98, Pennsylvania implemented a Statewide Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) system to replace the paper-based welfare benefits issuance system. EBT is a state-of-the-art means for electronically issuing welfare recipient benefits through a statewide network of automatic teller machines (ATM) and point-of-sale devices to electronically deliver cash assistance and SNAP benefits throughout the commonwealth.

Pennsylvania TANF recipients may access their benefits at ATMs located throughout all 67 counties in banks, grocery stores, shopping centers and gas stations. The ATM tells the user that a surcharge will be charged and, if he or she does not want to pay it, the ATM provides the option to cancel the transaction. Many ATMs do not charge any transaction fee for use.

Pennsylvania's TANF recipients may use their EBT cards at any store that accepts the Pennsylvania EBT card. Use of the EBT card in stores is a cost-free transaction for the recipient. Recipients may access their benefits at no cost by requesting cash after a POS purchase and access their benefits without penalty.

Pennsylvania provides recipients information about using EBT to access benefits and potential fees:

- Online at the Pennsylvania EBT Website (<https://www.ebt.acs-inc.com/paebtclient/index.jsp>)
- When the recipient creates his or her unique EBT PIN at the County Assistance Office.
- On the Pennsylvania Department of Human Service website. (http://www.dhs.state.pa.us/foradults/supplementalnutritionassistanceprogram/electronicbenefitstransferebt/S_001060)
- In the Pennsylvania Cash Assistance Handbook, available to the public online.
- When making an ATM transaction, the ATM displays transactions fees. The transaction will not continue if the user declines the fees.

Pennsylvania provides a 24/7 toll-free EBT hotline (1-888-EBT-PENN or 1-888-328-7366) that recipients can call to:

- Find out where the EBT card can be used.
- Check SNAP and cash assistance account balances.
- Report that an EBT card has been lost or stolen.
- Report that the EBT card does not work.
- Ask question about using the EBT card.

Families Entering Pennsylvania from Another State

Indicate whether the State intends to treat families moving into the State from another State differently than other families under the program, and if so, how [section 402(a)(1)(B)(i) of the Social Security Act]

Pennsylvania does not treat families moving into the State differently than current residents.

Treatment of Noncitizens

Indicate whether the State intends to provide assistance to non- citizens of the United States, and if so, shall include an overview of such assistance. [section 402(a)(1)(B)(ii) of the Social Security Act]

Pennsylvania is exercising the options available in Title IV of PRWORA to continue or to authorize TANF benefits for non-citizens who are "qualified aliens," as defined by PRWORA, and who meet all other eligibility requirements.

Determining Eligibility

The document shall set forth objective criteria for the delivery of benefits and the determination of eligibility and for fair and equitable treatment, including an explanation of how the State will provide opportunities for recipients who have been adversely affected to be heard in a State administrative or appeal process. [section 402(a)(1)(B)(iii) of the Social Security Act]

Earned Income: Sanctioned, Disqualified or Otherwise Ineligible Individuals

The earned income of sanctioned, disqualified or otherwise ineligible budget group members is now treated uniformly by computing their income as if these individuals were included in the budget group. This proposal ensures equitable treatment of all TANF households. This policy became effective August 2005. Individuals who have been sanctioned can get an appointment to discuss how to remedy the

situation. It is the intention of the County Assistance Office to treat all persons fairly and help them to connect to services that leads to employment and hopefully self-sufficiency.

Right to Appeal: Pennsylvania will continue to follow the appeal and fair hearing regulations and procedures consistent with 55 Pa. Code Chapter 275.

Work and Self-Sufficiency

The document shall indicate whether the State intends to assist individuals to train for, seek, and maintain employment [section 402(a)(1)(B)(v) of the Social Security Act] (1) providing direct care in a long-term care facility (as such terms are defined under section 2011); or (2) in other occupations related to elder care determined appropriate by the State for which the State identifies an unmet need for service personnel, and, if so, shall include an overview of such assistance.

As established by Act 35, recipients of TANF in Pennsylvania are enrolled in an employment and training program known as the Road to Economic Self-sufficiency through Employment and Training (RESET) to enable them to obtain employment and become self-sufficient. The primary means to achieve self-sufficiency is through work. The program emphasizes a work-first approach as part of a continuum of services which can establish a work history, with increasing wages and benefits that lead, over time, to economic independence and self-sufficiency.

A review of demographic data shows that the number of Pennsylvanians age 65 and older is rapidly increasing. This trend is projected to continue through the year 2020. In response to the anticipated need for trained workers to assist in providing quality service to this population, Pennsylvania is considering plans to best determine how to assist individuals to train for, seek, and maintain employment providing direct care in a long-term care facility or in other occupations related to elder care.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) and Work Programs Authorized Under Sections 6(d)(4) and 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008

General Requirements

The State agency must prepare and submit an Employment and Training (E&T) Plan to its appropriate Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Regional Office. The E&T Plan must be available for public inspection at the State agency headquarters. A State agency may include its plan for the SNAP E&T program in a Combined Plan under WIOA but will require FNS approval prior to Implementation and must continue to make a copy of the plan available for public inspection. If a State Plan includes SNAP E&T in a Combined Plan under WIOA, the State agency will detail the following for each year covered by the Combined Plan:

Pennsylvania submits an annual SNAP E&T state plan to FNS. It is generally submitted in August, approved by FNS in September and becomes effective October 1. It is the vehicle by which we receive our SNAP E&T funds. The E&T plan is available for public inspection at the State agency headquarters.

The nature of the E&T components the State agency plans to offer and the reasons for such components, including cost information. The methodology for State agency reimbursement for education components must be specifically addressed.

PA offers 11 Program Components as part of the SNAP E&T Program. They are: Job Readiness/Preparation Assistance; English-as-a-Second Language (ESL); Adult Basic Education (ABE) / Literacy; General Equivalency Diploma (GED) / High School Remediation; Skill / Vocational Training; Work Experience; Advanced Degree Program (ADP); Job Search; WIOA; Community Service and Job Retention. More details about each component and their costs can be found on pages 4-16 of the FNS-approved SNAP E&T State Plan.

Educational Component costs are addressed on page 27 of the plan as displayed below.

COMPONENTS	STATE AGENCY COSTS		CONTRACTUAL COSTS	PARTICIPANT REIMBURSEMENT (State plus Federal)		STATE AGENCY COST FOR DEPENDENT CARE SERVICES	TOTAL
	Salary & Benefits	Other Costs		Dependent Care	Transportation & Other Costs		
Job Readiness/ Preparation	64,417	1,357	28,573	183,600	48,960	0	326,907
ESL	594,913	12,531	263,878	108,000	452,160	0	1,431,482
ABE	572,177	12,052	253,793	43,200	434,880	0	1,316,102
GED	678,276	14,286	300,854	345,600	515,520	0	1,854,536
Skill/ Vocational Training	1,064,780	22,427	472,291	1,447,200	809,280	0	3,815,978

COMPONENTS	STATE AGENCY COSTS		CONTRACTUAL COSTS	PARTICIPANT REIMBURSEMENT (State plus Federal)		STATE AGENCY COST FOR DEPENDENT CARE SERVICES	TOTAL
	Salary & Benefits	Other Costs		Dependent Care	Transportation & Other Costs		
Work Experience	560,810	11,812	248,751	10,800	426,240	0	1,258,413
Advanced Degree	954,892	20,113	423,549	1,134,000	725,760	0	3,258,314
Job Search	253,880	5,347	112,610	723,600	192,960	0	1,288,397
WIOA	1,110,252	23,385	492,462	-	843,840	-	2,469,939
Community Service	727,537	15,324	322,704	486,000	552,960	0	2,104,525
Job Retention	682,066	14,366	302,535	-	518,400	0	1,517,367
Totals	7,264,000	153,000	3,222,000	4,482,000	5,520,960	0	20,641,960

An operating budget for the Federal fiscal year with an estimate of the cost of operation for each Federal fiscal year covered by the Combined Plan. Any State agency that requests 50 percent Federal reimbursement for State agency E&T administrative costs, other than for participant reimbursements, must include in its plan, or amendments to its plan, an itemized list of all activities and costs for which those Federal funds will be claimed, including the costs for case management and casework to facilitate the transition from economic dependency to self-sufficiency through work. Costs in excess of the Federal grant will be allowed only with the prior approval of FNS and must be adequately documented to assure that they are necessary, reasonable and properly allocated. A State must submit a plan amendment to request budget adjustments at least 30 days prior to planned implementation.

Pages 27, as shown above and 28 as shown below, of the SNAP E&T plan address the budget prompts for the current FFY. We will have to estimate these same costs for each FFY covered by the Combined WIOA plan.

PLANNED FISCAL YEAR COSTS OF THE STATE E&T PROGRAM BY CATEGORY OF FUNDING FISCAL YEAR 2016		
CATEGORY	Fiscal Year 2015	Fiscal Year 2016
1. E&T Grant Funds (100% Federal)	\$3,072,767.00	\$3,306,178.00
2. Additional E&T Expenditures	\$7,148,233.00	\$7,332,822.00
50% Federal	\$3,574,116.50	\$3,666,411.00
50% State	\$3,574,116.50	\$3,666,411.00
3. Participant Expenses Reimbursed	\$11,302,539.00	\$10,002,960.00
a. Transportation and other costs		
50% Federal	\$441,673.50	\$2,760,480.00
50% State	\$441,673.50	\$2,760,480.00
b. Up to 50% of the local market rate per dependent per month for dependent care costs		
50% Federal	\$5,209,596.00	\$2,241,000.00
50% State	\$5,209,596.00	\$2,241,000.00
c. Above \$25 per month for transportation and other costs (optional)		
100% State		
d. Above 50% of the local market rate per dependent per month for dependent care costs (optional)		
100% State		
4. Total E&T Program Costs (1+2+3a+3b=4)	\$21,523,539	\$20,641,960*

The categories and types of individuals the State agency intends to exempt from E&T participation, the estimated percentage of work registrants the State agency plans to exempt, and the frequency with which the State agency plans to reevaluate the validity of its exemptions;

PA is a voluntary SNAP E&T participation state so everyone is exempt. There are currently 437,776 exemptions expected in FY 2016. Participation status is evaluated for E&T at each client contact.

The characteristics of the population the State agency intends to place in E&T;

DHS has not undertaken an analysis of the characteristics of the work registrant population and potential employment and training caseload up until this point in time; however we have now begun that process and expect to have information available within the next few months.

The estimated number of volunteers the State agency expects to place in E&T;

The estimated number of volunteers is listed on pages 5-15 of the State Plan by component and throughout FY 2016 it is estimated that there will be 11,842 as specified on page 25 of the plan.

The geographic areas covered and not covered by the E&T Plan and why, and the type and location of services to be offered;

PA's SNAP E&T plan is a statewide program and all services are offered statewide. This is listed on each component page (5-15) of the plan.

The Able Bodied Adult Without Dependents (ABAWD) program will vary geographically based on an FNS approved waiver that we have submitted.

The method the State agency uses to count all work registrants as of the first day of the new fiscal year; The method the State agency uses to report work registrant information on the quarterly Form FNS-583; The method the State agency uses to prevent work registrants from being counted twice within a Federal fiscal year. If the State agency universally work registers all SNAP applicants, this method must specify how the State agency excludes those exempt from work registration under 7 C.F.R. §273.7(b)(1). If the State agency work registers nonexempt participants whenever a new application is submitted, this method must also specify how the State agency excludes those participants who may have already been registered within the past 12 months as specified under 7 C.F.R. §273.7 (a)(1)(i).

The methodology for the unduplicated counting of work registrants and the explanation of the 583 report is detailed on page 22 of the plan as follows:

A. METHOD FOR OBTAINING THE INITIAL COUNT OF WORK REGISTRANTS

The initial count of work registrants for the SNAP E&T Program will include: All work registrants as of October 1, 2015. All of the SNAP E&T work registrants will be data entered, tracked and reported by using eCIS and DHS's Data Warehouse.

B. METHOD FOR ENSURING AN UNDUPLICATED WORK REGISTRANT COUNT

Effective October 1, 1999, eCIS began tracking and reporting an unduplicated count of work registrants. eCIS assigns a unique individual number to every person receiving cash assistance, medical assistance and/or SNAP benefits. Using the unique individual number ensures that each person gets counted as a work registrant once during the federal fiscal year.

C. METHODS FOR MEETING ONGOING FEDERAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Management Information System (MIS) Method

All SNAP reporting will be created from DHS's eCIS and Data Warehouse. eCIS is our Family Assistance Management Information Systems (FAMIS) certified eligibility and benefit generation system. The Data Warehouse is a subject-oriented, integrated, time-variant, non-volatile collection of data from eCIS and other Department MIS systems. The Data Warehouse is structured to optimize the retrieval of data. The Data Warehouse is updated monthly from the various Departments' MIS systems.

Type of MIS

The Data Warehouse will be used to create ABAWD and non-ABAWD participation reporting. eCIS will be used to report "New Work Registrants" as required for the FNS 583 Report.

Local Reporting Requirements

Data entry of all SNAP recipients is done in eCIS locally at the CAO or through E&T programs using the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS).

The organizational relationship between the units responsible for certification and the units operating the E&T components, including units of the Statewide workforce development system, if available, FNS is specifically concerned that the lines of communication be efficient and that noncompliance by the participant be reported to the certification unit within 10 working days after the noncompliance occurs;

DHS administers and operates the Road to Economic Self-sufficiency through Employment & Training (RESET) Program for persons receiving cash assistance. The RESET Program and SNAP E&T program are integrated on the state and local level.

On the state level, the Bureau of Policy (BOP), Division of Employment and Training Policy, County Assistance Office (CAO) Based Programs and Development in the Office of Income Maintenance (OIM), is responsible for administering the RESET and SNAP E&T programs which includes program oversight, policy guidance and technical assistance to local CAO and contracted program staff.

On the local level, each CAO has IMCWs that enroll participants in both RESET and SNAP E&T.

While it is critical that our SNAP E&T processes be as efficient as possible for the administration of the program, there is no noncompliance such as compliance reviews or sanctions for PA's SNAP E&T participants as we are a volunteer state.

The relationship between the State agency and other organizations it plans to coordinate with for the provision of services, including organizations in the Statewide workforce development system. Copies of the contracts must be available for inspection;

SUMMARY OF INTERAGENCY COORDINATION FOR THE E&T PROGRAMS FISCAL YEAR 2016			
Areas of Coordination	Agencies (List all that are involved)	Number of E&T Placements Expected*	Methods of Coordination
1. Delivers an E&T component	Community Colleges, Secondary Education and Workforce Investment Areas	804	Contract for provision of service/Joint Plans of Operations/Joint Training
2. The E&T Program delivers a service for another agency or program	N/A	N/A	N/A
3. Joint component of the E&T Program and another	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ KEYS ▪ Workforce Development Boards ▪ E&T contractors 	9,744	Contract for provision of service
4. Referral of individuals from the E&T Program to another program or agency	Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WIB ▪ Local Educational Agencies ▪ Community Based Organizations ▪ United Way Agencies 	12,456	Non-financial/Interagency Agreement/Joint Plans of Operations
5. Other forms of coordination (specify)	N/A	N/A	N/A
TOTALS		23,004	

The availability, if appropriate, of E&T programs for Indians living on reservations after the State agency has consulted in good faith with appropriate tribal organizations;

We do not address tribal SNAP as PA has no recognized tribal organizations.

If a conciliation process is planned, the procedures that will be used when an individual fails to comply with an E&T program requirement. Include the length of the conciliation.

Conciliation is not addressed as PA is a volunteer state.

The payment rates for child care established in accordance with the Child Care and Development Block Grant provisions of 45 CFR 98.43, and based on local market rate surveys.

Child care costs are factored in each of the 11 components and are based on the Child Care and Development Block Grant provisions mentioned above and based on local market rate surveys.

The combined (Federal/State) State agency reimbursement rate for transportation costs and other expenses reasonably necessary and directly related to participation incurred by E&T participants. If the State agency proposes to provide different reimbursement amounts to account for varying levels of expenses, for instance for greater or lesser costs of transportation in different areas of the State, it must include them here.

The combined state agency reimbursement rates for transportation and other expenses is listed within each of the components in the plan from pages 4-16.

Information about expenses the State agency proposes to reimburse. DNS must be afforded the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed reimbursements before they are implemented.

DHS will reimburse the participant up to the DHS established rate for dependent care costs unless SNAP regulations are revised to increase the federal ceiling or match.

DHS issues supportive services, other than child care in advance to allow an individual to participate in SNAP program components. Supportive Services are issued as special allowances and eligibility is determined based on requirements of the program or component and the need of the individual up to a maximum limit established by legislation. Special allowances for services are issued with consideration of the least costly, most practical item or service.

Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWD)

A State agency interested in receiving additional funding for serving able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) subject to the 3-month time limit, In accordance with 7 C.F.R. §273.7(d)(3), must include the following for each federal fiscal year covered by the Combined Plan under WIOA:

- (1) Its pledge to offer a qualifying activity to all at-risk ASAWD applicants and recipients;*
- (2) Estimated costs of fulfilling its pledge;*
- (3) A description of management controls in place to meet pledge requirements;*
- (4) A discussion of its capacity and ability to serve at-risk ABAWDs;*
- (5) Information about the size and special needs of its ABAWD population; and*
- (6) Information about the education, training, and workforce components it will offer to meet the ABAWD work requirement.*

Pennsylvania has not applied to be a pledge state; therefore there is no relevant language to be inserted into the WIOA plan related to this section.

Optional, Voluntary and Comparable Workfare

Optional Workfare: State agencies or other political subdivisions must describe in detail in the plan how the political subdivision, working with the State agency and any other cooperating agencies that may be involved in the program, will fulfill the provisions of 7 C.F.R. §273.7(m). If a State opts to operate an optional workfare program or modify an existing optional workfare program, through a Combined Plan under WIOA, it must provide the following:

- (1) State agencies or political subdivisions submitting a workfare plan must submit with the plan an operating budget covering the period from the initiation of the workfare program's implementation schedule to the close of the Federal fiscal year for each year covered by the Combined Plan. In addition, an estimate of the cost for one full year of operation must be*

submitted together with the workfare plan for each Federal fiscal year covered by the Combined Plan.

- (2) *If workfare plans are submitted by more than one political subdivision, each representing the same population (such as a city with in a county), FNS will determine which political subdivision will have its plan approved. Under no circumstances will a SNAP recipient be subject to more than one SNAP workfare program and represents a population which is already, at least in part, subject to a SNAP workfare program administered by another political subdivision, it must establish in its workfare plan how SNAP recipients will not be subject to more than one SNAP workfare program.*

Voluntary Workfare: State agencies and political subdivisions may operate workfare programs whereby participation by SNAP recipients is voluntary. In such a program, the penalties for failure to comply, as provided in 7 C.F.R. §273.7(f), will not apply for noncompliance. The amount of hours to be worked will be negotiated between the household and the operating agency, though not to exceed the limits provided under 7 C.F.R. §273.7(m)(5)(ii). In addition, all protections provided under 7 C.F.R. §273.7(m)(6)(i) shall continue to apply. Those State agencies and political subdivisions choosing to operate such a program shall indicate in their workfare plan how their staffing will adapt to anticipated and unanticipated levels of participation for each Federal fiscal year covered by the Combined Plan under WIOA. FNS will not approve plans which do not show that the benefits of the workfare program in terms of hours worked by participants and reduced SNAP allotments due to successful job attainment, are expected to exceed the costs of such a program. In addition, if FNS finds that an approved voluntary program does not meet this criterion, FNS reserves the right to withdraw approval.

Comparable Workfare: the State agency or political subdivision must provide a description of its program, including a methodology for ensuring compliance with 7 C.F.R. §273.7(m)(9)(ii) for each Federal fiscal year covered by the Combined Plan under WIOA.

Pennsylvania does not operate a Workfare program therefore there is no relevant language on this topic to be inserted into the WIOA plan.

Process

The State agency must submit amendments to the SNAP E&T segment of the Combined Plan for FNS approval at least 30 days prior to the planned implementation in order to receive federal SNAP E&T funding for the activities not covered by the approved Combined Plan.

Pennsylvania is aware of this requirement.

Plan Modification

If FNS determines that the performance of a State agency with respect to employment and training outcomes is inadequate, FNS may require the State agency to make modifications to the State E&T plan to improve the outcomes.

Pennsylvania understands this potential requirement.

Trade Adjustment Assistance

Coordination with Other Programs

Describe the State's process for operating the TAA program that ensures coordination and integration with WIOA core and partner programs. Provide examples, if available, of how the co-location of Wagner-Peyser in one-stop centers and the addition of TANF, have improved access to these services for trade-affected workers.

The commonwealth uses Wagner-Peyser resources for career services and couples those resources with Title I and Trade resources to provide greater choice and focused resources where dislocated workers most need them. Dislocated workers receive all WIOA career services in a comprehensive PA CareerLink® center.

Pennsylvania co-enrolls all Trade-impacted workers in the WIOA program to ensure that all participants receive the full range of assistance available to dislocated workers. Workforce Investment Information Notice (WIIN) No. 14-02 , *Guidance on Integrating Services Under the Trade Act Programs--the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program, the North American Free Trade Agreement - Transitional Adjustment Assistance (NAFTA-TAA) Program and the Trade Act of 2002 with the Workforce Investment Act* provide the commonwealth's policy on integrating services for Trade participants.

The commonwealth implemented an online application for TAA training, job search and relocation allowances, and the Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA) and Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA) programs. This CWDS module is accessed via the Internet and dislocated workers, PA CareerLink® staff and training providers add information online. PA CareerLink® staff assists Trade-impacted workers with their applications, and assess the workers' skills and experiences.

Use of Funding

Describe how the State will use TAA funding for infrastructure, other shared costs, and the promotion of the development of integrated intake, case management, and reporting systems.

The commonwealth will continue to position state merit staff at the local PA CareerLink® centers throughout the state to ensure that eligible Trade participants receive case management services in a timely manner. Funding will continue to be used for system upgrades to CWDS that will allow an integration of services offered by partner agencies. The IEP will also be enhanced to conform to WIOA dual enrollment requirements and avoid duplication of services during the case management process.

Benefit and Service Approvals by Merit Staff

Describe how TAA program-funded benefits and services are approved by merit-staffed employees in accordance with 20 CFR 618.890.

All Trade eligible workers are encouraged to participate in the reemployment services offered through PA CareerLink® offices prior to layoff during their Benefits Rights Interview (BRI). Merit staff are assigned as case managers to assist trade eligible participants through the case management process with a goal of enrolling participants in a Trade approved activity. Merit Staff work closely with WIOA partners to comply with the dual enrollment process. Requests for TAA benefits and services are made by merit

staff at the PA CareerLink® centers on behalf of Trade participants via CWDS. Determinations for Trade benefits and services are issued by merit staff located in central office.

Jobs for Veterans State Grant

How the State intends to provide employment, training and job placement services to veterans and eligible persons under the JVSG;

Veterans and eligible persons will receive employment, training, and job placement services at the PA CareerLink® centers like other PA CareerLink® customers. However, veterans and eligible persons will receive priority of service, i.e., they will receive priority over non-veterans and other eligible persons when it comes to receiving employment, training, and job placement services.

All individuals, including veterans, who enter the PA CareerLink® first see an intake person. This person conducts an assessment and determines if the veterans and other eligible persons qualify to see the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist. The DVOP assists veterans with significant barriers to employment such as a long-term unemployment, previous incarceration, and low-income status. If the veteran lacks a significant barrier to employment and does not otherwise qualify to see the DVOP Specialist, then the veteran will immediately be sent to the first staff member, other than the Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER), for assistance. DVOP Specialists also may see veterans age 18 to 24 and transitional service members.

The duties assigned to DVOP Specialists and LVER staff by the State; specifically implementing DVOP Specialist and LVER duties or roles and responsibilities as outlined in 38 U.S.C. §§ 4103A and 4104. These duties must be considered with current guidance;

DVOP Specialists provide intensive services to veterans with disabilities, other eligible veterans, and other eligible persons as defined by 38 U.S.C. § 4103A; Veterans' Program Letter (VPL) No. 03-14; VPL No. 03-14, Change 1; VPL No. 03-14, Change 2; VPL No. 04-14; and VPL No. 08-14. The DVOP Specialists provide and facilitate a full range of employment, training, and placement services furnished to veterans who possess significant barriers to employment.

DVOP Specialists evaluate veterans' needs, knowledge, skills, and abilities; provide career guidance through vocational guidance or referrals to counseling; aid veterans in developing and documenting an individualized employment plan (IEP); and periodically review and update the IEP during the active case management process. DVOP specialists coordinate supportive services with applicable providers, deliver technical assistance to community-based organizations for employment and training services to veterans, and assist PA CareerLink® partners in providing services to veterans on a priority basis.

LVERs conduct face-to-face contact with employers, plan and participate in job and career fairs, and conduct job development with employers. LVERs facilitate employment, training, and placement services furnished to veterans, promote the benefits of employing veterans, and facilitate employer training. LVERs work with other partners and workforce development providers to communicate employer outreach and job openings.

LVERs facilitate the provision of services to veterans by working with employers to ascertain the jobs that employers need to fill. LVERs share this information with the PA CareerLink® center. Other PA CareerLink® staff members, in turn, make veterans aware of employment opportunities. LVERs also facilitate the provision of services to veterans by providing employers with resumes and information about veterans who seek employment. In this manner, employers have a pool of job candidates for existing and future vacancies. LVERs play an important role in educating all PA CareerLink® partner staff with current employment initiatives and programs for veterans.

The manner in which DVOP Specialists and LVER staff are integrated into the State's employment service delivery system or one-stop delivery system partner network;

Service delivery occurs through a seamless integrated delivery system called PA CareerLink®. Cross-trained, responsive customer service teams conveniently located in Pennsylvania communities provide effective services. Veterans receive priority in all employment and training programs. Priority of service is the responsibility of all PA CareerLink® staff and partner staff.

DVOP Specialists work with PA CareerLink® partners on a common strategy for identifying veterans who self-register by having the PA CareerLink® managers pull a list of veterans who self-identify. The PA CareerLink® manager invites the self-identified veteran to come to the PA CareerLink® center for services. Veterans who possess a significant barrier to employment receive a referral to the DVOP Specialist. This allows DVOP Specialists to supplement the work that already occurs at the PA CareerLink® center. A needs-based approach consists of screening for disadvantaged veterans, veterans who possess significant barriers to employment, and veterans most in need of intensive labor exchange services. PA CareerLink® centers conduct staff meetings, training sessions, and workshops on a periodic basis to keep all partners apprised of program updates, changes, revisions, accomplishments, and recommendations.

LVERs work with the PA CareerLink® Business Service Team in promoting veterans to employers. LVERs are key members of Business Service Teams as they provide information on current employer job openings, assist employers looking to hire veterans, and actively promote job-ready veterans to employers.

The Incentive Award program implemented using the 1% grant allocation set aside for this purpose, as applicable;

Pennsylvania does not participate in the incentive award program.

The populations of veterans to be served, including any additional populations designed by the Secretary as eligible for services, and any additional populations specifically targeted by the State Workforce Agency for services from one-stop delivery system partners (e.g., Native American veterans; veterans in remote rural counties or parishes);

Pennsylvania serves all veterans. Every PA CareerLink® staff member and partner staff member assists veterans. DVOP Specialists, however, only serve a subset of all veterans. DVOP Specialists assist special disabled veterans, other veterans with disabilities, veterans with significant barriers to employment, veterans age 18 to 24, and transitional service members. LVERs indirectly serve veterans by principally working with employers.

Pennsylvania lacks federal or state recognized Native American tribes or reservations within its borders. However, several tribes are listed as organizations. Additionally, many Native American community centers exist throughout Pennsylvania. State workforce reports indicate that as of the last four cumulative quarters ending March 31, 2014, there exists 7,708 Native Americans, Alaskan natives, or Native Hawaiians reported as having received services, compared to a total of 593,825 participants served. These targeted populations represent 1.3 percent of total participants served. Unfortunately, Pennsylvania lacks a method of capturing the number of Native American veterans, other than compiled ad hoc reports, as that information is not available in federal reporting systems. However, it is correct to presume that a significant number of Native Americans are veterans. The commonwealth plans to coordinate with Native American organizations within Pennsylvania. This includes inviting Native Americans to participate in job fairs, furnishing them marketing materials, and advising them of available training opportunities. Pennsylvania assures that it will work with any Native American organizations in its efforts to assist Native American veterans who need services.

How the State implements and monitors the administration of priority of service to covered persons;

Every PA CareerLink® center covers priority of service regulations and requirements during staff meetings. These meetings include both partner staff and merit staff. Each PA CareerLink® center displays numerous posters and signage announcing priority of service. When job seekers enter a PA CareerLink® center, the receptionist asks job seekers if they are a veteran or the eligible spouse of a veteran. If an affirmative answer is provided, then the veteran or eligible spouse receives a registration form that differs in color from the non-veteran. The veteran or eligible spouse also receives a handout describing priority of service. The veteran or eligible spouse gets referred to the next available staff member for an assessment. If the assessment determines that the veteran possesses a significant barrier to employment, then the veteran is immediately referred to a DVOP Specialist. If the PA CareerLink® center lacks a DVOP Specialist, or the DVOP Specialist is unavailable, then the veteran goes to the next available staff member. The staff member cannot be a LVER. Veterans and eligible spouses receive priority of service in all functions and entities at the PA CareerLink® center. Once a PA CareerLink® staff member determines that a veteran meets the criteria for a specific program, the veteran is automatically afforded priority of service. VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Chapter 31 participants receive referrals to the nearest DVOP Specialist within 48 hours after receiving notification from the VA VR&E office. If there is no DVOP Specialist within a reasonable commute, the veteran sees the closest PA CareerLink® Program Manager for an assessment and case management.

Priority of service to veterans and eligible persons remains the responsibility of all PA CareerLink® staff members, not simply DVOP Specialists. As part of Pennsylvania's monitoring process, each PA CareerLink® center submits a Quarterly Manager's Report on Services to Veterans that requires the PA CareerLink® center to explain its priority of service policy. Central office staff members review these reports for statewide consistency. Also, Pennsylvania plans to monitor 25 percent of the PA CareerLink® centers each year for compliance with the priority of service requirement. In addition, central office staff plans to accompany the USDOL VETS staff during the mandated annual JVSG audits.

The veterans' registrations will be reviewed to determine the types of services provided. Also, records will be reviewed to ensure that proper veterans program eligibility, e.g., veterans with a campaign badge have been correctly added to the records. Since the covered persons identifiers will be added automatically to records based on the self-identification in the virtual system, PA CareerLink® centers will check the registration services page to help guide priority of service. Reviewing the service record page allows PA CareerLink® staff members to look for indicators that may suggest a need for case management, intensive services, job search assistance, skills training, or further guidance. In addition, job orders will be evaluated to determine if veterans received priority of service. Job orders will be reviewed to ascertain if job-matched veterans received referrals, and a determination will be made if a referral did not occur.

How the State provides or intends to provide and measure, through both DVOP Specialist and one-stop delivery system partner staff: (1) job and job training individualized career services, (2) employment placement services, and (3) job-driven training and subsequent placement service program for eligible veterans and eligible persons;

All PA CareerLink® DVOP Specialists and one-stop delivery system staff provide job and job training individualized career services as well as job-driven training and subsequent placement services through referrals to PA CareerLink® partner entities. The DVOP Specialist or PA CareerLink® staff member and the participant mutually decide upon the individualized career services that the participant will receive during meetings and case management sessions.

Employment placement services are provided in two ways. First, the participant may receive employment placement services through JobGateway® and the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS). The participant can conduct self-directed job searches; PA CareerLink® staff may assist participants through staff assisted job searches; or PA CareerLink® staff may conduct job searches by reviewing posted job orders and participant qualifications, and make referrals with or without the participant's knowledge. Alternatively, participants can work through LVERs, who interact with employers seeking job candidates.

The hire date along with mandatory training completion dates for all DVOP Specialists and LVER staff;

Please see [Appendix VII](#) for the training register.

Such additional information as the Secretary may require.

N/A

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) Plan

Background

Section 503 of the 2006 Older Americans Act (OAA) Amendments requires the Governor or his designee to submit a Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) State Plan in order to receive SCSEP funds. The SCSEP promotes part-time employment opportunities in community service activities for unemployed low-income persons who are age 55 or older and who have poor employment prospects. The purpose of the SCSEP State Plan is to foster both short-term and long-term coordination among the various national and state SCSEP grantees and sub-grantees operating within the commonwealth. The SCSEP's goals are to foster individual economic self-sufficiency and promote useful opportunities in community service activities and to increase the number of persons who may enjoy the benefits of unsubsidized employment.

The SCSEP is administered at the federal level by the United States Department of Labor's (USDOL) Employment and Training Administration. The USDOL currently provides SCSEP funds to the Pennsylvania Department of Aging and nine national organizations that provide SCSEP services in the commonwealth as follows: American Association of Retired Persons (AARP); Asociacion Nacional Pro Personas Mayores (ANPPM); Experience Works, Inc. (EW); Goodwill Industries, Inc. (GI); National Asian Pacific Center on Aging (NAPCA); National Caucus/Center on Black Aged, Inc. (NCBA); National Council on the Aging (NCOA); Senior Service America, Inc. (SSA); and the National Urban League (NUL).

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2015-16, the Department of Aging will be contracting directly with Experience Works, Inc. to provide SCSEP services in 42 of the 52 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) Planning and Service Areas (PSAs). The Department of Aging issued a Request for Grant Applications (RFGA) for SCSEP services in four regions of the commonwealth in November 2012. The RFGA was issued because a total of 39 AAAs had relinquished their SCSEP funds to the Department of Aging. Since 2012, three more AAAs have relinquished their SCSEP funds to the Department of Aging. The Department of Aging will continue to directly provide 10 AAAs with SCSEP funds in FY 2015-16. These 10 AAAs are: Lancaster; Westmoreland; Luzerne/Wyoming; Washington/Fayette/Greene; Allegheny; Lycoming/Clinton; Lehigh; Northampton; Erie; and Philadelphia.

Economic Projections and Impact

Long-term projections for jobs in industries and occupations in the state that may provide employment opportunities for older workers. (20 CFR 641.302(d))

Using the U.S. Census Bureau's Local Employment Dynamics (LED) data, [Appendix VIII](#) identifies the statewide industry long-term employment projections for occupations with the highest percentage of workers age 55 and older. Using the Census Bureau's North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes from Appendix VII, the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis used the staffing patterns to determine which occupations were most likely to be found in those industries with the highest percentage of older workers. [Appendix IX](#) identifies the statewide occupational long-term employment projections for the top employing occupations in the industries with the highest percentage of workers ages 55 and older. Using the aforementioned Appendices, NAICS code 4854, *School and Employee Bus Transportation* is an industry that employs a high percentage of older workers and is projected to grow between 2012 and 2022. The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code *Bus Drivers: School or Special Client* is an occupation in the *School and Employee Bus Transportation* industry that is projected to have 643 annual openings, and older workers are a good fit for these jobs.

The long-term projections shown in Appendices VII and VIII apply to all older workers and not just the SCSEP eligible population.

A discussion of how the long-term job projections discussed in the economic analysis section of strategic plan relate to the types of unsubsidized jobs for which SCSEP participants will be trained and the types of skill training to be provided. (20 CFR 641.302(d))

Current and projected employment opportunities in the State (such as by providing information available under §15 of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 491-2) by occupation), and the types of skills possessed by eligible individuals. (20 CFR 641.325(c).)

[Appendix X](#) identifies statewide occupational employment projections for short or moderate-term on-the-job training occupations with 500 or more annual job openings. The definitions of short and moderate term on-the-job training as well as other education and training codes can be found in [Appendix XI](#). As of June 30, 2015, 64 percent of the SCSEP individuals served by the Department of Aging and nine National SCSEP sponsors had a high school diploma or less. Generally speaking, the jobs listed in [Appendix X](#) are appropriate for the majority of SCSEP participants because they require short or moderate term on-the-job training. Depending on the participant's assessment and Individual Employment Plan (IEP), training for a job in the local workforce development area that has many annual openings will result in a better outcome for the participant. Another tool that will be considered to find jobs for SCSEP participants is the statewide list of High Priority Occupations (HPOs) that require short term on-the-job training and moderate term on-the-job training. HPOs are occupations that are in demand by employers, have higher skill needs, and are more likely to provide family sustaining wages.

Service Delivery and Coordination

Planned actions to coordinate activities of SCSEP grantees with WIA title I programs, including plans for using the WIA One-Stop delivery system and its partners to serve individuals aged 55 and older. (20 CFR 641.302(g), 641.325(e))

There are varying degrees of involvement by the AAAs and the nine National SCSEP sponsors with the PA CareerLink® centers. Generally speaking, the AAAs and the nine National SCSEP sponsors are involved with the PA CareerLink® centers in the following ways: refer all individuals ages 55 and older to the PA CareerLink® centers to enroll in the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS); PA CareerLink® staff refer SCSEP eligible individuals ages 55 and older to the AAAs and the nine National SCSEP sponsors for services; co-enroll eligible individuals in WIOA, OVR, and Veterans programs to more efficiently use federal and state workforce development funds; co-locate SCSEP staff at the PA CareerLink® centers on a full- or part-time basis; and co-locate SCSEP participants at the PA CareerLink® centers to serve as greeters, resource room aides, job developers, custodians, clerical aides, and customer service representatives. The SCSEP is represented on all 22 Local Workforce Development Boards in the commonwealth by AAA directors, AAA SCSEP staff, national SCSEP operators, and county human service agency directors.

Planned actions to coordinate activities of SCSEP grantees with the activities being carried out in the State under the other titles of the Older Americans Act (OAA). (20 CFR 641.302(h))

Since the Department of Aging also administers the other titles of the Older Americans Act (OAA), it is in a position to coordinate the activities of the OAA with SCSEP. The Department of Aging will make the national SCSEP sponsors aware of these activities through e-mail announcements.

Planned actions to coordinate SCSEP with other private and public entities and programs that provide services to older Americans, such as community and faith-based organizations, transportation programs, and programs for those with special needs or disabilities. (20 CFR 641.302(i))

The PA Link to Aging and Disability Resources (The Link) is a focal point for Pennsylvania residents seeking information and referrals for services to the elderly and adults with disabilities. The PA Link, through its collaborative network of partners including state and local, public and private agencies, improves access to information and linkages to long term living supports and services. Private and public entities and programs providing services to older individuals such as assisted living, nursing home, vocational rehabilitation, and transportation and providers serving persons with disabilities are just a few of the agencies that comprise the Link. Many SCSEP providers are members of the Link which will serve them well in learning about the myriad of local services available that can help SCSEP participants in general.

Planned actions to coordinate SCSEP with other labor market and job training initiatives. (20 CFR 641.302(j).)

Each month, the Center for Workforce Information & Analysis (CWIA) provides the Department of Aging with Job Posting files by Local Workforce Development Area. The Department of Aging sends this information to its SCSEP sub-grantees and National Sponsors. Senior staff from the CWIA have presented at annual SCSEP trainings in the past few years. The trainings consisted of an explanation of the many available labor market information products and how SCSEP coordinators can use these products to find SCSEP participants' jobs.

Actions to ensure that SCSEP is an active partner in the One-Stop delivery system and the steps the state will take to encourage and improve coordination with the One-Stop delivery system. (20 CFR 641.335).

There are varying degrees of involvement by the AAAs and the nine National SCSEP sponsors with the PA CareerLink® one-stop system. The AAAs and the nine National SCSEP sponsors are involved with the PA CareerLink® centers in the following ways: Refer all individuals ages 55 and older to the PA CareerLink® centers to enroll in CWDS; PA CareerLink® staff refer SCSEP eligible individuals ages 55 and older to the AAAs and the nine National SCSEP sponsors for services; co-locate SCSEP staff at the PA CareerLink® centers on a full- or part-time basis; and co-locate SCSEP participants at the PA CareerLink® centers to serve as greeters, resource room aides, job developers, custodians, clerical aides, and customer service representatives.

Efforts to work with local economic development offices in rural locations.

Experience Works (EW), engages with the Tioga County Development Corporation (TCDC), which is a Local Economic Development Office in the very rural northern tier of the commonwealth. Quarterly meetings are held between EW and TCDC. These meetings have resulted in referrals of older individuals

to EW from TCDC and EW engaging the TCDC as one of its host agencies. In May 2015, the TCDC awarded EW with a Certificate of Appreciation for the service and commitment that EW provides to its participants. In the future, EW will be starting to place a greater emphasis on broadening these partnerships with the Local Economic Development Offices. In a very rural three county area in the Southwest corner of the commonwealth, the Southwest PA Area Agency on Aging (AAA) maintains relationships with key individuals at local organizations involved in economic development, such as the Mon Valley Progress Council, the Middle Monongahela Development Association, and the Washington and Fayette County Chambers of Commerce, as well as the Washington Business District Authority, and the Washington County Foundation. The AAA has requested their participation in area job fairs and also to present during participant meetings on employment opportunities.

The state's long-term strategy for engaging employers to develop and promote opportunities for the placement of SCSEP participants in unsubsidized employment. (20 CFR 641.302(e))

SCSEP sub-grantees are provided with occupations in the commonwealth that require Short-Term On-the-Job Training (ST OJT) or Moderate-Term On-the-Job Training (MT OJT). Of the occupations that require ST OJT or MT OJT, many are classified as High Priority Occupations (HPO). HPO's are occupations that are in demand by employers, have higher skill needs and are most likely to provide family sustaining wages. SCSEP staff focus on companies that have HPOs that are appropriate for SCSEP participants. As partners in the local PA CareerLink® centers, SCSEP staff have access to employers. SCSEP staff also work with human resource managers to discuss their staffing needs and how SCSEP participants could potentially meet these needs. The Department of Aging, through the Pennsylvania Hall of Fame of Champions of Older Workers, annually honors one employer in the commonwealth that recognizes and values the talents of the commonwealth's older workers. The Department of Aging and representatives from a few National SCSEP sponsors select the winner. Nomination forms are sent to all local WDB directors, PA CareerLink® administrators, AAAs, National SCSEP sponsors, and General Assembly members. The winner is honored annually in May during the PA Partners Conference Employer Recognition Luncheon. During this annual employer awards luncheon, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services also honor employers.

The State's long-term strategy for serving minority older individuals under SCSEP. (20 CFR 641.302 (c))

According to the *SCSEP Analysis of Service to Minority Individuals PY 2013, Volume II, April 26, 2015* the minority population in the commonwealth was 24.9 percent. Based on the final FY 14-15 quarterly progress reports for the Department of Aging and the 9 national SCSEP sponsors, 51 percent of the individuals served were minorities, which is more than double the statewide percentage. The commonwealth's previous strategies in serving minorities will continue because minorities are being served at a much higher level than their proportionate share. SCSEP providers shall continue to make extensive outreach efforts to potential minority SCSEP participants and communities, specifically to community groups, senior centers, cultural/social groups, fraternal organizations, chambers of commerce, libraries, community based media, community leaders and retail stores. Current partnerships with minority organizations will be renewed. Outreach to minority populations will continue to include paid advertisements and coordination with organizations that serve minority groups.

A list of community services that are needed and the places where these services are most needed. Specifically, the plan must address the needs and location of those individuals most in need of community services and the groups working to meet their needs. (20 CFR 641.330)

The task of identifying the types of community services that are needed and the places where these services are most needed is best left at the local level where there is a better understanding of each community's unique needs. As the commonwealth is a diverse state, each community has its own unique needs and the individuals comprising those communities that are most in need have varying degrees of factors that precipitate their individual situations.

The state's long-term strategy to improve SCSEP services, including planned longer-term changes to the design of the program within the state, and planned changes in the use of SCSEP grantees and program operators to better achieve the goals of the program. This may include recommendations to the Department as appropriate. (20 CFR 641.302(k))

In the past decade, the Department of Aging went from 52 SCSEP sub-grantees to its current 11. The Department of Aging will be issuing a Request for Grant Applications for SCSEP services in at least 42 of the 52 AAA Planning and Service Areas (PSAs) in December 2017. Selected providers will begin to provide SCSEP services in the four designated AAA PSA Regions on July 1, 2018.

The state's strategy for continuous improvement in the level of performance for SCSEP participants' entry into unsubsidized employment, and to achieve, at a minimum, the levels specified in OAA Section 513(a)(2)(E)(ii). (20 CFR 641.302(f)) –

All SCSEP grantees in the commonwealth will be invited to attend future SCSEP trainings conducted by the Department of Aging. The annual training addresses best practices to assist grantees to improve their performance in meeting the common measure performance goals of entered employment, retention, and earnings as well as the other goals of community service, most in need and service level. The Department of Aging uses the same trainer that the US DOL has used nationally to provide training to its grantees on improving performance.

Location and Population Served, including Equitable Distribution

A description of the localities and populations for which projects of the type authorized by title V are most needed (20 CFR 641.325 (d).)

Projects are authorized in each county of the commonwealth. The number of SCSEP positions or slots that each county receives is based on a formula that takes into account the number of individuals ages 55 and older who are at or below 125 percent of the poverty level. Local decisions based on many factors determine which host agencies provide training to the participants. Some of these factors are: the host agency's ability to hire; does the host agency offer good training or provide a particularly important community service; does the host agency assist with the job search process through their contacts with other agencies and local businesses; and does the host agency provide a supportive environment for participants with multiple and/or significant barriers that can also offer short-term opportunities for participants prior to IEP development. Federal regulatory priorities of service govern what populations are served. Priority of Service is provided first to Veterans and qualified spouses with further preference to those persons 65 and older or individuals with: a disability; limited English

proficiency; low literacy skills; reside in a rural area; low employment prospects; failed to find employment through WIOA Title I services; homeless or at risk of homelessness.

List the cities and counties where the project will be conducted. Include the number of SCSEP authorized positions and indicate where the positions changed from the prior year.

[Attachment A](#) delineates each SCSEP grantees authorized slot level as of July 1, 2015 and enrollment level as of April 1, 2015 for each county in the commonwealth. The authorized positions did not change from the previous fiscal year (FY 14-15).

Describe current slot imbalances and proposed steps to correct inequities to achieve equitable distribution.

The Department of Aging conducted an Equitable Distribution Conference Call with the National Grantees operating in the commonwealth on October 16, 2014. Three of the National Grantees did not have any significant slot imbalances. The other six National Grantees had significant variances in several counties and they were asked to submit a corrective action plan to the Department of Aging describing steps to be taken in FY 15-16 to remedy the slot imbalances. Several county slot imbalances have seen improvement in FY 15-16 but there is still more work to be done to achieve equitable distribution in all 67 counties. The Department of Aging will continue to monitor county enrollment levels against authorized levels on a quarterly basis for itself and the nine National Grantees to determine if improvements are being made in the counties with the most significant slot imbalances. The Department of Aging will continue to work with those National Grantees with the most significant county slot imbalances. When DOL issues the SCSEP Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) in the first quarter of calendar year 2016, several significant county slot imbalances will see improvement in FY 16-17.

The state's long-term strategy for achieving an equitable distribution of SCSEP positions within the state that moves positions from over-served to underserved locations within the state in compliance with 20 CFR 641.365.

Through natural attrition and placing participants in unsubsidized jobs in overserved counties, National Grantees and the Department of Aging will not refill the slots in overserved counties but instead will begin to fill slots in underserved counties. For example, AARP was overserved in Dauphin County by 9 slots and underserved in neighboring Schuylkill County by 15 slots on April 1, 2015. Through natural attrition and unsubsidized job placements in Dauphin County, AARP did not refill the slots in Dauphin County but instead moved these funds to serve Schuylkill County residents. As of October 1, 2015, AARP's SCSEP program is now only overserved by 1 slot in Dauphin County and underserved by 9 slots in Schuylkill County which is an improvement from just 6 months ago.

The state's long-term strategy for achieving an equitable distribution of SCSEP positions within the state that equitably serves rural and urban areas.

Since the formula used to allocate slots at the USDOL takes into account age 55 and older and 125 percent or below of the poverty level, this is the methodology used to allocate SCSEP slots equitably. Please see the discussion below for further information on the commonwealth's service to SCSEP participants who reside in rural and urban areas.

The state's long-term strategy for achieving an equitable distribution of SCSEP positions within the state that serves individuals afforded priority for service under 20 CFR 641.520. (20 CFR 641.302(a), 641.365, 641.520)

Please refer to the SCSEP priorities of service above. SCSEP providers use a variety of recruitment methods to reach out to individuals who must be afforded priority of service. Some of these methods are as follows: mailing postcards to zip codes that have a significant number of most in need individuals as defined by the SCSEP; networking with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Veterans Administration, Adult Education Programs, and PA CareerLink® centers; working with agencies that specialize in immigrant and minority services; and hiring SCSEP staff who are bilingual.

The ratio of eligible individuals in each service area to the total eligible population in the state. (20 CFR 641.325(a))

Please refer to [Appendix XII](#) which shows the statewide total number of eligible individuals under 125 percent of the poverty level (450,699) and the number of individuals under 125 percent of the poverty level for each county. This data was obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Census, 2009-2013 American Community Survey.

The relative distribution of eligible individuals who reside in urban and rural areas within the state.

The statewide distribution of eligible individuals who reside in rural and urban areas is 20 percent and 80 percent respectively. This data was obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Census, 2009-2013 American Community Survey. Based on the final FY 14-15 quarterly progress reports for the Department of Aging and the 9 national SCSEP sponsors, 20 percent of the participants served resided in rural area and 80 percent resided in urban areas.

The relative distribution of eligible individuals who have the greatest economic need.

According to data from the U.S. Bureau of Census, 2009-2013 American Community Survey, there were 450,699 individuals in the commonwealth who were age 55 and older and whose incomes were below 125 percent of the poverty level. Of this total, 303,760 individuals had incomes below the poverty level. Thus, 67 percent of the SCSEP eligible population in the commonwealth was determined to have the greatest economic need (below poverty). Based on the final FY 14-15 quarterly progress reports for the Department of Aging and the 9 national SCSEP sponsors, 89 percent of the participants served were below the poverty level. The percent of individuals served by the Department of Aging and nine national SCSEP operators in the commonwealth in FY 14-15 who were below the poverty level (89 percent) exceeded the statewide percentage of eligible individuals that are below the poverty level (67 percent).

The relative distribution of eligible individuals who are minorities.

According to the *SCSEP Analysis of Service to Minority Individuals PY 2013, Volume II, April 26, 2015* the minority population in the commonwealth was 24.9 percent. Based on the final FY 14-15 quarterly progress reports for the Department of Aging and the 9 national SCSEP sponsors, 51 percent of the individuals served were minorities, which is more than double the statewide percentage.

The relative distribution of eligible individuals who are limited English proficient.

According to data from the U.S. Bureau of Census, 2009-2013 American Community Survey, 5.8 percent of the SCSEP eligible population in the commonwealth did not speak English well or did not speak English at all. Based on the final FY 14-15 quarterly progress reports for the Department of Aging and the 9 national SCSEP sponsors, 7 percent of the individuals served had limited English proficiency. The percent of individuals served by the Department of Aging and nine national SCSEP operators in FY 14-15 who had limited English proficiency (7 percent) exceeds the statewide percentage of eligible individuals who did not speak English very well or did not speak English at all (5.8 percent).

The relative distribution of eligible individuals who have the greatest social need.

One of the Department of Aging's and the nine national SCSEP sponsors six performance goals is serving the most in need. This goal measures the average number of barriers per SCSEP participant. The barriers are: severe disability; frail; age 75 or older; old enough for but not receiving Social Security Title II; severely limited employment prospects and living in an area of persistent unemployment; limited English proficiency; low literacy skills; disability; rural; veterans; low employment prospects; failed to find employment after using WIOA Title I services; homeless; and at risk of homelessness. The total number of barriers divided by the number of participants served provides the average number of barriers per participant. Based on the final FY 14-15 quarterly progress reports for the Department of Aging and the 9 national SCSEP sponsors, 6 of the national sponsors exceeded their most in need goal and the Department of Aging and the other 3 national sponsors met their goal. In the aggregate, the percent of the most in need goal achieved by the Department of Aging and the nine national SCSEP providers was 105 percent.

A description of the steps taken to avoid disruptions to the greatest extent possible, when positions are redistributed, as provided in 20 CFR 641.365; when new Census or other reliable data become available; or when there is over-enrollment for any other reason.. (20 CFR 641.325(i), 641.302(b))

SCSEP providers in the commonwealth will ensure the least disruption possible to participants when positions are redistributed or when new Census data becomes available or for any other reason. Participants can never be terminated because of changes in funding, slots, providers or any other reason. If changes are needed, they will be implemented gradually and no participant will be adversely affected. SCSEP grantees in the commonwealth are not permitted to transfer slots from one county to another county or from one county to another state unless there is prior approval from the Department of Aging and the USDOL.

SCSEP Operations

Administrative

Identification of the key staff, including the primary responsibilities and how subprojects will be managed.

Key staff from the Department and the amount of time they are assigned to the grant are: Aging Services Specialist (100 percent), Budget Analyst 3 (8 percent), Budget Analyst 4 (3 percent), Budget Analyst 4 (3 percent) and Budget Analyst 5 (2 percent). All of the aforementioned key staff, with the exception of the Aging Services Specialist, are from the Department's Bureau of Finance. Bureau of Finance staff compile and process grants for all sub-grantees; review expenditure reports for all sub-grantees; process payments for all sub-grantees; review budgets for all sub-grantees; and process quarterly reporting information to the Comptroller. The Aging Services Specialist is the SCSEP Program Manager and is housed in the Bureau of Aging Services. The Aging Services Specialist's primary responsibilities are to monitor SCSEP sub-grantees; manage data collection and reporting; coordinate recognition events for SCSEP participants and employers; negotiate annual performance goals; conduct SCSEP data validation; and prepare the annual grant application for SCSEP funds. It should also be noted that Financial Representatives housed in the Bureau of Finance conduct financial monitoring of all SCSEP sub-grantees.

Include an organization chart depicting any subgrantees or local affiliates implementing the grant. Include a table with authorized positions for each subgrantee or affiliate, if applicable.

Please note that when viewing the Organizational Charts contained in [Attachment B](#), the Bureau of Aging Services and the Bureau of Finance are under the Deputy Secretary of Aging. Please see [Attachment C](#) for a list of the subgrantees along with their PY 15 authorized slots, location, and years of experience operating SCSEP.

Describe training that will be provided to local staff.

The PA Department of Aging conducts an annual SCSEP training for local subgrantee staff on topics that are requested from local subgrantee staff or are deemed appropriate by the Department based on current SCSEP developments. For example, when the most recent SCSEP regulations were published, a national SCSEP trainer that is also used by the USDOL provided 1.5 days of training on the new regulations. A senior staff member from the PA Department of Labor & Industry provided training to local subgrantee staff in 2013 on using labor market information to assist older workers in finding jobs. The SCSEP training products on Workforce3One are also very helpful to both grantee and local staff.

Describe how projects will be monitored for program and financial compliance, including audit plans.

The Aging Services Specialist in the Bureau of Aging Services will have primary responsibility for monitoring the SCSEP programs administered by the Department's SCSEP subgrantees. The Aging Services Specialist will conduct bi-annual reviews of each of these agencies. Spending patterns, performance, narrative reports and PA CareerLink® involvement will all be considered in the selection process to determine which agency the Employment Specialist visits. Financial Representatives from the Bureau of Finance will conduct financial monitoring of all sub-grantees. Additionally, each sub grantee is required to have an annual audit performed by an independent certified public accountant. For Area Agencies on Aging subgrantees, SCSEP funds are included in the overall agency audits. The audits are reviewed and reconciled by the Department's Bureau of Finance Staff.

Describe how the State will manage its providers and how it will transfer participants if new providers are selected to serve in the State.

The SCSEP Data Collection and Reporting System, known as SPARQ, is used by the Department's Aging Services Specialist to manage provider enrollments, equitable distribution, unsubsidized placement follow-ups, assessments and IEPs and performance. Quarterly expenditure reports are used to monitor expenditures. Any shift of positions by the Department to achieve more equitable distribution will be a gradual process based on attrition. These gradual shifts of positions by the Department will minimize and most likely eliminate any adverse impacts on the participants. Any movement of positions by the Department to remedy slot imbalances in Program Years 2016-2020 will not adversely impact SCSEP participants. Also, in the event that the Department would lose positions to another grantee, the Department will make the transition for the participants as seamless as possible.

Recruitment

Describe how grantee will recruit and select of participants will be achieved. the eligibility of participants is described under 20 CRF 641.500 and 641.525.

The PA Department of Aging's SCSEP subgrantees have the responsibility of developing recruitment procedures that will allow them to enroll individuals in accordance with the service priority categories and which will help them to achieve the Most in Need performance goal. Subgrantee recruitment methods include, but are not limited, to the following:

- convening special meetings with community agencies to pool recruitment resources;
- coordinating with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Programs, PA CareerLink® centers, County Assistance Offices, Vocational Rehabilitation Offices and other local service agencies;
- speaking engagements with civic organizations, business organizations, and other employer groups;

- having a public relations program that includes paid advertisements, employment and training "news" stories with photographs, public service announcements on radio and TV and PA Department of Aging employment brochures;
- dissemination of specially produced material (pamphlets, placards, brochures, and audio/visual presentations); and
- holding job fairs and local ceremonies to observe "National Employ Older Worker" week.

Income Eligibility

Describe how participant income will be recertified each year, including where eligibility records will be maintained.

Participant income, family size and employment status are recertified for all participants within 12 months of their last eligibility certification or recertification. It should be noted that local subgrantee staff inform participants to report any change in income, family size or employment status that could affect the participant's continued eligibility for SCSEP. If a participant reports any change in income, family size or employment status, the recertification will be conducted immediately. Eligibility records are securely stored at the offices of local subgrantees.

Orientation

Describe the orientation procedures for participants and host agencies.

Participants receive an overview of the program prior to enrollment and then after enrollment, there is a formal orientation for participants. The formal orientation informs participants of the SCSEP goals and policies, durational limits, allowable and unallowable political activities, grievance procedure, termination policy, etc. Participants sign an orientation form acknowledging that they have received and understand the orientation information that was provided to them.

During the host agency orientation, the host agency director and the participant's supervisor are provided with information related to their responsibility to supervise the participant in a safe and healthy environment; provide the participant with training and assistance in finding an unsubsidized job; maintenance of effort requirements, participant complaint procedures, etc. The Host Agency Director signs the host agency agreement acknowledging their responsibilities and requirements with training the participant in the SCSEP.

Duration Limits

Describe any policy for maximum duration of enrollment or maximum time in community service and provide a copy of the current Duration Limit policy.

See [Attachment D](#) for a copy of the current PA Department of Aging Durational Limit Policy.

Assessments

Describe the procedures for assessing job aptitudes, job readiness, and job preferences of participants and their potential to transition into unsubsidized employment. Also describe how the assessment will be used to develop the participant's Individual Employment Plan (IEP).

The assessment is made in partnership with the participant. SCSEP subgrantee staff gathers information on the individual's work history, formal and informal education and training, skills, talents, physical capabilities, and need for supportive services. The PA Department of Aging's largest subgrantee uses a computerized assessment and career planning system called *JobReady* to complete the assessment and Individual Employment Plan (IEP). *JobReady* allows program staff and participants to: (1) identify job choices based on an assessment of the participants' interests, personal characteristics, skills and experience; (2) quickly test and assess participants' existing skill levels for their job choices while identifying skill gaps and other barriers; (3) create the IEP that starts with a host agency training assignment and guides the participants through the stated objectives and actions required to prepare for their job goals; (4) access online training programs to eliminate skill gaps; (5) earn Job Skill Certificates that show employers that participants have the required abilities for the job; and (6) link to job openings in the community. Participants are reassessed at least twice annually. The initial IEP is determined based on the participant's assessment. Subgrantee staff and the participant jointly develop the IEP to ensure that it is realistic and that it accurately reflects the participant's interests and needs.

Community Service Assignments

Describe how the participant will be assigned to community service including:

The types of community service activity that will be emphasized and how they were chosen; methods used to match participants with community service training.

The SCSEP provides over 425,000 community service hours to public and non-profit agencies, allowing them to enhance and provide needed services. Local community leaders are in a position to better understand the unique needs of their communities. Therefore, the PA Department of Aging leaves the task of identifying the types of community services and the places where these services are needed at the local level. Locally, the types of community services needed are based on input from the partnerships developed in each county between the SCSEP subgrantees and County Human Service Agency Coalitions, the United Way and Aging Resource and Disability Links.

The extent to which participants will be placed in the administration of the project itself.

Several PA Department of Aging SCSEP subgrantees use participants in administrative and job development capacities. Many participants that have worked in project administration at the subgrantee's office were subsequently hired by the subgrantee's agency.

The types of host agencies used and the procedures and criteria for selecting the assignments.

SCSEP subgrantees are aware of the local community needs from networking with community leaders. They are also aware of which agencies can qualify as a SCSEP host agency. They determine the quality of training that can be provided by the host agency and if the training is related to a High Priority Occupation. Local SCSEP subgrantees use the assessment and the IEP as the basis for developing an appropriate host agency assignment. They review the available host agencies to find the closest match with the participant's IEP goal and training objectives. When a participant has specific needs that cannot be met by the current host agencies, the local SCSEP subgrantee will seek out a new host agency.

The average number of hours in a participant's training week.

SCSEP participants work an average of 20 hours per week and currently earn \$7.25 per hour.

The fringe benefits offered (if any).

SCSEP participants receive FICA, Workers Compensation and an annual physical exam. The offer of an initial physical examination and an annual physical examination thereafter is made to all participants. The participant is advised that the physical examination is a benefit and not a requirement for initial enrollment or continuing enrollment. If a participant declines to accept the offer of a physical examination, this will be documented.

Procedures for ensuring adequate supervision.

The agreements between the PA Department of Aging SCSEP subgrantees and the host agencies will state that a participant must receive at least the same amount and degree of supervision as permanent employees performing comparable job tasks. Subgrantees will conduct periodic host agency monitoring to assure appropriate supervision is being provided.

Training

Describe the training that will be provided during community service assignments and any other types of training provided, including linkages with local one-stop centers, and Registered Apprenticeship.

The assessment and IEP are used to develop each participant's community service training assignment. Most SCSEP subgrantees offer computer training for participants. One subgrantee's host agency

developed a two-week curriculum for computer classes, which took place at two PA CareerLink® centers, Pennsylvania's one-stop centers, in Southwestern Pennsylvania. The concept was to bring together older individuals and senior high school students into a collaborative process to foster relationships whereby older individuals could use their experiences to mentor students and students could provide computer training to older individuals. All 15 SCSEP enrollees participated in the training.

Organizations located at the PA CareerLink® provide training in areas such as literacy, self-esteem, basic computer entry, Internet job search, and interpersonal skills. There are currently no linkages between subgrantees and the Registered Apprenticeship Program but this is something that may be explored as a topic at a future SCSEP training.

Supportive Services

Describe the supportive services that will be offered to help participants obtain and retain an unsubsidized job, including transportation assistance (if applicable).

For any participant who finds unsubsidized employment, supportive services may be provided up to 12 months following the participant's exit provided that the services are necessary for the participant to remain employed. Subgrantees first seek to obtain supportive services for free from local agencies. For example, local Area Agencies on Aging provide support services that can help participants retain an unsubsidized job such as adult day care, meals on wheels, personal care services, transportation and home modifications. Local Adult Education programs partner with SCSEP subgrantees to provide GED services to participants, which will facilitate their job search. Individuals age 65 and older may ride for free at all times, any day of the week, on the fixed route services of local public transit systems throughout Pennsylvania. Also, on non-fixed route bus systems, the commonwealth's Shared-Ride Program allows individuals age 65 and older to ride at an 85 percent reduced fare with the local shared-ride transportation provider. When necessary, SCSEP funds are used mostly for the following supportive services: transportation for individuals under age 65, work shoes, uniforms, eyeglasses and tools.

Termination

Describe the procedures for terminating a participant, including IEP terminations. Please provide a copy of the current termination procedures.

See [Attachment E](#) which contains the PA Department of Aging Termination Policy. This policy describes the procedures for terminating a participant including IEP terminations.

Complaints and Grievances

Describe the procedures for addressing and resolving participant complaints and grievances related to program termination. Please provide a copy of the current complaint/grievance policies.

See [Attachment E](#) which contains the PA Department of Aging Complaints and Grievance Policy.

Maximizing Enrollment

Describe procedures for fully enrolling all available slots, including over enrolling participants, and how over-enrollments will be balanced with equitable distribution requirements.

Over enrolling participants, based on the SCSEP subgrantee's historical exit rate, is a management tool that SCSEP subgrantees use to minimize adjusting participant training hours throughout the fiscal year. For those subgrantees with slots in more than one county, the Department Aging Services Specialist monitors the county's actual enrollment data against the county's equitable distribution amount in SCSEPED.org. Counties with slot imbalances are required to move towards equitable distribution through attrition.

Performance

Include a proposed level for each performance measure for each of the program years covered by the plan. While the plan is under review, the State will negotiate with the Employment and Training Administration to set the appropriate levels for the next year. The State may also negotiate performance levels in subsequent modification. At a minimum, States must identify the performance indicators required under the SCSEP Final Rule published on September 1, 2010, and, for each indicator, the State must develop an objective and quantifiable performance goal for the next year. The performance measures include: entered employment; employment retention; average earnings; service level; service to most-in-need; and community service.

In Program Year (PY) 2015, the PA Department of Aging is required to meet SCSEP performance goals associated with the following six performance measures: Entered Employment – 46.5 percent, Retention – 70.8 percent, Average Earnings - \$7,077, Service Level – 159.3 percent, Community Service – 79.6 percent, and Most-in-Need – 2.61. In PY 16, the PA Department of Aging will strive to meet the following SCSEP performance goals for these six performance measures: Entered Employment – 48.8 percent, Retention – 74.3 percent, Average Earnings - \$7,147, Service Level – 167 percent, Community Service – 83.5 percent, and Most-in-Need – 2.74.

Administrative Costs

Describe any request for an increase in administrative costs consistent with Section 502(c)(3) of the Older Americans Act.

The PA Department of Aging has never requested an increase in administrative costs.

Community Services Block Grant

Describe how the State and the eligible entities will coordinate the provision of employment and training activities through Statewide and local WIOA workforce development systems.

In the work plans that will be authored and submitted by the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) agencies for the 2016 calendar year of activity, DCED will direct sub-grantees to describe how they will conduct their planning and implementation of workforce activities in collaboration with local workforce development boards. This involvement should include but not be limited to:

- Seeking board and/or committee membership
- Offering/ appointing WIOA representation on eligible entity boards
- Engaging in active information and resource sharing regarding all workforce related activities
- Utilizing existing workforce development and training activities instead of creating or duplicating activities.

Provide examples of innovative employment and training programs and activities conducted by eligible entities or other neighborhood-based organizations as part of a community antipoverty strategy.

Several of our CSBG eligible agencies already provide unique and innovative workforce training and employment related programs. For example:

- Bucks County Opportunity Council provides the Economic Self-sufficiency program which connects and supports individual clients through education and attainment of family sustaining wages. The program is tailored to each individual's level of need in order to be as impactful as possible.
- Westmoreland Community Action has created a social enterprise to educate clients in basic employment skills, as well as occupation specific skills through its salvage business, Shop Demo Depot.
- Several eligible entities all over the state have partnered to implement an employment initiative targeting veterans. This program uses individual service plans to determine each person's need and then provides a host of services, including pre-employment training, job development, paid work experience, and/or subsidized employment, to remove barriers.
- Central Susquehanna Opportunities has initiated the creation of its own employment center when the local PA CareerLink® center moved and created a transportation problem for residents. The center offers job search assistance and hosts numerous recruitment events for area employers.

Plans are being carried out to create two new training programs with corresponding social enterprises:

- Fayette County Community Action Agency is creating a food based manufacturing and distribution center.
- Montgomery County Community Action Development Commission is creating a copying/printing business. Similar to Shop Demo Depot, these programs will train low income individuals in the necessary skills and then employ them to give them experience as well as reinforce basic employability skills.

In addition, the Executive Directive of Community Action, Inc. in Jefferson/Clarion Counties serves in a variety of capacities in workforce development efforts. He is the President of the Punxsutawney Chamber of Commerce, the Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair and on the Executive Committee of the North Central Workforce Development Board (covers Jefferson County) and also serves on the Northwest Workforce Development Board (covers Clarion County) and their Governance and Sector Strategies/Career Pathways Committees.

Reintegration of Ex-Offenders (REO) Program

Coordination of Services and Activities for Justice-Involved Individuals

Describe how the State and the REO grantee(s) will coordinate services and activities for justice-involved individuals to successfully attain employment and transition into their communities with Statewide and local WIOA workforce development systems; and may

Increased collaboration amongst the education, training, workforce development, criminal justice and community-based systems to enhance reentry employment opportunities promotes an effective and efficient government that works. The alignment of reentry planning and service activities among stakeholders can likely improve the justice-involved individual's ability to attain and retain a job that pays family-sustaining wages and to be a productive tax-paying citizen.

Approximately 1 in 28 individuals in Pennsylvania are either incarcerated or under some form of parole/probation supervision. Over 81 percent of the individuals entering the DOC self-report as unskilled or possess no skills and reading levels are slightly below 8th and 9th grades for male and female offenders, respectively. Over 90 percent of the DOC population will ultimately be released and have reintegration needs including employment. Identified as an individual with barriers to employment, ex-offenders also characteristically are basic skills deficient and depict the sub-populations of individuals with disabilities, low-income individuals, individuals receiving public assistance such as SNAP, homeless, older, english language learners, single parents, long-term unemployed, and veterans.

Faith-based and community organizations, as well as local workforce development boards, local workforce service providers and criminal justice system providers that intend to apply to the REO Program solicitations can contact DOC for a letter of support or more formal agreements to support reentry program implementation. The DOC values the applicant's ability to demonstrate an understanding of the criminally-involved population and the criminal justice system as well as the evidence-based practices that support an individual's reentry success and recidivism reduction. DOC will communicate with L&I regarding the requests for support and ensure the proposed program/activities align to WIOA priorities. Similar outreach will occur should L&I receive the request.

The U.S. Department of Labor REO Program awards are provided directly to the applicant and, in the instance a formal collaboration with the DOC has been established, DOC coordinates access to the state offender population and participates in REO programs as agreed upon.

Coordination of services and activities for justice involved individuals to attain and retain employment across the community, workforce and criminal justice systems is critical. However, since most applicants are direct recipients of the grant award, DOC does not partner with all applicants, and there is no formal mechanism established by US DOL to indicate/communicate to DOC or L&I that an REO award is made in Pennsylvania. The DOC proposes a collaborative partnership with the State Department of Labor & Industry via an REO workgroup. The workgroup would be responsible to:

- Outreach and communicate to REO applicants (and potential applicants) on availability of solicitations.
- Establish a process to determine formal agreements of support by L&I and DOC for applications, including prioritization for programs/activities that a) align with the WIOA priorities outlined in the State Plan, b) incorporate workforce best practices that achieve successful employment

outcomes and c) incorporate criminal justice best practices that achieve successful recidivism reduction outcomes.

- Monitor US DOL REO awardee information for Pennsylvania recipients.
- Provide technical assistance, where possible and appropriate, to REO recipients in areas such as: designating staff contacts to guide interaction with the workforce and criminal justice systems, establish points of access and processes across the REO program and the workforce and criminal justice systems, identify opportunities to align common intake/referral, identify opportunities to support the identification and tracking of performance for ex-offenders, and other opportunities.

Innovative Employment and Training Programs

Provide examples of innovative employment and training programs and activities conducted by faith-based and community organizations (FBCOs), State reentry councils, and justice-organizations in coordination with education and training providers, one-stop centers and other supportive services, which improve employment outcomes for justice-involved individuals.

Research indicates that employment placement is a vital step in the employment process but it is employment retention that is just one critical factor to address successful reintegration of ex-offenders. When combined with proven strategies to address positive cognitive-behavioral change in the criminally involved individual, employment programs have the greatest ability to achieve successful employment outcomes and recidivism reduction.

Innovative employment and training programs that achieve successful employment and recidivism outcomes incorporate:

- 1) Recidivism reduction strategies that address cognitive behavioral interventions and other techniques that address criminogenic risk in conjunction with training and employment services;
- 2) Staff capacity that leverages workforce development, criminal justice and cognitive behavioral intervention techniques such as Motivational Interviewing and the National Institute of Corrections' Reentry Employment Specialist, Offender Workforce Development Specialist, Offender Employment Retention Specialists trainings;
- 3) Job retention services are needed for approximately 12 months from the date of job placement and incorporate program strategies such as job coaching, intensive case management, and supportive services; and
- 4) Transitional Work Experiences – such as the Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) – provide ex-offenders with the much-needed skill development and work experience to support successful employment outcomes. CEO recently launched its evidence-based employment program supporting high risk ex-offenders aged 25 and under in Philadelphia. The program provides comprehensive employment services to men and women with recent criminal convictions. In 2012, CEO released results on its model program via a random assignment evaluation and achieved a statistically significant 22 percent reduction in recidivism for high risk individuals as well as increased employment placements. CEO is currently undergoing another more recent rigorous third-party evaluation to evaluate job retention and other employment outcomes.

Section V – Assurances

Common Assurances

1. *That 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.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- [PA Management Directive 205.9 Code of Conduct Statement of Financial Interest Filing](#)
- [PA Management Directive 205.10 Ethics Act Financial Disclosures](#)
- [Bylaws of the Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board](#)
- [Local Governance Policy 02-2015](#)

2. *That 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.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- [Pennsylvania Sunshine Act](#)
- [PA Management Directive 250.1, Advertisement of Public Meetings](#)
- [PA Management Directive 205.36, Right To Know Law](#)
- [PA Management Directive 205.26 The Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, Title II, Subtitle A, Nondiscrimination in State and Local Government Services](#)
- [Local Governance Policy 02-2015](#)

3. *That the lead state agencies with responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the state plan, and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served by such programs.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

Representatives from each of the core programs assisted in writing the Combined State Plan. Additionally, a team of individuals representing each of the core programs met regularly during the drafting of the Plan to allow appropriate input and guidance from all partners. All core program partners were given the opportunity to review and comment on the draft Plan prior to it being posted for public comment to ensure the Plan serves the needs of the populations served by each program.

4. *That the state obtained input into the development of the 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, other primary stakeholders, and the general public and that the state plan is available and accessible to the general public. That 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 is a member of the State Board.

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

The commonwealth established seven working groups of stakeholders to provide input to the state plan. This stakeholder input process began with a “kickoff” meeting on April 30, 2015 and was followed by numerous subsequent work group meetings. The seven workgroups were as follows: Barriers to Employment; Governance and Planning; PA CareerLink® Operations; Performance and Accountability; Service Delivery; Strategies; and Youth Services. Work groups met from May through August and ultimately produced white papers to inform the Combined State Plan. Almost 300 individuals participated in work group activities to include 21 full work group meetings and 14 sub-group meetings. A listing of all workgroup meetings is included as [Appendix XIII](#).

Additionally, the Secretary of L&I held five roundtable meetings with businesses across the state in the summer of 2015. Meetings were held in Lancaster, the Lehigh Valley, Wilkes-Barre, Glassport (Allegheny County) and Centre County with local chambers of commerce and their members. Feedback was provided by businesses regarding how they currently interact with the workforce development system and changes and improvements they would like to see in the future.

The commonwealth has also established a WIOA Legislator Workgroup to keep the Pennsylvania General Assembly apprised of the goals and strategies of the State Plan and to allow lawmakers to provide input based on their experiences and conversations with constituents.

The SWDB received an overview of the State Plan and the State Plan process at their meeting on October 8, 2015. After the meeting, all SWDB members were given the opportunity to review and comment on the Strategic portion of the State Plan. Additionally, the SWDB established an ad hoc committee to review and provide input for the entire State Plan. The State Plan Ad Hoc Committee met on November 6, 2015 and offered feedback, which was incorporated into the State Plan as posted for public comment. Members of the SWDB also participated in a strategic planning retreat on November 12, 2015 in which they were guided through a “lab” process to establish board priorities and inform State Plan strategies. The SWDB will vote to approve the State Plan before it is submitted finally.

5. *That the state has established, in accordance with 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 adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs to carry out workforce investment activities under chapters 2 and 3 of subtitle 3.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- [Financial Management Policy](#)

6. *That the state has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with section 188, if applicable.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- [Methods of Administration \(2014\)](#)
- [PA Management Directive 205.26 The Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, Title II, Subtitle A, Nondiscrimination in State and Local Government Services](#)
- [PA Management Directive 215.12 Provisions Concerning The Americans With Disabilities Act](#)
- [PA Management Directive 410.10 Amended - Guidelines for Investigating and Resolving Internal Discrimination Complaints](#)
- [PA Management Directive 410.11 - Commonwealth's Equal Employment, Outreach, and Employment Counseling Program](#)
- [IT Accessibility Statement](#)

7. *That 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.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- [Financial Management Policy](#)

8. *That 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.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- [Financial Management Policy](#)

9. *The State has a one-stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all one-stop centers with the ADA of 1990.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- [Policy 02-2014 Workforce Delivery System](#)
- [Methods of Administration \(2014\)](#)

10. *Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with significant barriers to employment to DVOP services, when appropriate.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- Each PA CareerLink® site possesses a local customer flow policy that identifies those veterans who may be referred to the DVOP Specialist. PA CareerLink® staff members and partners who provide services to PA CareerLink® customers only refer veterans with significant barriers to employment, veterans age 18 to 24, and transitioning service members in need of intensive services to DVOP Specialists. *Veterans' Program Letter Nos. 03-14, 04-14, 08-14.*

11. *The state will conduct evaluations and research projects on activities under WIOA core programs; that 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, that the projects will be coordinated with the evaluations provided for by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education under WIOA.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- The commonwealth agrees to conduct evaluations and research projects on WIOA core program activities. Such projects will be coordinated and designed in conjunction with the state and local WDBs and the agencies (L&I and PDE) responsible for the administration of the core programs. Projects will be coordinated with the evaluations provided for by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education.

Title I-B Assurances

1. *The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of career and training services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients or basic skills deficient.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- [Workforce System Policy 05-2015, Priority of Service](#)

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 DVOP specialist.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- [Workforce System Policy 05-2015, Priority of Service](#)

3. *The state has established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by CEOs for the appointment of LWDB members.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- [Local Governance Policy 02-2015](#)

4. *The state has established a written policy and procedures to ensure LWDBs are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2)*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- [Local Governance Policy 02-2015](#)

5. *The state has established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the State WDB help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the State consults with CEOs in local areas throughout the State in determining the distributions.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- This policy is still under development.

6. *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).*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- In accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7), the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote or deter union organizing.

7. *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.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- [Financial Management Policy](#)

8. *If a state WDB, department, or agency administers state laws for VR of persons with disabilities, that board, department or agency cooperates with the agency that administers W-P services, Adult and DW programs, and Youth programs under Title I.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- VR programs are administered by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation within the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry. Wagner-Peyser, Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs under Title I are also administered by the Department of Labor & Industry allowing for cooperation across the programs.

9. *Priority of Service for covered persons is provided for each of the Title I programs.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- [Workforce System Policy 05-2015, Priority of Service](#)

10. *The state agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- Per Training and Guidance Letter (TEGL) 38-14, the commonwealth has no current waivers. When a barrier is identified that precludes or limits the effectiveness of efforts to serve businesses or citizens, the commonwealth may pursue a waiver of the provision. Pennsylvania agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of any approved waivers in the WIOA Annual Report.

11. *That 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 section 184(a)(3)*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- [WIIN 3-00, Change 2: Monitoring/OS Policy](#) (This policy is in the process of being updated to be consistent with WIOA requirements)

Wagner-Peyser Assurances

- 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)).*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- Wagner-Peyser Employment service is a required co-located partner at all PA CareerLink® centers, Pennsylvania's one-stop centers.

- 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.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- The state assures that it is complying with MSFW significant office requirements in accordance with 20 CFR 653.111.

- 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.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- VR programs are administered by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation within the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry. Wagner-Peyser, Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs under Title I are also administered by the Department of Labor & Industry allowing for cooperation across the programs.

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

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s):

- Merit-based public employees employed by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry provide Wagner-Peyser Act labor exchange activities in accordance with U.S. Department of Labor regulations.

Adult Basic Education and Literacy Programs Certifications and Assurances

1. *States must provide written and signed certification that:*
 - 1.1. *The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;*
 - 1.2. *The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;*
 - 1.3. *The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;*
 - 1.4. *All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;*
 - 1.5. *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;*
 - 1.6. *The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;*
 - 1.7. *The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and*
 - 1.8. *The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): The Pennsylvania Department of Education will ensure that signed certification of all of the above items is included with the final submission of the State Plan.

2. *The State plan must include assurances that:*
 - 2.1. *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).*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): The PDE Bureau of Postsecondary and Adult Education will ensure that it and all eligible providers are expending funds under supplement not supplant. A need-based funding formula allocates funds to all LWDA in the state.

- 2.2. *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.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): If no eligible provider in a local area is awarded a grant, a successful awardee will be awarded the funds for the LWDA and required to provide services there.

- 2.3. *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.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): PDE will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA to support or provide programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not

“eligible individuals” within the meaning of section 203(4). PDE provides family literacy activities with state funding.

2.4. 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.

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): When using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, PDE will ensure that priority is given to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.

Vocational Rehabilitation Certifications and Assurances

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

1. *The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation is authorized to submit the VR services portion of the 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;*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): 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 Office of Vocational Rehabilitation agrees to operate and administer the State VR Services Program in accordance with the VR services portion of the 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 Combined State Plan;*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): 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 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 Combined State Plan;*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): 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 Combined State Plan and its supplement;*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): Yes

5. *The State legally may carry out each provision of the VR services portion of the Combined State Plan and its supplement.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): Yes

6. *All provisions of the VR services portion of the Combined State Plan and its supplement are consistent with State law.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): Yes

7. *The Executive Director of OVR has the authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the VR services portion of the Combined State Plan and its supplement;*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): Yes

8. *The Executive Director of OVR has the authority to submit the VR services portion of the Combined State Plan and the supplement for Supported Employment services;*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): Yes

9. *The agency that submits the VR services portion of the Combined State Plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): Yes

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 Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): Yes

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.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): Yes

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:*

- 3.1. *The establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act.*

- 3.2. *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

- 3.3 *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.*
- 3.4 *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. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds: Yes*
- 3.5 *The shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act . Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs: Yes*
- 3.6 *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? Yes, see Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Combined State Plan.*
- 3.7 *The descriptions for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11), (24)(B), and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.*
- 3.8 *All required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act.*
- 3.9 *The requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act.*
- 3.10 *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.*
- 3.11 *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.*
- 3.12 *The submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): Yes

4. **Administration of the Provision of VR Services:** *The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:*
- 4.1 *comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act.*

- 4.2. *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.*
- 4.3. *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? Yes*
- 4.4. *comply with all required available comparable services and benefits, determined to be available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act and*
- 4.5. *comply with the requirements for the development of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.*
- 4.6. *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.*
- 4.7. *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.*
- 4.8. *comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual review, 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, as required by section 101(a)(14) of the Rehabilitation Act.*
- 4.9. *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.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): Yes

5. Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement:

- 5.1. *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.*
- 5.2. *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.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): Yes

6. Financial Administration:

- 6.1. *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.*
- 6.2. *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.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): Yes

7. Provision of Supported Employment Services:

- 7.1. *The designated State agency assures that it will provide supported employment services as defined in section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act.*
- 7.2. *The designated State agency assures that:*
- 7.2.1. *the comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act,*
 - 7.2.2. *an individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act, which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): Yes

EDGAR Certifications and Other Assurances for the Perkins Career and Technical Educational and Tech Prep Programs

States must provide written and signed certifications stating that:

Part A

- (a) The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan. (34 CFR 76.104(a)(1)) (Note: The term 'eligible agency' means a State board designated or created consistent with State law as the sole State agency responsible for the administration, or the supervision of the administration, of career and technical education in the State. See Sec. 3(12);*
- (b) The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program. (34 CFR 76.104(a)(2));*
- (c) The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan. (34 CFR 76.104(a)(3));*
- (d) All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law. (34 CFR 76.104(a)(4));*
- (e) 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. (34 CFR 76.104(a)(5)) (Note: If a State wishes for the Department to continue sending the grant award documents directly to the State director, this individual's title needs to be listed on this portion of the assurance;*
- (f) The State officer who submits the plan, specified by title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan. (34 CFR 76.104(a)(6));*
- (g) The agency that submits the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan. (34 CFR 76.104(a)(7));*
- (h) The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program. (34 CFR 76.104(a)(8));*

Part B

1. The eligible State agency must submit a copy of the State Plan to the State office responsible for the Intergovernmental Review Process if the State implements that review process under Executive Order 12372. (See 34 CFR Part 79);
2. The eligible State agency must provide a complete and signed ED Form 80-0013 for certifications regarding lobbying; (See 34 CFR Part 82. To download ED Form 80-0013, and the SF LLL Form (Disclosure of Lobbying Activities) referred therein, See: <http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>);

3. The eligible State agency must provide a complete and signed Assurance for Non-Construction Programs Form. (See <http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>);
4. The eligible State agency must provide a signed assurance that the eligible State agency will comply with the requirements of the Act and the provisions of the State Plan, including the provision of a financial audit of funds received under the Act which may be included as part of an audit of other Federal or State programs. (section 122(c)(11));
5. The eligible State agency must provide a signed assurance that none of the funds expended under the Act will be used to acquire equipment (including computer software) in any instance in which such acquisition results in a direct financial benefit to any organization representing the interests of the acquiring entity or the employees of the acquiring entity, or any affiliate of such an organization. (section 122(c)(12));
6. The eligible State agency must provide a signed assurance that the State will waive the minimum allocation as required in section 131(c)(1) in any case in which the local educational agency is located in a rural, sparsely populated area or is a public charter school operating secondary school career and technical education programs and demonstrates that it is unable to enter into a consortium for purposes of providing services under the Act. (section 131(c)(2));
7. The eligible State agency must provide a signed assurance that the State will provide, from non-Federal sources for the costs the eligible agency incurs for the administration of programs under this Act, an amount that is not less than the amount provided by the eligible agency from non-Federal sources for such costs for the preceding fiscal year. (section 323(a));
8. The eligible State agency must provide a signed assurance that the State and eligible recipients that use funds under this Act for in-service and pre-service career and technical education professional development programs for career and technical education teachers, administrators, and other personnel shall, to the extent practicable, upon written request, permit the participation in such programs of career and technical education secondary school teachers, administrators, and other personnel in nonprofit private schools offering career and technical secondary education programs located in the geographical area served by such eligible agency or eligible recipient. (section 317(a));
9. The eligible State agency must provide a signed assurance that, except as prohibited by State or local law, that an eligible recipient may, upon written request, use funds made available under this Act to provide for the meaningful participation, in career and technical education programs and activities receiving funds under this Act, of secondary school students attending nonprofit private schools who reside in the geographical area served by the eligible recipient. (section 317(b)(1)); and
10. The eligible State agency must provide a signed assurance that eligible recipients that receive an allotment under this Act will consult, upon written request, in a timely and meaningful manner with representatives of nonprofit private schools in the geographical area served by the eligible recipient regarding the meaningful participation, in career and technical education programs and

activities receiving funding under this Act, of secondary school students attending nonprofit private schools. (section 317(b)(2)).

Certifications and Assurances: EDGAR Certifications and other Assurances have been signed and are found in the federal Perkins State Plan.

TANF Certifications

The state will:

- 1) *Operate a child support enforcement program under the State plan approved under part D.*

Certification: The Department of Human Services will operate a child support enforcement program under the approved Title IV-D State Plan.

- 2) *Operate a foster care and adoption assistance program under the State plan approved under part E, and that the State will take such actions as are necessary to ensure that children receiving assistance under such part are eligible for medical assistance under the State plan under title XIX.*

Certification: The Department of Human Services will operate, during the fiscal year, a foster care and adoption assistance program under the State Plan approved under part E, and the State will take such actions as are necessary to ensure that children receiving assistance under such part are eligible for Medical Assistance under the State Plan under Title XIX of the Social Security Act.

- 3) *Specify which State agency or agencies will administer and supervise the program referred to in paragraph (1) for the fiscal year, which shall include assurances that local governments and private sector organizations—(A) have been consulted regarding the plan and design of welfare services in the State so that services are provided in a manner appropriate to local populations; and (B) have had at least 45 days to submit comments on the plan and the design of such services.*

Certification: The Department of Human Services will administer and supervise the program known as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families for the fiscal year. Local governments and private sector organizations will be consulted regarding the plan and design of welfare services in Pennsylvania so that services are provided in a manner appropriate to local populations; and these same local governments and private sector organizations will have had at least 45 days to submit comments on the plan and the design of such services.

- 4) *Provide each member of an Indian tribe, who is domiciled in the State and is not eligible for assistance under a tribal family assistance plan approved under section 412, with equitable access to assistance under the State program funded under this part attributable to funds provided by the Federal Government.*

Certification: The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, during the fiscal year, will provide each member of an Indian tribe, who resides in the State and is not eligible for assistance under a tribal family assistance plan approved under section 412, with equitable access to assistance under the State's TANF Program.

- 5) *Establish and is enforce standards and procedures to ensure against program fraud and abuse, including standards and procedures concerning nepotism, conflicts of interest among individuals responsible for the administration and supervision of the State program, kickbacks, and the use of political patronage.*

Certification: The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has established and is enforcing standards and procedures to ensure against program fraud and abuse, including standards and procedures concerning nepotism, conflicts of interest among individuals responsible for the administration and supervision of the State program, kickbacks, and the use of political patronage.

- 6) *(Optional) Establish and enforce standards and procedures to: (i) screen and identify individuals receiving assistance under this part with a history of domestic violence while maintaining the confidentiality of such individuals; (ii) refer such individuals to counseling and supportive services; and (iii) waive, pursuant to a determination of good cause, other program requirements such as time limits (for so long as necessary) for individuals receiving assistance, residency requirements, child support cooperation requirements, and family cap provisions, in cases where compliance with such requirements would make it more difficult for individuals receiving assistance under this part to escape domestic violence or unfairly penalize such individuals who are or have been victimized by such violence, or individuals who are at risk of further domestic violence.*

Certification: The Department of Human Services will establish and enforce standards and procedures to:

- screen and identify individuals receiving assistance under this part with a history of domestic violence while maintaining the confidentiality of such individuals;
- refer such individuals to counseling and supportive services; and
- waive, pursuant to a determination of good cause, other program requirements such as time limits (for so long as necessary) for individuals receiving assistance, residency requirements, child support cooperation requirements, and family cap provisions, in cases where compliance with such requirements would make it more difficult for individuals receiving TANF assistance to escape domestic violence or unfairly penalize such individuals who are or have been victimized by such violence, or individuals who are at risk of further domestic violence.

Trade Adjustment Assistance Assurance

- 1) *On an annual basis, the CSA will execute TAA Cooperative Financial Agreements and UI Funding Agreements for each fiscal year during the four-year State Planning cycle.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): The TAA program is a required partner in the one-stop system, established under section 121 of WIOA. Pennsylvania adheres to the signed Governor-Secretary Agreement, in addition to the terms and conditions provided in the Trade Adjustment Assistance Annual Cooperative Financial Agreement and the Unemployment Insurance Annual Funding Agreement, executed each fiscal year between the state and ETA.

SCSEP Assurance

- 1) *Where SCSEP is included in the Combined Workforce Plan, the State established a written policy and procedure to obtain advice and recommendations on the State Plan from representatives of the State and area agencies on aging; State and local boards under WIOA; public and private nonprofit agencies and organizations providing employment services, including each grantee operating a SCSEP project within the State, except as provided under section 506(a)(3) of OAA and 20 CFR 641.320(b); Social service organizations providing services to older individuals; Grantees under Title III of OAA, Affected Communities, Unemployed older individuals, Community-based organizations serving older individuals; business organizations; and labor organizations.*

Assurance(s) or Attachment(s): Working in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Department of Aging, the commonwealth made all of the above entities aware of the posting of the Combined State Plan for public comment and of the procedures by which entities were able to submit public comment.

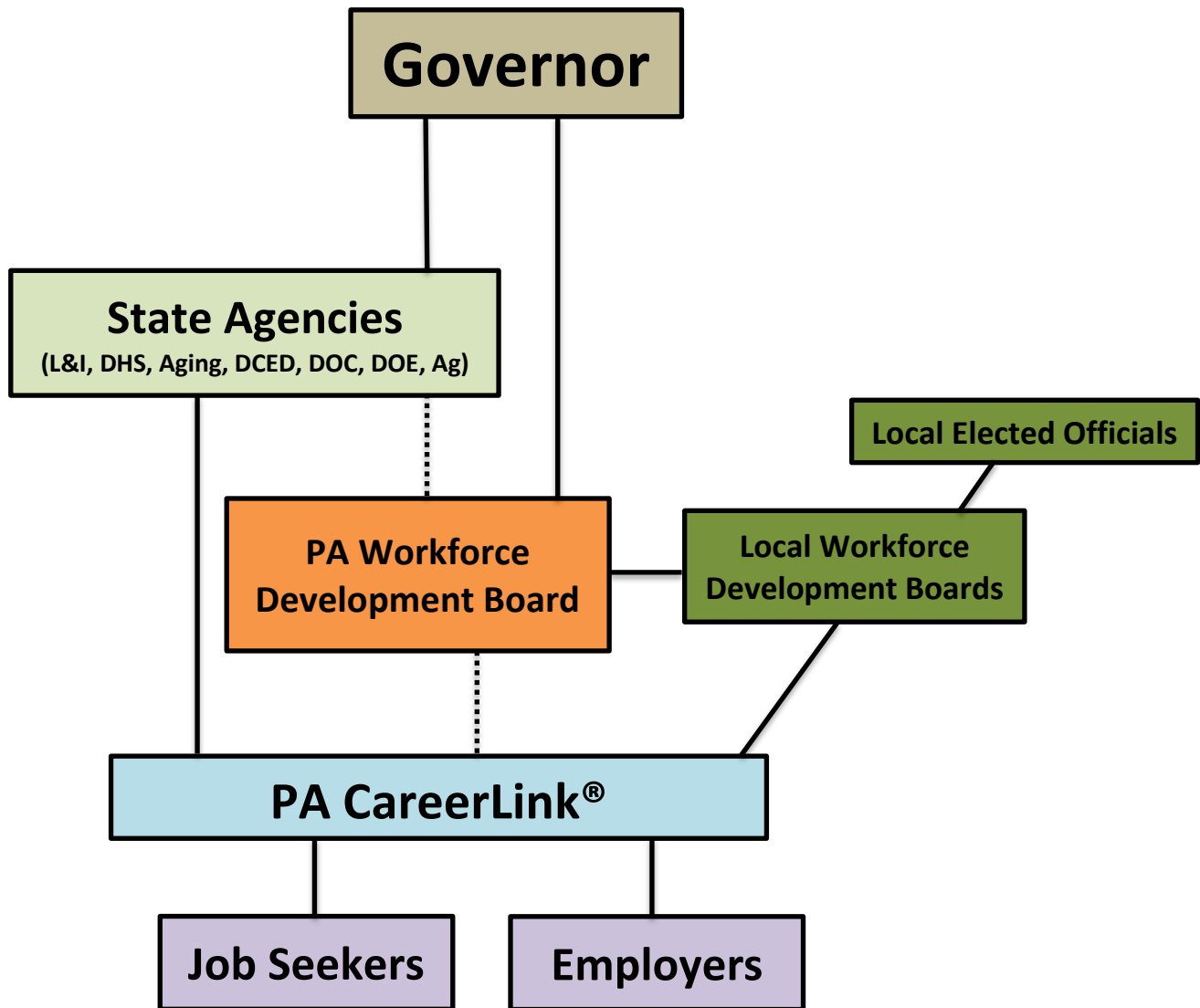
Section VI – Appendices

Appendix I – Career Pathway Definition

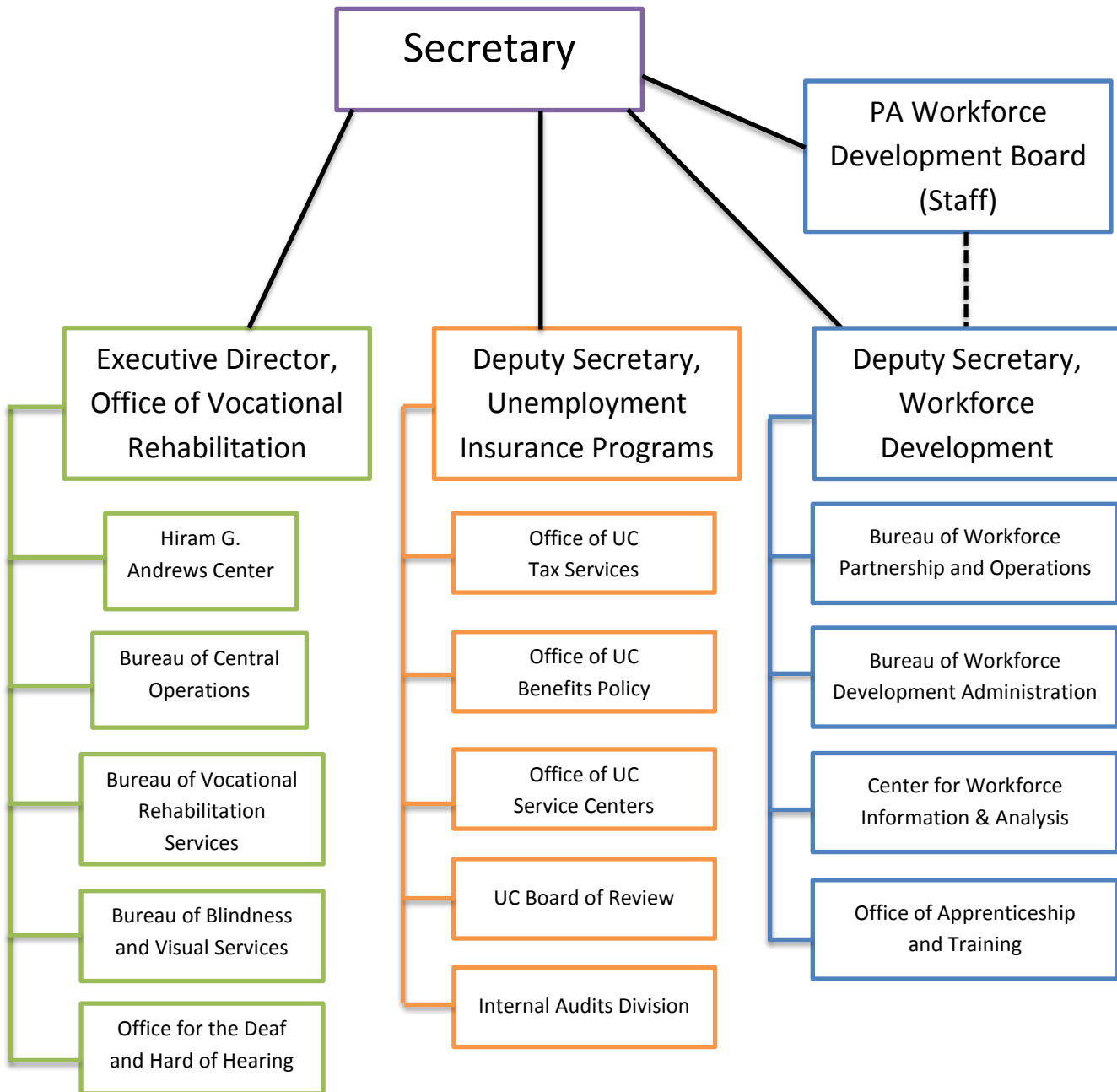
The term "career pathway" means a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training and other services that:

- (A) aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;
- (B) prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including apprenticeships registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the "National Apprenticeship Act"; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.) (referred to individually in this Act as an "apprenticeship", except in section 171);
- (C) includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual's education and career goals;
- (D) includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
- (E) organizes education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;
- (F) enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least 1 recognized postsecondary credential; and
- (G) helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

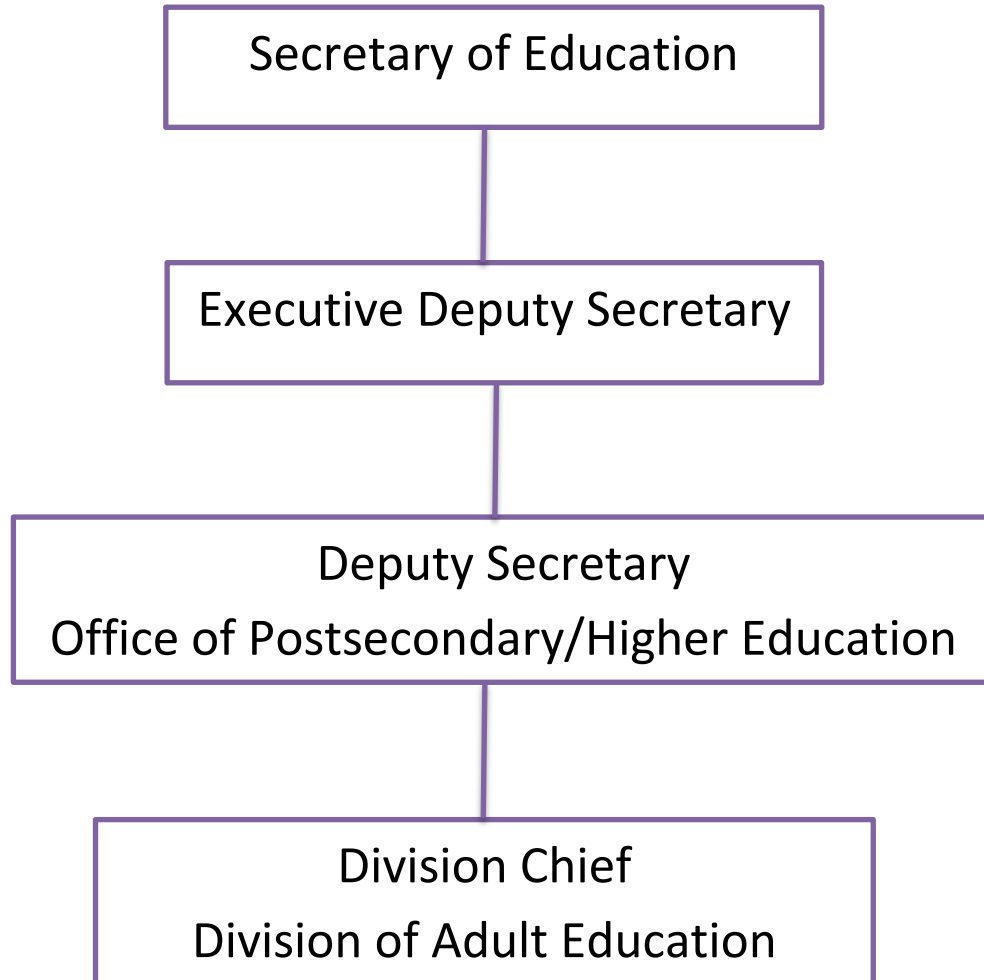
Appendix II – Pennsylvania Workforce Development System



Appendix III – Labor & Industry Workforce Programs Organizational Chart



Appendix IV – Adult Basic Education Organizational Chart



Appendix V – Local Workforce Development Areas

1. Allegheny County Workforce Development Area
2. Berks County Workforce Development Area
3. Bucks County Workforce Development Area
4. Central Workforce Development Area - consisting of Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder and Union Counties
5. Chester County Workforce Development Area
6. Delaware County Workforce Development Area
7. Lackawanna County Workforce Development Area
8. Lancaster County Workforce Development Area
9. Lehigh Valley Workforce Development Area - consisting of Lehigh and Northampton Counties
10. Luzerne-Schuylkill Counties Workforce Development Area - consisting of Luzerne and Schuylkill Counties
11. Montgomery County Workforce Development Area
12. North Central Workforce Development Area - consisting of Cameron, Clearfield, Elk, Jefferson, McKean and Potter Counties
13. Northern Tier Workforce Development Area - consisting of Bradford, Susquehanna, Sullivan, Tioga and Wyoming Counties
14. Northwest Workforce Development Area - consisting of Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Venango and Warren Counties
15. Philadelphia Workforce Development Area
16. Pocono Counties Workforce Development Area - consisting of Carbon, Monroe, Pike and Wayne Counties
17. South Central Workforce Development Area - consisting of Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Juniata, Lebanon, Perry and York Counties
18. Southern Alleghenies Workforce Development Area - consisting of Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon and Somerset Counties
19. Southwest Corner Workforce Development Area - consisting of Beaver, Greene and Washington Counties
20. The City of Pittsburgh Workforce Development Area
21. Tri-County Workforce Development Area - consisting of Armstrong, Butler and Indiana Counties
22. West Central Workforce Development Area - consisting of Lawrence and Mercer Counties
23. Westmoreland-Fayette Workforce Development Area - consisting of Fayette and Westmoreland Counties

Appendix VI – Designated Planning Regions

- Central Planning Region – - consisting of Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Juniata, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder and Union Counties
- Lehigh Valley Planning Region – consisting of Lehigh and Northampton Counties
- North Central Planning Region – consisting of Cameron, Clearfield, Elk, Jefferson, McKean and Potter Counties
- Northeast Planning Region – consisting of Carbon, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Schuylkill and Wayne Counties
- Northern Tier Planning Region – consisting of Bradford, Susquehanna, Sullivan, Tioga and Wyoming Counties
- Northwest Planning Region - consisting of Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango, and Warren Counties
- South Central Planning Region – consisting of Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry and York Counties
- Southeast Planning Region – consisting of Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia Counties
- Southern Alleghenies Planning Region – consisting of Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon and Somerset Counties
- Southwest Planning Region - consisting of Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Greene, Fayette, Indiana, Washington and Westmoreland Counties

Appendix VII – Jobs for Veterans State Grant Hire and Mandatory Training Completion Dates

DVOP Specialist		Hire Date	Training Deadline
Donna	Acker	5/4/2009	10/31/2010
Richard	Boyer	3/31/2014	9/27/2015
Robert	Clark	6/28/2010	12/25/2011
Severio	Costello	9/2/2014	2/29/2016
Jill	Counts-Weaverling	9/30/2012	3/29/2014
Thomas	Cramer	9/28/2015	3/26/2017
Vicki	Curtis	8/10/2007	2/5/2009
Robert	Eddy	8/17/2015	2/12/2017
Shannon	Eidem	4/5/2010	10/2/2011
Ian	Emmett	8/24/2015	2/19/2017
Roy	Evans	1/5/2015	7/3/2016
William	Fallon	7/3/2015	12/29/2016
Timothy	French	6/1/2009	11/28/2010
David	Grey	6/1/2015	11/27/2016
Shawn	Griffin	6/9/2014	12/6/2015
Robert	Haefner	10/27/2014	4/24/2016
Patrick	Hayden	10/5/2015	4/2/2017
John	Haydu	4/29/2013	10/26/2014
Carl	Heilbrun	6/15/2015	12/11/2016
Randal	Hollenbach	3/22/2010	9/18/2011
Samuel	Jocuns	5/3/2010	10/30/2011
Samuel	Jones	7/16/2001	1/12/2003
Don	Kelsey	3/4/2013	8/31/2014
Karen	McFadden	12/13/2010	6/10/2012
Catherine	Miller	10/7/2009	4/5/2011
Jason	Owings	4/20/2015	10/16/2016
Ryan C.	Paglia	12/3/2007	5/31/2009
Porter	Peaden III	6/22/2002	12/19/2003
Jesse	Putnam	9/28/2015	3/26/2017
Loretta	Reeger	2/8/2010	8/7/2011
Jeffrey	Rhein	11/25/2002	5/23/2004
Thomas	Sheehan	5/12/2014	11/8/2015
Byron	Sutton	10/1/2012	3/30/2014
George	Tanner	7/20/2015	1/15/2017
Billy	Walls	12/8/2014	6/5/2016
George	Warholic	1/4/2004	7/2/2005
Clifford W.	White	1/14/2008	7/12/2009
Rodney	Wyatt	3/22/2010	9/18/2011
Sean	Zielinski	7/5/2005	1/1/2007

Appendix VIII – Statewide Employment Projections

Statewide Employment Projections for the Top 25 Industries with the Highest Percentage of Workers Aged 55-plus

NAICS Code	Industry Title	Empl. (2012)	Proj. Empl. (2022)	Volume Empl. Change (2012-22)	Percent Empl. Change (2012-22)
	TOTAL JOBS	6,046,560	6,514,500	467,940	7.7%
4855	Charter Bus Industry	2,430	2,460	30	1.2%
8122	Death Care Services	7,210	7,810	600	8.3%
4854	School & Employee Bus Transportation	22,990	24,700	1,710	7.4%
8131	Religious Organizations	79,510	80,290	780	1.0%
4231	Motor Vehicle/Part Merchant Wholesalers	19,670	20,920	1,250	6.4%
3151	Apparel Knitting Mills	360	190	-170	-47.2%
4531	Florists	3,450	2,250	-1,200	-34.8%
4853	Taxi & Limousine Service	2,290	2,260	-30	-1.3%
3131	Fiber, Yarn & Thread Mills	300	180	-120	-40.0%
3152	Cut & Sew Apparel Manufacturing	4,880	2,660	-2,220	-45.5%
4871	Scenic/Sightseeing Transportation, Land	530	610	80	15.1%
4852	Interurban & Rural Bus Transportation	770	720	-50	-6.5%
4859	Other Ground Passenger Transportation	4,050	5,090	1,040	25.7%
6112	Junior Colleges	21,420	21,800	380	1.8%
3132	Fabric Mills	2,240	1,190	-1,050	-46.9%
2213	Water, Sewage & Other Systems	2,290	2,700	410	17.9%
8141	Private Households	30,450	29,920	-530	-1.7%
3325	Hardware Manufacturing	780	610	-170	-21.8%
3311	Iron & Steel Mills & Ferroalloys	13,600	13,060	-540	-4.0%
8139	Professional & Similar Organizations	18,820	20,740	1,920	10.2%
5312	Offices of Real Estate Agents & Brokers	7,430	7,630	200	2.7%
3333	Commercial & Service Industry Machinery	3,310	3,050	-260	-7.9%
3221	Pulp, Paper & Paperboard Mills	3,410	3,150	-260	-7.6%
3326	Spring & Wire Product Manufacturing	3,100	2,640	-460	-14.8%
3312	Purchased Steel Product Manufacturing	6,600	6,720	120	1.8%
Source: 2012-22 Long-Term Industry Employment Projections					

Appendix IX – Statewide Employment Projections

Statewide Employment Projections for the Top-Employing Occupations in the Industries with the Highest Percentage of Workers 55-plus

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Educ. Level	Empl. (2012)	Proj. Empl. (2018)	Percent Empl. Change (2012-22)	Total Annual Open's
53-3022	Bus Drivers, School or Special Client	ST OJT	25,800	27,500	6.6%	643
37-2012	Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners	ST OJT	55,170	60,760	10.1%	1,652
21-2011	Clergy	BD+	15,100	15,500	2.6%	349
43-6014	Secretaries	ST OJT	109,400	118,790	8.6%	2,256
39-9011	Childcare Workers	ST OJT	56,440	62,880	11.4%	2,303
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	ST OJT	142,200	145,060	2.0%	3,274
21-2021	Directors, Religious Activities & Education	BD+	8,740	8,850	1.3%	309
37-2011	Janitors & Cleaners	ST OJT	96,980	104,140	7.4%	2,541
49-9071	Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	LT OJT	65,350	70,060	7.2%	1,725
43-3031	Bookkeeping & Accounting Clerks	MT OJT	73,280	79,310	8.2%	1,276
39-9021	Personal Care Aides	ST OJT	53,410	70,790	32.5%	2,120
41-4012	Sales Representatives	MT OJT	75,770	80,490	6.2%	1,949
13-1075	Labor Relations Specialists	BD	4,970	4,920	-1.0%	91
53-3041	Taxi Drivers & Chauffeurs	ST OJT	11,300	12,790	13.2%	283
53-3021	Bus Drivers, Transit & Intercity	MT OJT	6,640	7,050	6.2%	163
53-3033	Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	ST OJT	40,830	41,880	2.6%	758
37-3011	Landscaping & Groundskeeping Workers	ST OJT	43,610	47,410	8.7%	1,479
25-2011	Preschool Teachers	AD	13,920	15,870	14.0%	586
53-7062	Laborers & Material Movers	ST OJT	105,640	117,290	11.0%	4,437
11-1021	General & Operations Managers	BD+	61,340	66,630	8.6%	1,678
25-3021	Self-Enrichment Education Teachers	WK EXP	12,140	12,890	6.2%	282
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	ST OJT	104,410	113,100	8.3%	3,709
51-6031	Sewing Machine Operators	ST OJT	5,630	4,350	-22.7%	27
27-2042	Musicians & Singers	LT OJT	4,610	4,630	0.4%	126
43-4171	Receptionists & Information Clerks	ST OJT	47,410	50,490	6.5%	1,584
51-8021	Stationary Engineers & Boiler Operators	LT OJT	3,110	3,110	0.0%	95
25-9041	Teacher Assistants	PS	44,000	45,360	3.1%	1,134
43-1011	Supervisors - Office & Admin Support	WK EXP	57,770	62,110	7.5%	1,805
43-6011	Executive Secretaries Admin Asst's	WK EXP	27,480	26,880	-2.2%	331
51-4023	Rolling Machine Setters/Oprs/Tndrs	MT OJT	3,160	3,010	-4.7%	61
39-4021	Funeral Attendants	ST OJT	1,800	1,800	0.0%	38
41-9022	Real Estate Sales Agents	LT OJT	12,740	13,460	5.7%	192
51-1011	Supervisors - Production Workers	PS+	27,300	27,530	0.8%	407
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	ST OJT	189,430	195,000	2.9%	7,036
49-3031	Bus, Truck & Diesel Engine Mechanics	LT OJT	10,930	12,010	9.9%	340

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Educ. Level	Empl. (2012)	Proj. Empl. (2018)	Percent Empl. Change (2012-22)	Total Annual Open's
27-3031	Public Relations Specialists	BD	11,350	12,230	7.8%	244
27-1023	Floral Designers	MT OJT	3,070	2,610	-15.0%	81
13-2011	Accountants & Auditors	BD	59,270	64,670	9.1%	2,294
51-4031	Cutting, Punching & Press Machine Oprs	MT OJT	9,300	8,940	-3.9%	79
49-3023	Automotive Techs & Mechanics	LT OJT	37,470	39,780	6.2%	1,178
51-9198	Helpers - Production Workers	ST OJT	24,300	25,870	6.5%	577
33-9032	Security Guards	ST OJT	41,890	47,140	12.5%	1,167
51-9196	Paper Goods Machine Oprs	MT OJT	7,150	6,940	-2.9%	64
43-5071	Shipping, Receiving & Traffic Clerks	ST OJT	28,010	28,490	1.7%	785
51-9061	Inspectors, Testers & Sorters	MT OJT	21,600	23,260	7.7%	640
51-2092	Team Assemblers	MT OJT	41,070	43,010	4.7%	843
21-1012	Educational & Vocational Counselors	MD	11,050	11,660	5.5%	296
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers & Brazers	MT OJT	15,910	16,780	5.5%	476
51-4021	Extruding & Drawing Machine Oprs	MT OJT	5,190	4,810	-7.3%	100
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	LT OJT	17,100	21,370	25.0%	921
43-5081	Stock Clerks & Order Fillers	ST OJT	77,590	74,640	-3.8%	2,344
53-7061	Cleaners of Vehicles & Equipment	ST OJT	11,580	12,340	6.6%	398
53-3031	Driver/Sales Workers	ST OJT	19,390	20,510	5.8%	422
53-1031	Supervisors - Transport'n & Vehicle Oprs	WK EXP	7,670	8,360	9.0%	280
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers	BD+	54,040	56,890	5.3%	1,474
51-4191	Heat Treating Equipment Oprs	MT OJT	1,880	1,880	0.0%	36
51-4041	Machinists	LT OJT	20,100	22,560	12.2%	707
11-9033	Education Administrators, Postsecondary	MD+	5,650	6,190	9.6%	203
41-9021	Real Estate Brokers	WK EXP	2,760	2,910	5.4%	41
49-1011	Supervisors - Mechanics & Installers	WK EXP	14,850	15,660	5.5%	483
53-7064	Packers & Packagers, Hand	ST OJT	33,510	36,910	10.1%	1,220
31-1014	Nursing Assistants	PS	73,840	81,390	10.2%	2,160
13-1161	Market Research Analysts	BD	21,960	28,060	27.8%	911
51-6063	Textile Knitting & Weaving Machine Oprs	MT OJT	900	530	-41.1%	14
43-5032	Dispatchers	MT OJT	6,730	7,400	10.0%	262
11-9061	Funeral Service Managers	AD+	570	630	10.5%	18
21-1093	Social & Human Service Assistants	ST OJT	24,000	26,870	12.0%	915
13-1131	Fundraisers	BD	2,020	2,170	7.4%	55
53-7051	Industrial Truck & Tractor Operators	ST OJT	23,630	23,770	0.6%	556
13-1121	Meeting, Convention & Event Planners	BD	2,840	3,660	28.9%	121
51-4051	Metal-Refining Furnace Oprs/Tndrs	MT OJT	1,870	1,820	-2.7%	24
13-1151	Training & Development Specialists	BD+	10,520	11,820	12.4%	321
Source: 2012-22 Long-Term Occupational Employment Projections						

Appendix X – OJT

Statewide Occupational Employment Projections for Short- or Moderate-Term On-The-Job Training Occupations with 500 or More Annual Openings

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Educ. Level	Empl. (2012)	Proj. Empl. (2018)	Percent Empl. Change (2012-22)	Total Annual Open's
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	ST OJT	189,430	195,000	2.9%	7,036
41-2011	Cashiers	ST OJT	156,060	154,010	-1.3%	6,747
35-3021	Combined Food Preparation & Serving Workers	ST OJT	127,050	143,490	12.9%	6,494
35-3031	Waiters & Waitresses	ST OJT	89,990	94,250	4.7%	4,756
53-7062	Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers	ST OJT	105,640	117,290	11.0%	4,437
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	ST OJT	104,410	113,100	8.3%	3,709
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	ST OJT	142,200	145,060	2.0%	3,274
31-1011	Home Health Aides	ST OJT	59,950	80,390	34.1%	3,184
37-2011	Janitors & Cleaners	ST OJT	96,980	104,140	7.4%	2,541
43-5081	Stock Clerks & Order Fillers	ST OJT	77,590	74,640	-3.8%	2,344
39-9011	Childcare Workers	ST OJT	56,440	62,880	11.4%	2,303
43-6014	Secretaries	ST OJT	109,400	118,790	8.6%	2,256
39-9021	Personal Care Aides	ST OJT	53,410	70,790	32.5%	2,120
41-4012	Sales Representatives	MT OJT	75,770	80,490	6.2%	1,949
37-2012	Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners	ST OJT	55,170	60,760	10.1%	1,652
43-4171	Receptionists & Information Clerks	ST OJT	47,410	50,490	6.5%	1,584
47-2061	Construction Laborers	ST OJT	39,220	46,290	18.0%	1,547
37-3011	Landscaping & Groundskeeping Workers	ST OJT	43,610	47,410	8.7%	1,479
35-3011	Bartenders	ST OJT	31,210	33,830	8.4%	1,416
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting & Auditing Clerks	MT OJT	73,280	79,310	8.2%	1,276
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers	ST OJT	39,810	40,660	2.1%	1,225
53-7064	Packers & Packagers, Hand	ST OJT	33,510	36,910	10.1%	1,220
35-9021	Dishwashers	ST OJT	23,950	25,290	5.6%	1,188
33-9032	Security Guards	ST OJT	41,890	47,140	12.5%	1,167
43-3071	Tellers	ST OJT	24,900	23,090	-7.3%	1,160
35-9031	Hosts & Hostesses	ST OJT	14,430	15,170	5.1%	1,159
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	MT OJT	33,570	37,950	13.0%	1,100
45-2092	Farmworkers & Laborers, Crop & Nursery	ST OJT	35,190	34,070	-3.2%	1,068
33-3051	Police & Sheriff's Patrol Officers	MT OJT	27,940	28,750	2.9%	957
21-1093	Social & Human Service Assistants	ST OJT	24,000	26,870	12.0%	915
39-3091	Amusement & Recreation Attendants	ST OJT	14,670	16,100	9.7%	878
51-2092	Team Assemblers	MT OJT	41,070	43,010	4.7%	843
43-3021	Billing & Posting Clerks	ST OJT	27,890	31,030	11.3%	827
43-6013	Medical Secretaries	MT OJT	20,800	26,210	26.0%	792

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Educ. Level	Empl. (2012)	Proj. Empl. (2018)	Percent Empl. Change (2012-22)	Total Annual Open's
43-5071	Shipping, Receiving & Traffic Clerks	ST OJT	28,010	28,490	1.7%	785
47-2073	Operating Engineers	MT OJT	22,960	25,700	11.9%	784
35-3022	Counter Attendants	ST OJT	12,680	12,580	-0.8%	773
35-9011	Dining Room Attendants & Bartender Helpers	ST OJT	15,430	16,390	6.2%	771
35-3041	Food Servers, Nonrestaurant	ST OJT	14,000	17,140	22.4%	724
53-3022	Bus Drivers, School or Special Client	ST OJT	25,800	27,500	6.6%	643
51-9061	Inspectors, Testers & Sorters	MT OJT	21,600	23,260	7.7%	640
35-2012	Cooks, Institution & Cafeteria	ST OJT	20,310	22,320	9.9%	602
41-3021	Insurance Sales Agents	MT OJT	20,340	21,340	4.9%	577
51-9198	Helpers--Production Workers	ST OJT	24,300	25,870	6.5%	577
53-7051	Industrial Truck & Tractor Operators	ST OJT	23,630	23,770	0.6%	556
43-3011	Bill & Account Collectors	MT OJT	15,250	16,490	8.1%	553
41-2021	Counter & Rental Clerks	ST OJT	15,600	16,970	8.8%	536
33-3012	Correctional Officers & Jailers	MT OJT	17,270	17,670	2.3%	500
Source: 2012-22 Long-Term Occupational Employment Projections						

Appendix XI – Educational Attainment Abbreviations

Short-term or Moderate-term training (**ST OJT** or **MT OJT**) – basic tasks and skills are learned through a period of on-the-job training. A high school diploma may be required.

Long-term training (**LT OJT**) – a high school diploma and at least one year of on-the-job training or an apprenticeship.

Related work experience (**WK EXP**) – a high school diploma and training gained through hands-on work in a similar occupation.

Postsecondary training (**PS** or **PS+**) – training is gained through a postsecondary training program. Some period of related work experience may be required.

Associate Degree (**AD** or **AD+**) – degree completed after two years of full-time schooling beyond high school. Some period of related work experience may be required.

Bachelor's Degree (**BD** or **BD+**) – degree completed after four years of full-time schooling beyond high school. Some period of related work experience may be required.

Master's Degree (**MD** or **MD+**) – degree completed after two years of full-time schooling beyond a bachelor's degree. Some period of related work experience may be required.

Doctoral (**PhD**) or First Professional Degree (**PROF**) – degree programs requiring 3-6 years of education at the college or university level beyond a four-year bachelor's degree.

Appendix XII – Ratio of Income to Poverty for the Population 55 and over, Pennsylvania Counties: 2009-2013

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; 2009-2013 American Community Survey
Prepared by the Pennsylvania State Data Center

Geography	Total Population For Whom Poverty Status is Determined	Total Population 55 and over	Population 55 years and over:			
			Under 125 Percent of the Poverty Level		At or Above 125 Percent of the Poverty Level	
			Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Pennsylvania	12,318,805	3,583,351	450,699	12.6%	3,132,652	87.4%
Adams	97,050	29,785	2,552	8.6%	27,233	91.4%
Allegheny	1,193,906	366,247	46,593	12.7%	319,654	87.3%
Armstrong	67,797	22,827	3,354	14.7%	19,473	85.3%
Beaver	167,369	55,987	6,319	11.3%	49,668	88.7%
Bedford	48,655	16,167	2,606	16.1%	13,561	83.9%
Berks	399,090	109,798	12,325	11.2%	97,473	88.8%
Blair	123,627	39,167	5,154	13.2%	34,013	86.8%
Bradford	61,570	19,826	2,936	14.8%	16,890	85.2%
Bucks	617,588	178,796	12,909	7.2%	165,887	92.8%
Butler	179,511	53,017	5,282	10.0%	47,735	90.0%
Cambria	134,627	47,005	6,802	14.5%	40,203	85.5%
Cameron	4,923	1,902	261	13.7%	1,641	86.3%
Carbon	64,107	20,926	2,319	11.1%	18,607	88.9%
Centre	137,314	32,649	2,616	8.0%	30,033	92.0%
Chester	490,502	128,342	8,604	6.7%	119,738	93.3%
Clarion	37,855	11,663	1,661	14.2%	10,002	85.8%
Clearfield	76,463	24,695	3,472	14.1%	21,223	85.9%
Clinton	36,795	11,114	1,567	14.1%	9,547	85.9%
Columbia	62,788	19,255	2,802	14.6%	16,453	85.4%
Crawford	84,343	26,870	3,937	14.7%	22,933	85.3%
Cumberland	223,903	67,222	4,887	7.3%	62,335	92.7%
Dauphin	263,362	72,890	8,534	11.7%	64,356	88.3%
Delaware	538,284	147,297	14,830	10.1%	132,467	89.9%
Elk	31,422	10,595	1,182	11.2%	9,413	88.8%
Erie	268,118	76,019	10,380	13.7%	65,639	86.3%
Fayette	132,147	44,113	7,857	17.8%	36,256	82.2%
Forest	4,803	2,417	381	15.8%	2,036	84.2%
Franklin	147,806	43,845	4,450	10.1%	39,395	89.9%
Fulton	14,649	4,602	613	13.3%	3,989	86.7%
Greene	34,089	10,968	1,786	16.3%	9,182	83.7%
Huntingdon	40,693	13,492	1,965	14.6%	11,527	85.4%

Geography	Total Population For Whom Poverty Status is Determined	Total Population 55 and over	Population 55 years and over:			
			Under 125 Percent of the Poverty Level		At or Above 125 Percent of the Poverty Level	
			Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Indiana	83,228	25,315				
Jefferson	44,207	14,168	2,261	16.0%	11,907	84.0%
Juniata	24,382	7,371	942	12.8%	6,429	87.2%
Lackawanna	206,410	65,544	9,455	14.4%	56,089	85.6%
Lancaster	508,652	139,800	13,586	9.7%	126,214	90.3%
Lawrence	87,914	29,663	3,903	13.2%	25,760	86.8%
Lebanon	130,881	39,671	3,955	10.0%	35,716	90.0%
Lehigh	342,482	93,682	10,840	11.6%	82,842	88.4%
Luzerne	309,333	98,829	13,999	14.2%	84,830	85.8%
Lycoming	111,158	34,221	4,471	13.1%	29,750	86.9%
McKean	40,078	12,710	1,633	12.8%	11,077	87.2%
Mercer	108,935	36,609	4,681	12.8%	31,928	87.2%
Mifflin	46,071	14,755	2,275	15.4%	12,480	84.6%
Monroe	165,394	44,995	5,542	12.3%	39,453	87.7%
Montgomery	784,679	220,992	17,426	7.9%	203,566	92.1%
Montour	17,757	5,753	717	12.5%	5,036	87.5%
Northampton	287,165	85,469	7,895	9.2%	77,574	90.8%
Northumberland	89,877	29,886	4,531	15.2%	25,355	84.8%
Perry	45,091	12,991	1,122	8.6%	11,869	91.4%
Philadelphia	1,494,160	346,593	87,339	25.2%	259,254	74.8%
Pike	56,449	18,181	1,777	9.8%	16,404	90.2%
Potter	17,182	6,038	995	16.5%	5,043	83.5%
Schuylkill	140,278	45,937	6,718	14.6%	39,219	85.4%
Snyder	37,324	11,242	1,495	13.3%	9,747	86.7%
Somerset	73,064	25,325	3,794	15.0%	21,531	85.0%
Sullivan	6,256	2,564	357	13.9%	2,207	86.1%
Susquehanna	42,400	14,335	1,845	12.9%	12,490	87.1%
Tioga	40,515	13,455	2,047	15.2%	11,408	84.8%
Union	35,756	11,141	1,106	9.9%	10,035	90.1%
Venango	53,367	18,097	2,355	13.0%	15,742	87.0%
Warren	40,464	13,989	1,767	12.6%	12,222	87.4%
Washington	203,268	66,551	7,494	11.3%	59,057	88.7%
Wayne	48,590	17,583	2,127	12.1%	15,456	87.9%
Westmoreland	356,036	123,049	13,195	10.7%	109,854	89.3%
Wyoming	27,399	8,706	1,136	13.0%	7,570	87.0%
York	427,447	118,643	11,804	9.9%	106,839	90.1%

Appendix XIII – Designing the Future: A Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Workgroup Meeting Schedule

Performance & Accountability

60 East Wing, Capitol Bldg
Monday, May 18, 2015
10:00am to 2:00pm

Governance & Planning

Via Conference Call
Thursday, May 21, 2015
1:00pm to 3:00pm

Service Delivery

60 East Wing, Capitol Bldg
Wednesday, May 27, 2015
10:00am to 2:00pm

Youth Services

Dept of Labor & Industry Bldg, Room 1710
Monday, June 1, 2015
10:00am to 2:00pm

PA CareerLink® Operations

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Forum Place, 8th Floor
Monday, June 1, 2015
10:00am to 1:00pm

Eligible Training Provider List Subcommittee (WIOA Performance & Accountability)

Dept. of Labor & Industry Bldg, 651 Boas Street, Room 1710, Harrisburg, PA 17121
Tuesday, June 2, 2015
1:30pm to 3:30pm

Strategies

Dept of Labor & Industry Bldg, Room E-100
Tuesday, June 2, 2015
10:00am to 1:00pm

Service to Individuals with Barriers to Employment

Dept of Labor & Industry Bldg, Room 1710

Wednesday, June 3, 2015

10:00am to 2:00pm

Eligible Training Provider List Subcommittee (WIOA Performance & Accountability)

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Forum Place, 8th Floor

Thursday, June 18, 2015

9:00am to 12:00pm

Operator Subcommittee (WIOA PA CareerLink® Operations)

Via Conference Call

Friday, June 19, 2015

1:00pm to 3:00pm

Partner Roles & Responsibilities Subcommittee (WIOA PA CareerLink® Operations)

Via Conference Call

Monday, June 22, 2015

10:00am to 12:00pm

Career Pathways Subcommittee (WIOA Strategies)

Via Conference Call (PASSHE Bridge: 717-540-7416)

Monday, June 22, 2015

3:00pm to 4:00pm

Infrastructure & Shared Costs Subcommittee (WIOA PA CareerLink® Operations)

Via Conference Call

Tuesday, June 23, 2015

10:00am to 12:00pm

Sector Strategies Subcommittee (WIOA Strategies)

Tuesday, June 23, 2015

Dept. of Labor & Industry Bldg, 651 Boas Street, Room E-100, Harrisburg, PA 17121

10:00am to 1:00pm

Service Delivery

CAB Bldg, 901 North 7th Street, Suite 101, Harrisburg, PA 17102

Wednesday, June 24, 2015

10:00am to 2:00pm

Eligible Training Provider List Subcommittee (WIOA Performance & Accountability)

Dept. of Labor & Industry Bldg, 651 Boas Street, Room 1710, Harrisburg, PA 17121

Wednesday, June 24, 2015

1:00pm to 3:00pm

Operator Subcommittee (WIOA PA CareerLink® Operations)

Via Conference Call

Friday, June 26, 2015

10:00am to 12:00pm

Governance & Planning

Appalachian Brewing Company, 50 N. Cameron Street, Harrisburg PA, 17101

Monday, June 29, 2015

1:00pm to 4:00pm

Infrastructure & Technology Subcommittee (WIOA PA CareerLink® Operations)

Via Conference Call

Tuesday, June 30, 2015

10:00am to 12:00pm

Youth Services

Dept. of Labor & Industry Bldg, 651 Boas Street, Room E-100, Harrisburg, PA 17121

Tuesday, June 30, 2015

10:00am to 2:00pm

Job Seekers Subcommittee (WIOA Service Delivery)

Via Conference Call

Wednesday, July 1, 2015

10:00am

Strategies

Dixon University Center, 2986 N. Second Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110

Tuesday, July 7, 2015

10:00am to 2:00pm

Service to Individuals with Barriers to Employment

Dept of Labor & Industry, 651 Boas Street, Room 12A, Harrisburg, PA 17121

Wednesday, July 8, 2015

9:00am to 12:00pm

PA CareerLink® Operations

Technology Center in Innovation Park, 200 Innovation Blvd., State College, PA 16803

Thursday, July 9, 2015

10:00am to 1:00pm

Employer Engagement Subcommittee (WIOA Service Delivery)

Via Conference Call

Friday, July 10, 2015

11:00am

Job Seekers Subcommittee (WIOA Service Delivery)

Via Conference Call

Wednesday, July 15, 2015

10:00am

Employer Engagement Subcommittee (WIOA Service Delivery)

Via Conference Call

Friday, July 17, 2015

11:00am to 12:00pm

Youth Services

Dept. of Labor & Industry Bldg, 651 Boas Street, Room E-100, Harrisburg, PA 17121

Tuesday, July 21, 2015

10:00am to 2:00pm

Service Delivery

PA Workforce Development Association, 205 House Avenue, Suite 101 Camp Hill, PA 17011

Wednesday, July 22, 2015

10:00am to 2:00pm

Performance & Accountability

Dept of Labor & Industry, 651 Boas Street, Room 1700, Harrisburg, PA 17121

Wednesday, July 22, 2015

1:00pm to 3:00pm

Service to Individuals with Barriers to Employment

PA Department of Corrections, 1920 Technology Parkway, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

Thursday, July 30, 2015

9:00am to 12:00pm

Governance & Planning

PA Workforce Development Association, 205 House Avenue, Suite 101 Camp Hill, PA 17011

Thursday, July 30, 2015

1:00pm to 4:00pm

Governance & Planning

Technology Center in Innovation Park, 200 Innovation Blvd., Room 243, State College, PA 16803

Monday, August 10, 2015

1:00pm to 4:00pm

Strategies

HACC Midtown Campus, 1523 North 4th Street, Harrisburg, PA

Wednesday, August 12, 2015

10:00am to 1:00pm

Service Delivery

PA Workforce Development Association, 205 House Avenue, Suite 101 Camp Hill, PA 17011

Thursday, August 20, 2015

10:00am to 2:00pm

Appendix XIV – Sector Strategies and Workforce Intermediaries

The commonwealth will use sector strategies as its major means of linking workforce development and economic development. The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) defines Sector Strategies as *industry-focused approaches to workforce and economic development that improve access to good jobs and increase job quality in ways that strengthen an industry's workforce*. USDOL is actively promoting sector strategies as “a proven framework” that WIOA incorporates into state and regional planning requirements. This new federal emphasis on sector-based workforce development strategies signals an important opportunity for Pennsylvania.

Since shortly after the implementation of the 1998 Workforce Investment Act, Pennsylvania has been a leader in making sector-based approaches integral to its design and delivery of workforce services for employers and workers. Over the past decade, more than 100,000 Pennsylvanians have participated in training programs sponsored by Pennsylvania's employer-driven Industry Partnerships. This record of success has led to bipartisan support in Harrisburg and in 2011 state legislators unanimously voted to put the commonwealth's Industry Partnership program into statute. Pennsylvania has also implemented sector strategies through multi-employer apprenticeship programs, which are strongest in the construction industry. However, Pennsylvania also has longstanding and innovative manufacturing apprenticeship programs that touch multiple employers. Some of these are legally single-employer apprenticeships in which classroom education and other apprenticeship elements are coordinated for multiple employers by an industry association or non-profit intermediary.

Given the potential of robust Industry Partnerships and other multi-employer workforce intermediaries to solve coordination problems in the labor market and improve outcomes for employers, workers, and regional economies, Pennsylvania aims under WIOA to go well beyond its sectoral initiatives to date. Pennsylvania also plans a flexible and non-bureaucratic approach to supporting sector strategies and sectoral workforce partnerships. Thus, while Pennsylvania's largest-scale recent sector initiative has been the state's Industry Partnership program, the state does not see this program as another new workforce silo but rather as a flexible program that should be responsive to the shifting workforce needs of groups of employers in each sector. The program has been managed flexibly to date, with a variety of entities – industry associations, economic development organizations, non-profit organizations, LWDBs and labor-management organizations – managing partnerships in different sectors and regions of the state. Looking forward, the state plans a performance-based approach to strengthen effective multi-employer workforce partnerships that demonstrate the ability to improve workforce outcomes for all stakeholders in their sector.

Pennsylvania also seeks to strengthen the role of sectoral partnerships as coordinating entities on the full range of workforce issues, not just incumbent worker training. Industry Partnerships were funded initially to deliver incumbent worker training because that was where employers saw the biggest gaps. In practice, however, Pennsylvania's Industry Partnerships have also addressed common workforce challenges related to entry-level workers, the recruitment of low-income and other targeted groups, and even, on occasion, the reemployment of dislocated workers. Apprenticeship programs, the oldest and best funded sectoral workforce partnerships in Pennsylvania (reliant mostly on private funds), are often thought of primarily as training new workers. However, they also serve a wide range of coordinating functions for their employers: incumbent worker training, supervisory training, sophisticated safety training and, in some cases, pre-apprenticeship programs for in-school and out-of-school youth, sometimes with community based partners. Some education and training programs operated by schools

and academic institutions also deserve support because they meet the criteria for effective sectoral workforce partnerships: they have deep engagement of employers in a sector (e.g. York College's engineering programs serving local manufacturers) that keeps curriculum current, expands work-based learning (e.g., internships and summer jobs), leads to industry certification as well as academic credit and results in careers for young people and great employees for Pennsylvania's high-wage companies. Going forward, Pennsylvania will invest in sectoral workforce intermediaries that:

- Can serve as general-purpose employer-engagement partners for programs dealing with all workforce groups, including high-school and out-of-school youth, college students, dislocated and other unemployed workers, veterans, low-income workers, TANF recipients, persons with disabilities, and ex-offenders re-entering the workforce, as well as incumbent workers who are not included in any of these categories.
- Are well- and sustainably funded by a mix of private and public funds.
- Are effectively run, with a large and demonstrable impact on outcomes for employers, for individuals receiving services, and for all Pennsylvanians because they increase productivity, competitiveness, and the number of jobs that pay.

To accomplish these goals, Pennsylvania will:

- **Expand state and LWDB support for Industry Partnerships, multi-employer apprenticeships, and other sectoral workforce intermediaries.** Pennsylvania state appropriations for Industry Partnerships went from \$20 million in fiscal year 2008-09 to less than \$2 million since fiscal year 2011-12. State discretionary and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds were used to further augment support for IPs through 2011 and 2012. Starting in 2016, Pennsylvania may use some of its WIOA state discretionary dollars for IPs, multi-employer apprenticeships, and other multi-employer workforce intermediaries.
- **Seek sustainable public-private support for workforce intermediaries.** Building powerful effective Industry Partnerships and other sectoral workforce intermediaries requires supplementing annual state appropriations with funding sources that are not dependent on the state budget process. The commonwealth will explore several possible sources.
- **Leverage local, federal and philanthropic funds for workforce development, including sector strategies, career pathways and innovative youth programs.** Pennsylvania's governor has a long history of civic engagement in which he learned the importance of building partnerships and leveraging resources from many funding sources to get a project completed or the job done right. Pennsylvania's workforce system also has more experience than that of any other state in the past decade in leveraging philanthropic funds (e.g., from the National Fund for Workforce Solutions) to ensure that low-income and other priority populations, as well as employers, benefit from sectoral partnerships. Pennsylvania will pursue partnerships and funding from nonprofit foundations, local governments, and the federal government to make state tax dollars stretch further. To kick-start philanthropic interest in the reinvigoration of workforce partnerships, Pennsylvania will organize a "Governor's Convening with Philanthropy" in 2016 and make workforce development a core component of this event.

- **Seek funding for workforce partnerships from multiple agencies.** To date, Pennsylvania's Industry Partnership and apprenticeship programs connect to state government through the Department of Labor & Industry. As the USDOL definition of sector strategies makes explicit, however, sectoral approaches make sense for economic development as well as workforce development. Sector strategies are also an effective way to serve a variety of constituencies who are primarily under the purview of other state agencies: young people (Department of Education), TANF and SNAP recipients (Department of Human Services), employers (Department of Community and Economic Development), farmers and agricultural workers (Department of Agriculture), ex-offenders (Department of Corrections), and older individuals (Department of Aging). The fact that effective sector strategies require cooperation across many agencies is further reflected in Pennsylvania's Industry Partnership statute. Pennsylvania will encourage funding of sector partnerships by multiple agencies.
- **In partnership with sectoral intermediaries and LWDBs, develop and implement a comprehensive sector partnership performance management and continuous improvement system.** Beginning in 2005-06, Pennsylvania developed a multi-pronged performance management system for Industry Partnerships that included required annual reports from Industry Partnerships, tracking of wage and placement outcomes from individuals trained with Industry Partnership dollars, and a program of training and capacity building for Industry Partnerships. The latter included the "PA Sector Academy," sector-specific peer learning opportunities, and, in the case of health care and manufacturing, compilation of Industry Partnership best-practice toolkits. While cutbacks in Industry Partnership funding have slowed its development, Pennsylvania will reinvigorate this performance management system, with appropriate fine-tuning to include apprenticeships and multi-employer, sector-specific pipeline programs for youth.

This accountability system should be a tool that provides an ongoing feedback loop to sector partnerships and their coordinators and supports peer learning and practitioner-state dialogue about "what are we trying to do?" and "is it working?" This system should also be used to help more sector partnerships undertake higher-order initiatives with high net benefits for employers, workers and job seekers, and the state. Such initiatives may include spreading best practices, developing industrywide credential and career pathway systems, creating industry-specific job matching systems that help dislocated workers with industry-specific skills (e.g., precision machining and industrial maintenance in manufacturing) find reemployment, or managing programs that help people from targeted groups access careers that pay and obtain the skills and attitudes needed to succeed in well-managed companies.

Components of an enhanced sector partnership performance management system could include:

- Sector partnership standards that spell out explicitly the full range of activities in which a high-performance multi-employer workforce partnership can engage. For example, Pennsylvania's Notice of Grant Availability for the 2015-16 Industry Partnership program did this.
- A revitalized program of capacity-building and peer learning for Industry Partnership coordinators and interested employer members, with varied offerings for new

coordinators, those with some experience (e.g., PA Sector Academy), and experienced practitioners (e.g., self-directed peer learning with technical assistance from national experts).

- An explicit and public proposal-scoring system for Industry Partnership proposals that allows the state to encourage high priority activities with a high return.
- A modified Industry Partnership Annual Report that balances the goal of making the report short and easy to complete quickly with the goal of making it a more powerful tool for supporting Industry Partnerships to take on initiatives with greater potential to improve outcomes for both employers and workers/job seekers.
- Collection of quantitative performance data from partnerships, with quick-turnaround access to data for the partnerships, including how they compare with their peers.
- Competitive grants to multiple Industry Partnerships in a specific cluster (e.g., advanced manufacturing, health care, logistics and transportation) that agree jointly to develop and use sector-specific benchmarking tools that track the impacts of strategic workforce investments on employer outcomes. (Outcomes might include turnover in long-term care, scrap rates and uptime in manufacturing, and on-time delivery in logistics and transportation.) These tools would be another way to encourage sector partnerships to tackle higher-order organizational improvement issues with a potential to increase the return on investment.
- Develop a certification process for Sector Partnerships. Businesses often use organizational certifications, such as ISO standards, as tools for improving organizational performance. Workforce intermediaries could similarly benefit from a certification process. Certification might be particularly valuable to improve partnership governance, e.g., by making partnerships more employer-driven and less staff-dependent. Certifying partnerships would also open up the possibility of using certification as the basis for eligibility for partnerships to qualify for additional or continued state funding.