WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA) COMBINED STATE PLAN

for the period of
JULY 1, 2016 *through* JUNE 30, 2020
Effective: July 1, 2016

Tom Wolf
Governor

Table of Contents

Section I – Strategic Planning Elements 7
Governor Wolf's Strategic Vision for Workforce Development in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania 7
Goal 1: Establish Career Pathways 8
Goal 2: Invest in Talent and Skills for Targeted Industries in Strategic Partnership with Employers and Educational Institutions 10
Goal 3: Increase Work-Based Learning Opportunities for Youth 12
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 15
Goal 5: Strengthen Data Sharing and More Effectively Use Data 17
Economic Analysis 19
Workforce Development System - Analysis 27
Workforce Development System – Alignment Strategy 32
Desired Outcomes 33
Section II – Operational Planning Elements 35
State Board Functions 35
Core Program Alignment 37
Alignment with Other Partner Programs 40
Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals 47
Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers 48
Engagement with Educational Institutions 50
Partner Engagement with Other Education and Training Providers 52
Leveraging Resources to Increase Educational Access 54
Improving Access to Postsecondary Credentials 55
Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies 56
Section III – State Operating Systems and Policies 58
State Program and State Board 60
Assessment of Programs and One-Stop Partners 61
Distribution of Funds for Core Programs 63
Program Data 69
Priority of Service for Veterans 70

Priority of Service for Recipients of Public Assistance, Other Low-income Individuals, and Individuals who are Basic Skills Deficient 73
Non-Discrimination and Accessibility 78
Section IV – Program Specific Requirements 80
Local Area Designation 80
Local and Regional Planning 81
State Policies and Guidance 82
Governor's Set-Aside Funding 83
Rapid Response Services 83
Trade Adjustment Assistance 88
Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and Training Models 91
Youth Activities 93
Wagner-Peyser Act Program 100
Agricultural Outreach Plan 103
Title II Programs 113
Local Activities 113
Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individuals 115
Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program 116
State Leadership 118
Assessing Quality 120
Vocational Rehabilitation Programs 122
Input of State Rehabilitation Council 122
Request for Waiver of Statewideness 127
Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Development System 128
Coordination with Education Officials 130
Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations 133
Coordination with Employers 134
Interagency Cooperation 135
Comprehensive System of Personnel Development; Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development 136
Statewide Assessment 145
Annual Estimates 150

State Goals and Priorities 152
Order of Selection 153
Goals and Plans for Distribution of title VI Funds 155
State's Strategies 156
Evaluation and Reports of Progress: VR and Supported Employment Goals 167
Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services 173
Career and Technical Education Programs Authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 178
Planning, Coordination and Collaboration Prior to State Plan Submission 178
Program Administration 180
Provision of Services for Special Populations 204
Accountability and Evaluation 206
Tech Prep Programs 215
Financial Requirements 219
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF) 224
Safeguarding Information 236
Reductions of Out-of-Wedlock Births 237
Education and Training to Reduce Statutory Rape 239
Delivery of Benefits 244
Access to Benefits 245
Families Entering Pennsylvania from Another State 246
Treatment of Noncitizens 246
Determining Eligibility 246
Work and Self-Sufficiency 246
TANF State Plan 247
Trade Adjustment Assistance 285
Coordination with Other Programs 285
Use of Funding 285
Benefit and Service Approvals by Merit Staff 285
Jobs for Veterans State Grant 286
Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) Plan 291
Background 291

Economic Projections and Impact 291
Service Delivery and Coordination 293
Location and Population Served, including Equitable Distribution 298
SCSEP Operations 301
Community Services Block Grant 309
Reintegration of Ex-Offenders (REO) Program 311
Coordination of Services and Activities for Justice-Involved Individuals 311
Section V – Assurances 313
Common Assurances 313
Title I-B Assurances 317
Wagner-Peyser Assurances 319
Adult Basic Education and Literacy Programs Certifications and Assurances 320
Vocational Rehabilitation Certifications and Assurances 322
EDGAR Certifications and Other Assurances for the Perkins Career and Technical Educational and Tech Prep Programs 327
TANF Certifications 330
Trade Adjustment Assistance Assurance 332
SCSEP Assurance 333
Section VI – Appendices 334
Appendix I – Career Pathway Definition 334
Appendix II – Pennsylvania Workforce Development System 335
Appendix III – Labor & Industry Workforce Programs Organizational Chart 336
Appendix IV – Adult Basic Education Organizational Chart 337
Appendix V – Local Workforce Development Areas 338
Appendix VI – Designated Planning Regions 339
Appendix VII – Jobs for Veterans State Grant Hire and Mandatory Training Completion Dates 340
Appendix VIII – Statewide Employment Projections 342
Appendix IX – Statewide Employment Projections 343
Appendix X – OJT 345
Appendix XI – Educational Attainment Abbreviations 347
Appendix XII – Ratio of Income to Poverty for the Population 55 and over, Pennsylvania Counties: 2009-2013 348

Appendix XIII – Designing the Future: A Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Workgroup Meeting Schedule 350

Appendix XIV – Sector Strategies and Workforce Intermediaries 355

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), in partnership with employers, multi-employer workforce partnerships, and secondary and postsecondary education providers, 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 minimum spending requirements for how much local area funding must be used for training. Spending requirements will be established based on WIOA Title I allocations, excluding administrative funds. Local areas may use a variety of funding sources beyond Title I funds to meet spending requirements to include: other federal funds, such as TANF, Vocational Rehabilitation, National Dislocated Worker grants, and other federal discretionary grants; state funds, such as Industry Partnership funds and state discretionary grants; and local funds, such as county or city training programs, local industry partnership funds used for training and philanthropic funded training programs. In Program Year (PY) 2016, the training benchmark will be calculated as 30 percent of Title I funding; in PY 2017, the training benchmark will be calculated as 40 percent of Title I funding; and in PY 2018 and thereafter, the training benchmark will be calculated as 50 percent of Title I funding. Additionally, in PY 2016, at least 50 percent of funds utilized to meet the training benchmark must be spent on low income individuals and individuals with other barriers to employment, with the percentage rising to 60 percent in PY 2017 and 70 percent in PY 2018 and thereafter. A formal policy to include a definition of training and the funding sources which can be counted toward training benchmarks will be issued by the commonwealth. The policy will provide a

process for local areas to request that additional training types and models count toward meeting the targets. Additionally, 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. The commonwealth will reassess training benchmarks and training funds targeted to individuals with barriers to employment on an annual basis.

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 Apprenticeship and Training Office (ATO) 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, and public library system 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 be 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, are involved in the public mental health system, or are pregnant or parenting, 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 leverage existing 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 Title I funds on OSY, the commonwealth will leverage TANF Youth Development Funds to increase summer employment opportunities for in-school youth. In PY 2015, 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 ATO 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 or jobs that are likely to lead to 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. Industry Partnerships will also be leveraged to provide educator in the workplace opportunities for teachers and other educational system professionals.

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). The growth of this population will likely lead to an increased need for workforce services, including by members who also fall into priority categories.

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 in-migration 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.

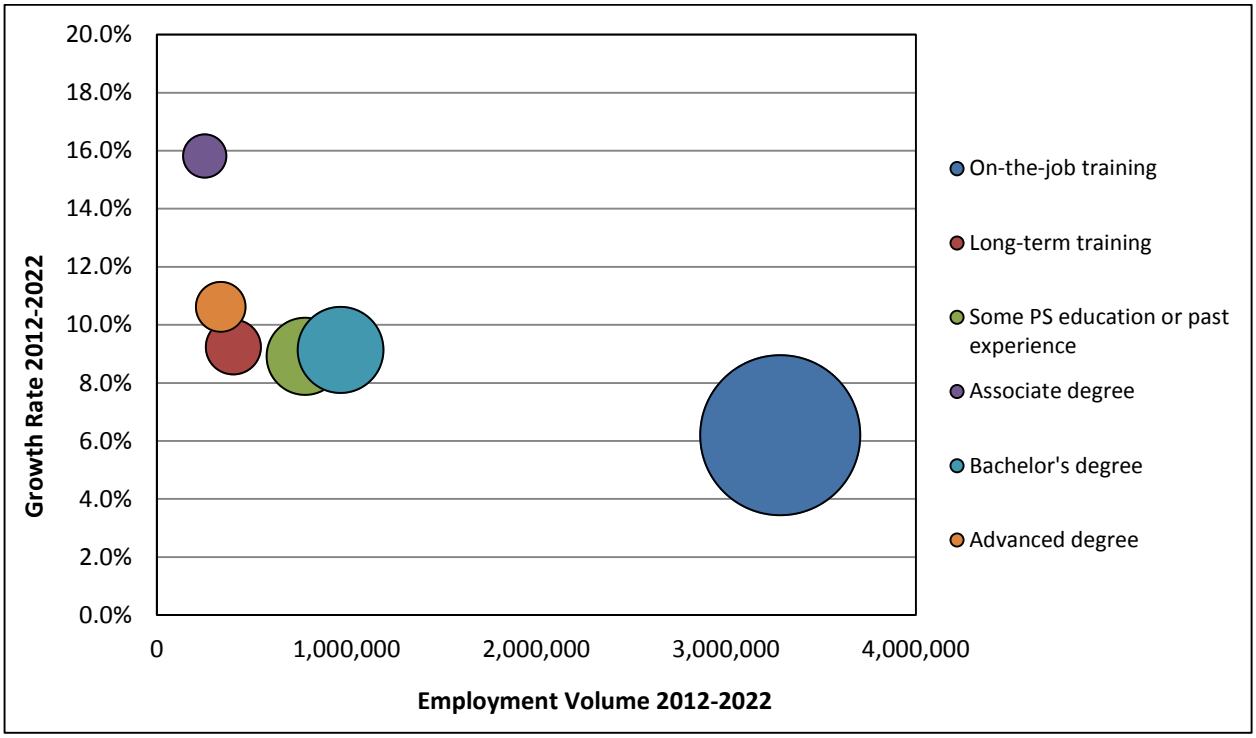
It is also important to remember that occupations with a large number of annual openings are not always attractive targets for workforce development. If high turnover rates are the main reason for a large number of openings in an occupation, then the more appropriate policy response may be to find ways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

		2014 Annual Average		
Cluster (or sub-cluster) Name		**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.

The Pennsylvania Combined State Plan includes the six core programs and the following optional programs: Career and Technical Education Programs Authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins); the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program; the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program; programs under the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG); the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP); the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG); and the Reintegration of Ex-Offenders (REO) Program. Collectively, the thirteen programs included in the Combined State Plan work to serve target populations, including individuals with barriers to employment and incumbent workers, in finding and maintaining employment while concurrently meeting the talent needs of employers, as follows:

WIOA Title I Adult: The Adult program serves participants age 18 or older in need of employment or career advancement, with priority of service 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. Individuals deemed ready for work are provided career services to assist them in finding existing employment opportunities. Individuals not ready for employment or looking for employment in a new field are provided training to prepare them with the skills necessary to meet the needs of employers.

WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker: The Dislocated Worker program assists workers before or after layoff to help facilitate rapid reemployment. Dislocated workers with requisite skills may be directly referred to employers with hiring needs. Other dislocated workers may require training and other services in order to meet the skill requirements of employers.

WIOA Title I Youth: The Youth program 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 attainment of education, skills and work experience makes Youth participants more attractive candidates for employers looking to hire.

WIOA Title II 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. 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 (BSTs). 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. 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.

WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser: Wagner-Peyser staff provides employment services to both job seekers and employers with the ultimate goal of placing individuals in employment and filling employer job orders.

WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation: The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) provides vocational rehabilitation services to help persons with disabilities prepare for, obtain, or maintain employment. The OVR Single Point of Contact (SPOC) model 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.

Perkins: Perkins funds support career and technical education programs at the secondary and postsecondary levels. Perkins programs work with businesses to identify relevant technical standards to include national industry standards and credentialing opportunities where appropriate, to ensure that program completers have the skills needed by employers.

TANF: To increase work participation rates and to promote self-sufficiency, Pennsylvania has adopted a work-first approach to help TANF clients succeed in their pursuit of self-sufficiency. Pennsylvania requires each adult, minor head of household or minor child age 16 or 17 who is not in school to engage in work or an approved employment and training activity. Individuals who have some work experience are 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 who need to rectify some barriers such as literacy, “soft skills” development and support services such as child care and transportation assistance are referred to a Work Ready provider. This contracted provider assists the individual with barrier removal strategies and then refers 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 are 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. All activities are aimed at increasing the skills and employability of TANF recipients so that employers are able to hire them.

TAA: TAA eligible workers are provided services and benefits to assist them in returning to the workforce in the shortest period of time. Services and training provided ensure that TAA recipients have the skills needed to find reemployment within the industry they were laid off from or to enter a new industry where employment opportunities exist.

JVSG: Through the JVSG program, Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists assist veterans with significant barriers to employment such as long-term unemployment, previous incarceration, and low-income status. Another element of the program is carried out by Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) who meet with employers, plan and participate in job and career fairs and conduct job development with employers on behalf of veterans. LVERs work with the PA CareerLink® BSTs in promoting qualified veterans to employers seeking candidates.

SCSEP: SCSEP promotes part-time employment opportunities in community serve activities for unemployed low-income persons who are age 55 or older and who have poor employment prospects. SCSEP utilizes labor market information to identify occupations most likely to hire older workers and prepares participants for those jobs. Some SCSEP grantees already work with PA CareerLink® BSTs to develop employment opportunities for older workers; additional partnerships with BSTs will be pursued. 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.

CSBG: CSBG funded programs provide opportunities for participants to attain basic soft skills, occupation-specific skills and work experience necessary to meet employer talent needs.

REO: Increased collaboration and alignment of reentry planning and service activities among system partners can improve the justice-involved individual's ability to attain and retain a job that pays family-sustaining wages. Efforts described in the Combined State Plan will allow for greater coordination of services and activities provided by REO grantees with the workforce development system. Activities seek to not only get the justice-involved individual employed, but to provide the necessary supports to allow employment retention, thus reducing turnover and costs for employers providing job opportunities to justice-involved individuals.

Service delivery is coordinated and integrated among core and partner programs in a number of ways. One method of integration is the proliferation of PA CareerLink® centers, Pennsylvania's one-stops, across the commonwealth. 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 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.

Coordinated service delivery will also be achieved through the development of career pathways as described in Goal 1. Career pathway development will be led by Local Workforce Development Boards, in partnership with employers, multi-employer workforce partnerships, secondary and postsecondary education providers, Title I, adult basic education and vocational rehabilitation program providers and other combined plan partner programs capable of providing supportive services, such as TANF. Goal 1.4 stresses 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 pathways models to facilitate access for individuals with barriers to employment. Goal 1.5 emphasizes co-enrollment of individuals in core and other partner programs as another means of achieving the best outcomes for those with barriers.

It is also imperative that the workforce system is responsive to the employment needs of employers. Goal 4 focuses on engaging employers as critical partners in the education and workforce system, not just end-users. One established method of identifying and responding to the needs of employers is through the Industry Partnership program. Industry Partnerships were funded initially to deliver incumbent worker training because that was where employers saw the biggest gaps. Moving forward, Industry Partnerships will also be used to address other common workforce challenges faced by employers to include finding qualified entry-level workers, recruitment of low-income individuals and workers from other targeted groups, including veterans and individuals with disabilities, and the re-employment of dislocated workers within an industry sector. Pennsylvania will also place additional emphasis on establishing new and expanding existing Registered Apprenticeship programs as a means of addressing employer talent needs. The recently established Pennsylvania Apprenticeship and Training Office will work closely with Combined State Plan core and partner programs to promote and support pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship programs as part of relevant career pathway models.

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.

Further detail regarding the alignment of programs, to include program alignment and how services are coordinated for both individuals and employers, can be found in the Operational Planning Elements section of the Combined State Plan.

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

Note: The table was revised from the version submitted for public comment as the result of final federal guidance issued February 18, 2016 titled: Required Elements for Submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Plan Modifications under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The guidance instructed states to indicate "baseline" for certain program measure. A "baseline" indicator is one for which states will not propose an expected level of performance and will not come to agreement with the Departments on adjusted levels of performance.

	PY 2016/ FY2017 Proposed	Negotiated	PY 2017/ FY2018 Proposed	Negotiated
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)				
Adult	59.0%	65.0%	61.0%	TBD
DW	67.0%	74.0%	69.0%	TBD
Youth	58.0%	65.0%	59.0%	TBD
W-P	56.0%	61.0%	57.0%	TBD
Adult Basic Ed	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Voc Rehab	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)				
Adult	58.0%	65.0%	60.0%	TBD
DW	63.0%	75.0%	65.0%	TBD
Youth	57.0%	57.0%	58.0%	TBD
Wagner-Peyser	57.0%	62.0%	58.0%	TBD
Adult Basic Ed	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Voc Rehab	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)				
Adult	$5,000	$5,000	$5,300	TBD
DW	$6,300	$7,000	$6,500	TBD
Youth	$2,100	Baseline	$2,300	TBD
W-P	$4,700	$5,000	$4,900	TBD
Adult Basic Ed	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Voc Rehab	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Credential Attainment Rate				
Adult	68.0%	55.0%	69.0%	TBD
DW	71.0%	57.0%	72.0%	TBD
Youth	60.0%	70.0%	61.0%	TBD
W-P				
Adult Basic Ed	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Voc Rehab	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

	PY 2016/ FY2017 Proposed	Negotiated	PY 2017/ FY2018 Proposed	Negotiated
Measurable Skill Gains				
Adult	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
DW	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
W-P				
Adult Basic Ed	48.0%	44.0%	50.0%	46.0%
Voc Rehab	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Effectiveness in Serving Employers				
Adult	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
DW	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
W-P	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Adult Basic Ed	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Voc Rehab	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

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, program and provider 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.

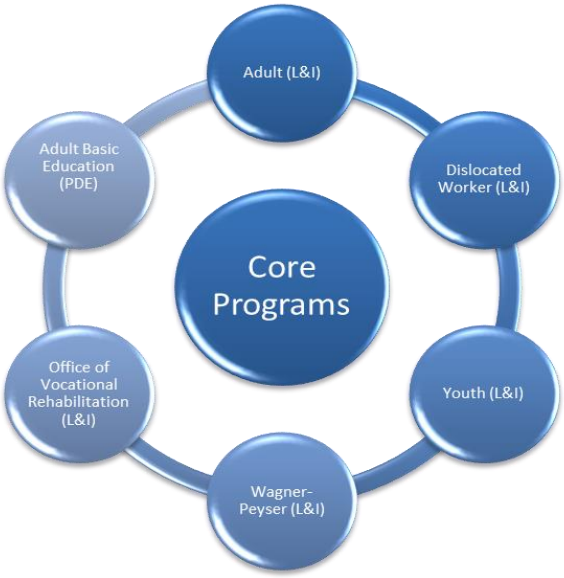
Official actions of the board, with the exception of bylaw amendments, must be supported by a majority of members. In the event of a quorum, all action will be taken by a vote of a majority of the members present. At meetings without a quorum, the board shall present and second a desired motion. After 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 programing 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 LWBD 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 45. 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. The interagency work group is an ad hoc group comprised of executive and program level staff from the Departments of Aging, Education, Human Services, Labor & Industry, Agriculture, Community and Economic Development, Military and Veterans Affairs, and Corrections, as well as the Governor's Office. The work group is coordinated by the Governor's Office and led by the Deputy Secretary of Workforce Development within the Department of Labor & Industry. 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.

- The Community Education Councils (CECs) network, as designated by PDE, will align training development efforts with the overarching strategies of the commonwealth to increase the education and training delivery to residents of rural communities.

- 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. It should be noted that SCSEP is the largest federal workforce development program targeted to serve older workers.

- 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 Centers for Independent Living (CILs) play an important role in helping individuals with disabilities achieve or maintain independence through supportive services and programs, including four core services: information and referral, peer support, advocacy, and independent living skills. WIOA provides new opportunities for PA CareerLink® to partner with CILs leading to improved employment outcomes for job seekers with disabilities. The comprehensive services provided by CILs to advocate for and support the independence of individuals with disabilities is a perfect match with the focus of the public workforce system. CILs, OVR and PA CareerLink® centers are natural partners committed to improving the employment and economic advancement of all job seekers, including in-school and out-of-school youth and adults with disabilities through collaboration.

- 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. The commonwealth will leverage the resources available in the over 600 public libraries across the state to include basic computer skills training and access to the Internet and other digital education resources.

- 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, local boards are encouraged to secure other services through partner programs and community and faith-based organizations based on local needs. 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 providers offer supportive services based on findings from needs assessments. 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 PA 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 IPs 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® centers help 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 contextualized 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.

- Utilization of the public library system, which can provide programs and tools, particularly for small business owners and entrepreneurs.

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 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 – betheboss.org. 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.

Partner Engagement with Other Education and Training Providers

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

As prior mentioned in the Strategic section of the plan:

Goal 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.

Goal 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.

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 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.

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.

Additionally, the CECs have historically leveraged other state and local funding to implement sector based training provided through a variety of educational institutions in rural communities where campus locations are non-existent. CECs serve as an intermediary and broker of training programs based on identified need and demand.

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.
Lastly, ITAs can be utilized by eligible participants to gain access to and participate in appropriate training programs offered by eligible providers, including education institutions. The ITA may be leveraged with Pell Grants and state financial assistance to increase individual's participation and affordability for training activities.

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.

- The CECs will extend program development activities with postsecondary institutions to ensure that residents of rural communities have access to credential bearing training opportunities.

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 PA 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. While CWDS is the case management system for L&I workforce development programs, there are other workforce and education programs that use different systems of record.

The Division of Adult Education uses the e–Data v2 web–based system to collect Title II program data for federal and state reporting purposes. 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. Division of Adult Education staff and local program staff also use a corresponding Access template to further analyze program data to improve and expand services to participants. For example, reports in the template identify students who have demonstrated measurable skill gain and may be ready for referral to the local PA CareerLink® site for employment or training. This Access template can be expanded to include additional reports that support implementation of the State's strategies to establish career pathways, increase opportunities for out of school youth and adults with basic skills deficiencies, and engage employers.

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. Federal Perkins recipients also utilize the data produced by CWIA to connect with regional and local employers. Perkins recipients are required to work with the Local Workforce Development Boards to interpret the data and to apply the data to educational program needs of the region. The LWDB also provides assistance to the Perkins recipients in identifying employers who can partner with the Perkins recipients.

The TANF system of record is the Department of Human Services Customer Information System (CIS).
CIS sends referral information to DHS business partners who then utilize CWDS to enroll DHS recipients in contracted Employment and Training programs. The DHS services and related information entered in CWDS are transferred back to CIS via a nightly batch process. Participants may be dual enrolled in a DHS and an L&I program. Duplication of services is avoided due to the integration of the PA CareerLink® centers and DHS EARN centers and by using specific service codes to identify WIOA funded services.

Beyond case management systems, the commonwealth has established the PA–WDQI reporting 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.

PA CareerLink® customers are universally offered Wagner Peyser, or labor exchange services. Co-enrollment in Wagner-Peyser and WIOA Title I occurs and is encouraged; however the Title I eligibility is assessed and determined at the local level. A Common Measure Program Activity Log has been created within CWDS which tracks periods of participation by program for all US DOL workforce programs. Activities of all programs are tracked in this central location, which allows for the creation of reporting and program participation cycles. Participants who are co-enrolled exit for measurement once 90 days has passed since the provision of services from any program in which they are participating.

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 43 new persons being appointed. The board exceeds the requirements of WIOA, and includes: the governor; two members of the legislature; 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 1205-0NEW. 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 PA 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 commonwealth has submitted a plan of action to further address how one-stop delivery system partner programs will be assessed. The State Plan will be updated once that action plan has been implemented.

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 is supporting WIOA core programs through effective communication and information sharing among partners. The combined WIOA state plan has already increased the frequency and quality of interactions among partners through shared vision and goals.

These groups will continue to meet regularly to share information, discuss programs and collaborate wherever possible to improve outcomes for jobseekers and various programs.

This behavior will be modeled at the state level and shared and replicated within each of the Local Workforce Development Areas, with the intent that they establish similar type of meetings and information exchanges at the local level. The LWDAs will be responsible for adding local partners who can specifically help outcomes for workforce program participants.

Effectiveness of core programs, one-stop partners, and combined state plan partners will also be supported through monitoring and evaluation. State agencies overseeing the various programs and partners regularly review data from services provided at the local level. In addition, on-site monitoring visits are conducted as needed and appropriate. Information gathered from such monitoring is used to determine need for additional guidance and technical assistance for program improvement.

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.

Under the federal Perkins grant, the Pennsylvania Department of Education provides technical assistance that is focused on improving the effectiveness of the Perkins recipients' delivery of the career and technical education programs. Under the combined plan, the Pennsylvania Department of Education will continue to review and analyze data collected under Perkins and WIOA to determine appropriate technical assistance for each of the recipients. The technical assistance will assist the Perkins recipients to increase effectiveness.

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.

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

The commonwealth will 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.
The commonwealth has submitted a plan of action to further address how the workforce development system and WIOA core programs will be evaluated. The State Plan will be updated once that action plan has been implemented.

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.

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 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.

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. State adult education direct service funds will be competed through the same process. Grants funds will be awarded through yearly contracts contingent on availability of federal and state funds. Each year's renewal option and grant amounts will be based on the following criteria: contract compliance, including success in meeting contracted enrollment and providing the contracted services; evidence of sufficient progress in meeting the state imposed targets for the indicators of performance; evidence of continuous program improvement; compliance with fiscal and programmatic policies and guidelines; and the amount of state and federal awards.

For the competition, PDE will use a needs-based funding formula to allocate funds to the local workforce development areas. This formula was developed in 2010 by PDE and a group of program administrators with technical assistance provided through a national leadership activity. The formula includes five data sets weighted equally: 1) the number of individuals age 18 and over who are not enrolled in school and who do not have a high school diploma; 2) the number of individuals age 16 and over who are in the labor force and are unemployed; 3) the number of individuals age 18 and over with less than a ninth grade education; 4) the number of people below poverty level; and 5) the number of OJT openings per year. In local areas comprised of multiple counties, PDE anticipates further breaking out funding by county to ensure services are available throughout the area.

Grant applications will be submitted through PDE's eGrants system. 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. 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. 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 when and where appropriate.

Providers seeking to provide integrated education and training services will be required to supply evidence of their ability to do so either directly or in partnership with other providers. Through a standardized process developed by PDE Division of Adult Education, applicants will submit their grant applications to the local workforce development board for review of alignment with the local plan. Local boards will have the opportunity to provide recommendations to improve alignment.
PDE has guidelines in place to ensure a fair and open competition. In accordance with these guidelines, grant applications will be evaluated by teams of three individuals. Team members will include staff from the Division of Adult Education, other PDE staff, other qualified commonwealth staff, and, as needed, peer reviewers, subject matter experts, and/or consultants. Division staff will create a scoring rubric for each grant type, which will address all items in the grant application including demonstrated effectiveness and the results of the local board reviews with recommendations. Review team members will be trained prior to beginning evaluation and scoring of applications. Once the applications have been reviewed and scored, they will be ranked from highest to lowest scoring. PDE will award grants to the highest scoring applicant in each of the local workforce development areas and will continue to award funds until the amount allocated to the area under the needs-based formula is reached or until all applications for service in the local area with a sufficient score have been funded.

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 though 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 engaged in a planning retreat featuring a lab session that allowed 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

Priority of service is provided in accordance with the commonwealth's Workforce System Policy (WSP) 05-PY2015, *Priority of Service—Initial Implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act,* December 23, 2015. The priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses applies across all qualified employment and training programs. The priority of service for public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient is a statutory priority that applies only to the receipt of individualized career services and training services in the WIOA title I Adult program. Local boards may establish a local discretionary priority that also gives priority to other individuals specifically for the receipt of individualized career services and training services in the WIOA title I Adult program. With regard to the priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses, priority of service for the WIOA title I Adult program must be applied in the following order:

1. Veterans and eligible spouses who meet the *statutory* priority (public assistance recipient, other low-income individuals including the underemployed, or basic skills deficient) and Adult program eligibility must receive the highest level of priority for services;
2. Other individuals (not veterans or eligible spouses) who meet the *statutory* priority (public assistance recipient, other low-income individuals including underemployed, or basic skills deficient) and Adult program eligibility then receive the second level of priority for services;
3. All other veterans and eligible spouses who meet Adult program eligibility, then receive the third level of priority for services;
4. Other individuals (not veterans or eligible spouses) who do not meet the statutory priority (public assistance recipient, other low-income individuals including underemployed, or basic skills deficient), but do meet a local discretionary priority and Adult program eligibility, then receive the fourth level of priority for services.
5. Other individuals (not veterans or eligible spouses) who do not meet the statutory priority (public assistance recipient, other low-income individuals including underemployed, or basic skills deficient) and do not meet the local discretionary priority, but do meet Adult program eligibility, then receive the fifth level of priority for services.

When a customer appears for PA CareerLink® services, the receptionist determines if the customer is a veteran and eligible for priority of service. If the customer self-discloses veteran status, the receptionist provides the veteran customer with an intake form. This form allows the veteran customer to disclose whether he/she possesses significant barriers to employment, such as: lacks a high school diploma; is a transitional service member; or otherwise qualifies to receive intensive case management services from a DVOP Specialist, if present.

Upon determining that a veteran qualifies for intensive case management services from a DVOP Specialist based upon self-disclosed veteran status and the completed intake form, the receptionist immediately refers the veteran to the DVOP Specialist, if available. If the DVOP Specialist cannot see the veteran immediately, the receptionist gives the veteran the choice of making an appointment with the DVOP Specialist or exercising priority of service.

If the veteran exercises the latter, the veteran will see the next available PA CareerLink® staff member, i.e., will go to the front of the line for assistance and case management services. If the particular PA CareerLink® office does not have a DVOP Specialist, then priority of service automatically occurs and the veteran will see the next available PA CareerLink® staff member.

Upon meeting the veteran for the first time, the DVOP Specialist or PA CareerLink® staff member will ensure that the veteran's CWDS record contains the appropriate veteran service code and that the veteran is otherwise eligible for DVOP Specialist services. Thereafter, the DVOP Specialist will provide the necessary intensive case management services to assist with removing those barriers that inhibit full employment.

Priority of service also comes into play with respect to veterans who seek to enter workforce programs such as On-the-Job Training. In these instances, the veteran receives the next available training slot. Additionally, each PA CareerLink® office holds all job orders for twenty-four hours, which allows staff members to first identify qualified veterans. When employers conduct candidate searches, JobGateway® places a United States flag adjacent to a veteran's 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).

Priority of service requirements will no longer be triggered by limited funds, but instead, such precedence will be provided based on an established grading of priority. The commonwealth, LWDBs, and PA CareerLink® centers shall provide priority for Title I Adult and Youth services. Additionally, the commonwealth shall allow for a local discretionary priority of service to be applied to individuals with barriers of employment for the provision of individualized career services and training services funded through the Adult program. Lastly, the commonwealth has established measures to monitor the implementation and assess the effectiveness of priority of service for this program.

"Priority of service" is 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.

"Covered persons" (as it applies to the Adult program priority of service) are veterans and eligible spouses; and individuals who are included in the WIOA priority groups, who are given priority over other individuals for receipt of individualized career services and training services funded by WIOA title I Adult Program.

"WIOA priority groups" (in relation to the Adult program priority of service) are the categories of individuals who are eligible to receive priority of service (i.e., recipients of public assistance; other low–income individuals; individuals who are basic skills deficient; and individuals who are both underemployed and low-income), and may include other categories of individuals with barriers to employment as established through a LWDB's local discretionary priority.

"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.

Basic skills may be assessed using instruments that are considered valid and appropriate and/or via case manager observation and documented case notes. Standardized assessments will be administered following published guidelines, and locators/appraisals will be used to determine the appropriate level of use of such assessments. This assessment method must include reading, writing, or computing skills. Soft skills deficiency or occupation skills deficiency shall not be used to determine otherwise proficient individuals as basic skills deficient. Case notes and other documents must provide an auditable trail back to the source of the verified information. This assessment method includes assessment questions, test results, school records, and/or referrals. Reasonable accommodation must be provided during the assessment process, if necessary, for individuals with disabilities.

“Individual who is both underemployed and low-income” is both:

(i) “Underemployed” is an individual who is:
- employed less than full-time and is seeking full-time employment
- employed in a position that is inadequate with respect to his/her skills and training
- employed but whose current job’s earnings are not sufficient compared to his/her previous job’s earnings from their previous employment, per state and/or local policy; and

(ii) A “low-income individual” as defined in WIOA Sec. 3(36).

“Local discretionary priority” is a priority group established in addition to WIOA priority groups provided above; such priority may be used by LWDBs to meet the needs and vision of their respective local area.

The commonwealth allows LWDBs to identify and apply one local discretionary priority of service group to the established priority hierarchy. If a LWDB elects to develop a local discretionary priority, this priority group must include individuals with barriers to employment as defined in WIOA Sec. 3(24), may be created by adding a local requirement to one of the four required WIOA priority groups, and must last no less than one program year.

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.

The commonwealth will monitor data reported by LWDBs and PA CareerLink® centers to determine the percentage of those individuals in the four WIOA priority groups who are being served through the Adult program in comparison to all other individuals (i.e., individuals who are not receiving required WIOA priority) who are being served through the Adult program. For this assessment, only individuals included in the four WIOA priority groups described above receiving value-added services through the Adult program funds will be counted as "individuals who are receiving priority." Individuals made eligible for priority of service through local discretionary priority of service will be counted as "individuals who are not receiving any priority of service." Should the percentage of "individuals who are receiving priority" 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. The 70 percent requirement applies to all individuals who receive Adult services. 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.

In consideration of WIOA transition, during program year 2016, should the percent of individuals who are receiving priority be less than 51 percent in a local workforce development area, the commonwealth will provide technical assistance to assist LWDBs in effective outreach efforts to individuals who are included in WIOA priority groups.

Reflective of federal guidance in Training and Employment Guidance Letter 03-15, veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, low income, basic skills deficient, or both underemployed and low income will receive first priority, non–veterans who are recipients of public assistance, low–income, basic skills deficient, or both underemployed and low income will receive second priority, veterans and eligible spouses not included in priority groups will receive third priority, non-veterans participating in the Adult program who are not included in any aforementioned priority group but who meet a local discretionary priority will receive fourth 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, and identify the local area's discretionary priority and any additional requirements, if a local discretionary priority group exists. LWDBs must communicate in their plans the methods to be used to apply priority of service requirements and any local discretionary priority, to include a description of the following:

(i) How they will obtain data reflecting each of the four groups 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) When otherwise deemed eligible for program participation, how they will affirmatively identify persons entitled to priority of service and inform those individuals 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.

(xi) What, if any, local discretionary priority of service has been established for a specific program year and what data will be used to support the need or benefit for the discretionary priority.

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.

More information regarding WIOA Title I Adult program priority of service is provided in the commonwealth's priority of service policy, developed as a part of the "Initial Implementation of WIOA Series" to assist in the transition to the new workforce act. The commonwealth's priority of service policy will be revised to align with the (pending) State Plan and Federal regulations.

Describe the State's criteria regarding local area transfer of funds between the adult and dislocated worker programs.

WIOA provides flexibility to local WDBs to provide services in the areas of greatest need by allowing fund transfers of up to 100 percent of a program year allocation between the local adult and the local dislocated worker allocations. In accordance with WIOA's regulations that require the governor to establish factors for approving such transfers, the commonwealth provides the following criteria for local WDBs to request transfers between these funding streams:

- Local boards must seek approval for transferring funds between the adult and dislocated worker funding allocations by submitting a transfer request to BWDA. In order for a transfer request to be approved and fully executed prior to June 30, all transfer requests must be received no later than April 15. Written requests must be submitted to Labor & Industry on a Funds Request Form as directed in the WSP 03-2015, Financial Management Guide page 5-8 through 5-9 and Appendix A.
- A local area must consider how it will meet adjusted levels of performance for the primary indicators before requesting such transfer since the negotiated levels of performance for the primary indicators remain in effect.
- Local boards must attest to the following when submitting a transfer request:
    - Employment and training activities of the program that funds are being transferred from or the program that funds are being transferred will not be adversely impacted.
    - Any transfer of funds from the dislocated worker program to the adult program to be adult program funds fall under the priority requirements of the adult program. Likewise, any transfer of funds from the adult program to the dislocated worker program will fall under the requirements of the dislocated worker program;
    - A local area is still responsible for meeting the adjusted levels of performance for any participants that it is required to serve; and
    - When funds are transferred from one program to another, the transferred funds adopt the identity of the new fund source and are bound by all of the requirements of that source.

As indicated in the commonwealth's workforce system policy (WSP) on financial management, the maximum dollar amount that a local area can transfer is calculated against the total base annual allocation (excluding any transfers or other adjustments to the allocation amount) for the funding stream that the funds are being transferred from. It should also be noted that administrative funds must be included with the transferred program funds based upon a 90/10 percent program to administrative split. Therefore, local areas must have adequate administrative funds available before BWDA will approve a transfer request.

For reference, transferred funds retain their federal year-of-appropriation identity and must be accounted for and reported accordingly. For example, PY 2016 WIOA Adult funds can only be transferred to the PY 2016 WIOA Dislocated Worker program. All transfers assume the identity and applicable requirements of the funding stream receiving the transfer. Expenditures associated with the transferred funds have to be tracked or accounted for separately. Transferred funds are accounted for, and reported, as part of the total available funds in the originally allocated program.

Transfer requests approved will result in a separate NOO and contract number being issued for the transferred amount, while the program in which the amount is being transferred from will be revised to reflect the reduced allocation. The issuance of said NOOs will serve as a local area's official notification that the transfer is approved. Conversely, local areas will receive notification of any transfer request that is not approved.

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 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-PY2014, V002: Workforce Delivery System, Version 002
- Workforce System Policy No. 01-PY2015: Pennsylvania's Workforce System of Record
- Workforce System Policy No. 02-PY2015: Local Governance Policy
- Workforce System Policy No. 03-PY2015: Financial Management Policy
- Workforce System Policy No. 04-PY2015: Eligible Training Providers
- Workforce System Policy No. 05-PY2015: Priority of Service
- Workforce System Policy No. 06-PY2015: Training Expenditure Targets and Definitions of Training for Benchmarks
- Workforce System Policy No. 07-PY2015: Oversight
- Workforce System Guidance 02-2014: Process and Timeline for Designation of Pennsylvania's Local Workforce Development Areas
- Workforce System Guidance No. 01-PY2015: Implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act -- Transition Procedures
- Workforce System Guidance No. 03-PY2015: Youth Eligibility Definitions
- Workforce System Guidance No. 04-PY2015: Self-Certification and Telephone/Document Verification
- Workforce System Guidance No. 05-PY2015: Regional and Local Planning
- Workforce System Guidance No. 06-PY2015: Incumbent Worker Training Activities

The Department did not develop a policy with regard to the 2015 version of the Trade Act but does follow USDOL Training Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 5-15, dated September 4, 2015.

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 Apprenticeship and Training Office with the goal of promoting and growing Registered Apprenticeship (RA) and pre-apprenticeship programs across the state. The ATO 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 (RRS) 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 RRS 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. RRS 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 RRS offer workers affected by downsizing the best chance to reenter the workforce as quickly as possible. Since inception, RRS has become nationally recognized, often cited by the U.S. Department of Labor as a model for service delivery.

RRS, 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. RRS 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 RRS 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 RRS will contact the company and attempt to establish a meeting and plant tour. SEWN staff has 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.

RRS 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, RRS 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 RRS to gather and synthesize real-time LMI and conduct needs-profiling of dislocated workers accomplished through surveys distributed, completed, and collected at RRS 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, RRS has become an essential component in the commonwealth's layoff-aversion and reemployment network.

RRS 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. RRS 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. RRS, 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.

RRS 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, RRS 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.

Through the fact-finding process, Rapid Response staff are able to gather information from the employer related to the layoff/closure. At times, the information shared by the employer reveals that the loss of business is due to foreign imports/exports. When such information is shared, the RR staff informs the employer, employees, and union (if applicable) to apply for Trade Act benefits. RR will work with any entity (employer, union, workers) willing to file a Trade petition with the USDOL. RR provides the technical assistance to complete the Trade petition application and file it with the USDOL accordingly.

The fact-finding information gathered is shared with all partners in the LWDA to ensure that planning for such dislocation occurs in a timely manner. It also provides the opportunity for RR to recommend to the LWDAs to request additional RR funds to ensure that services can be provided for the dislocated workers (DW). When a company has applied for Trade benefits, the additional RR funds can be used to provide "on-site" DW services prior to the company closure. RR and LWDA staff develop a comprehensive plan with the company and union, if applicable, to provide workers with services such as JobGateway® registration and access to various workshops related to topics such as healthcare, retirement, training opportunities in the workforce area, and soft skills to re-enter the workforce.

Funds can also be provided to develop customized pre-employment/training services. Local partnerships with community colleges and organizations will help with development and planning of basic computer skills training and pre-GED/basic skills workshops. Having these services planned out in advance enables the DW to obtain or refresh skills that are needed for the current job market. It may also serve as a platform for more in depth training.

The additional funds will also be used to re-enforce the partnerships established with local employers in the respective workforce area. The RR staff, with the collaboration of LWDA partners, can opt to arrange various job-fairs for the Trade affected dislocated workers. Companies in the workforce area may benefit in filling current open positions and/or take the opportunity to engage in on-the-job-training for workers with transferable skills.

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

RRS 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 RRS, 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. RRS markets TAA to companies, workers, and unions (where present) through the rapid response process. Within 48 hours of receiving a WARN notice (or any other form of Public Notice) from a company that is either closing or laying-off, a RR representative contacts the employer and initiates a fact-finding session (in person/by-phone). Information is gathered on the following items:

- Reason for closure/layoff
- Size of the workforce
- Demographics of the workforce
- Supply chain
- Timeframe in which closure/layoff will take place.

Following the gathering of information, the RR representative provides a summary of workforce services that will benefit the affected workers such as on-site workshops covering resume writing, job search skills, interviewing techniques, managing a household budget and Unemployment Compensation. These pre-layoff workshops serve as a precursor for the workers in preparing for the upcoming layoff. Further, the RR representative explains the benefits of having the company apply for Trade benefits on behalf of their workforce. The RR representative reviews the benefits that the Trade Act offers to workers, emphasizing the training opportunities available for a higher skilled workforce in the respective area. The RR representative is able to assist the employer complete a Trade petition application on site and encourages sending the completed application via the US DOL website (https://doleta.gov/tradeact/). Finally, the employer is left with an informational folder providing a summary of what has been reviewed during the fact-finding meeting and schedules a follow-up meeting for next steps.

With the information gathered during the fact finding meeting, the RR representative assembles a Rapid Response Team that can meet the needs of the workers in a particular dislocation. The demographic information gathered at the fact-finding allows for Rapid Response to focus in on particular needs of the workers. This includes, but not limited to:

- Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
- Workers near Retirement Age
- Workers lacking a High School Diploma
- Workers with limited or no post-secondary education
- Transportation barriers

The RR representative encourages the local Workforce Development Board to request additional Rapid Response funds to ensure that enough funds for supportive services are available to serve the workers in question, specifically in areas that are identified as barriers to employment.

A Rapid Response Team will include specialists that will cover:

- Unemployment Insurance
- Health and Pension Benefits
- Job Search Activities
- Education Services
- Trade Adjustment Assistance
- Social Service Programs
- Community and Economic Development
- Other members deemed necessary to serve a specific dislocation

The Rapid Response representative follows up with employer to schedule pre-layoff workshops as well as a Rapid Response Information Session (RRIS) with the affected workers. Various dates can be scheduled to accommodate large dislocations. The Rapid Response representative makes it a priority to involve the employer and worker union (if applicable) in the planning of the RRIS to cover subjects such as, but not limited to, location of the event, amount of invitees, and information that will be presented. The RRIS is usually scheduled four to six weeks prior to layoff/closure date. The RR representative will also follow up with the employer to check the status of the Trade petition application. If the employer has not moved ahead with the application, the RR representative will encourage the union (if applicable) and/or workers to submit a Trade petition application. In situations where three workers are unable to come together to complete a Trade petition application, the State Agency will submit it on the workers behalf.

The Rapid Response representative meets with the assembled RR Team to provide an overview of how the event will unfold to include order of presenters and general flow of the event. A strong emphasis is given to providing the participant with up to date information on UC, health benefits and workforce services. Workers are given an overview of what their local PA CareerLink® has to offer to include training, one-on-one job search assistance, career assessment and case management services built on an Individual Employment Plan tailored to the worker needs. PA CareerLink® staff is present at the RRIS to schedule one-on-one appointments with workers who want to access workforce benefits. Each worker present at the RRIS completes a survey that gathers critical information for ongoing follow-up services (contact information, education background, work history, skills, interest in training/job search, etc.) These surveys are reviewed by Rapid Response staff and shared with local PA CareerLink® case managers who will provide follow-up services to these workers. The surveys provide a solid foundation for the case managers to build a plan with the worker that leads to employment/training opportunities. Additionally, the surveys also provide good indicators on what employment barriers exist (limited education, job skills, LEP) and hence allow for appropriate referrals to PA CareerLink® partners that can assist workers overcome such barriers. RR representatives maintain contact with the employer during the layoff/closure period to ensure that all workers receive the information presented at the RRIS. The RR representative also encourages the formation of a Dislocated Worker Transition Team. These teams are mostly made up of volunteer workers within the company that can serve as “a body” representing the voice of the workforce. Particular issues can be addressed such as further information on specific topics, development of newsletters and arrangement of smaller worker groups that address specific topics of interest.

Upon receiving notification from US DOL that a TAA petition has been approved/certified, the RR representative contacts the employer and union (where applicable). The federal program obtains a worker-list from the employer and sends out notification to all workers of the potential eligibility for Trade benefits.

Next, the RR representative collaborates with local PA CareerLink® Trade, Title I and Unemployment Compensation service staff to set up a Trade Benefits Rights Interview (BRI) meeting date convenient for the employer and workers. The RR representative recommends BRI sessions to be held at the actual company site to maximize participation. Workers receive a personal invitation to the BRI session and obtain a copy of the information that will be reviewed during the meeting.

Rapid Response staff highlights the benefits that the Trade Act offers to assist in returning to the workforce by providing a detailed timeline for workers to follow. It emphasizes the services provided at the PA CareerLink® as a staging point to access Trade benefits in a timely manner. A strong emphasis is given to TAA training, High Priority Occupations and important deadlines that have an impact on time sensitive benefits. Case managers are present to schedule one-on-one appointments with TAA eligible workers who have an immediate interest in Trade benefits.

Rapid Response staff will also recommend the use of an Enrollment Assessment (EA) session to take place one to two weeks after the BRI is held, specifically for larger dislocations. EA sessions are a collaborative effort among PA CareerLink® partners present at the different stations set up for the EA. These stations serve the purpose of explaining Trade benefits on an individual basis, full-enrollment on the JobGateway® system, completion of dual-enrollment, initial skills assessment, WIOA supportive services, initiating the IEP, an overview of the Reemployment Trade Adjustment Allowance (RTAA) for workers 50 years of age or older, scheduling of a comprehensive assessment for participants interested in training, a review of the training programs and providers in the workforce area, and next steps/follow-up appointments. The EA sessions allow for a TAA eligible worker to go through a smooth process where there is a clear understanding of expectations and results. Furthermore, having the dual-enrollment completed at an early stage of case management allows for the TAA eligible worker to take full advantage of all workforce services offered under the PA CareerLink® umbrella. Once the EA session is completed, the worker identifies with a case manager, who then assists in making sure the worker accesses the TAA benefit(s) prior to an upcoming deadline. The EA session also allows for the local area to pull additional resources by having staff from other parts of the commonwealth assist with the logistics of such an event. It also allows for the case managers to identify the TAA workers who have a strong interest in using Trade benefits to secure suitable employment. The RR representative encourages the involvement of the DWTT to encourage workers to use Trade benefits and engage with the PA CareerLink® staff.

The commonwealth implemented an online application for TAA training, job-search and relocation allowances, 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® center. 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 Apprenticeship and Training Office (ATO) within L&I. The ATO 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.

ATO 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 ATO staff, who will follow up on the leads to help employers create or expand registered apprenticeship programs. ATO 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 ATO 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. However, when older youth and young adult clients have low literacy and numeracy levels, local areas should consider integrated, contextual strategies that blend work experience and education.

- *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, including youth with disabilities. 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)

The commonwealth's Workforce System Guidance No. 03-PY2015, *Youth Eligibility Definitions—Initial Implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act*, December 23, 2015, provides definitions to ensure compliance with law and other federal guidance, expand the flexibility of local areas to expend funds appropriately, and eliminate barriers to the provision of services to individuals most in need.

Under WIOA, a key element of youth eligibility determination is whether or not the applicant is attending school or not attending school, as defined by State law. An ISY must be attending school, while OSY must not be attending school. Unfortunately, Pennsylvania law does not define these terms, but the policy is guided by how the Pennsylvania Department of Education defines schools. In Pennsylvania, providers of youth services must establish whether a youth is an ISY or OSY by utilizing the criteria outlined below:

Attending Any School. Youth receiving services from any one of the 'public' or 'non-public' institutions to include: school districts; charter schools; cyber charter schools; area vocational technical schools; sectarian schools; and private schools, as well as those being home-schooled or privately tutored, would be considered "attending school" for the purpose of WIOA Title I-B youth eligibility determination. A youth enrolled at a post-secondary institution would also be considered to be "attending school," unless the youth is enrolled at the post-secondary institution as part of an integrated education and training program.

Not Attending Any School. Youth not receiving services from any one of the 'public' or 'non-public' institutions listed above would be considered "not attending school" for the purpose of WIOA Title I-B youth eligibility determination.

For purposes of WIOA eligibility, the Department does not consider providers of adult education under title II of WIOA, YouthBuild programs, the Job Corps program, high school equivalency programs, or dropout re-engagement programs to be schools. Therefore, in all cases except the one provided below, WIOA Youth programs may consider a youth to be an OSY for purposes of WIOA youth program eligibility if he or she attends adult education provided under title II of WIOA, YouthBuild, Job Corps, high school equivalency programs, or dropout re-engagement programs regardless of the funding source of those programs. Youth attending high school equivalency programs funded by the public K-12 school system who are classified by the school system as still enrolled in school are an exception; they are considered ISY. Youth must be categorized as OSY or ISY at the time of registration in the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS).

If <u>not</u> 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 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

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.

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.

An assessment of the agricultural activity in the State means: 1) identifying the top five labor-intensive crops, the months of heavy activity, and the geographic area of prime activity; 2) Summarize the agricultural employers' needs in the State (i.e. are they predominantly hiring local or foreign workers, are they expressing that there is a scarcity in the agricultural workforce); and 3) Identifying any economic, natural, or other factors that are affecting agriculture in the State or any projected factors that will affect agriculture in the State.

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 County is the top agricultural county in the state.

In Pennsylvania, the agriculture footprint is unique to certain geographical areas. The southeast part of the state produces 62 percent of the nation's mushrooms. The eastern part of the state has considerable blueberry and cherry production. Bucks, Montgomery, and Lancaster Counties are hubs for wholesale nursery production. Lancaster County leads the commonwealth in animal agriculture including dairy, poultry, and swine. The south central part of the state is considered the fruit belt with Adams and Franklin Counties leading in the production of apples, peaches, cherries, and pears. Bedford and Blair Counties also have numerous apple growers. Central Pennsylvania is the heart of the Christmas tree industry while northwestern Pennsylvania leads a burgeoning wine industry that also has pockets throughout the commonwealth. Grapes, cherries, vegetables, and nursery production fills out production categories in the western part of the state.

According to the 2012 Census of Agriculture, the five leading labor-intensive crops (where the most hired farm labor is employed) are Greenhouse, Nursery, and Floriculture Production (NAICS code 1114) (16,628 employed); Dairy Cattle and Milk Production (NAICS code 11212) (4,045); Other Crop Farming (NAICS code 1119) (6,818); Fruit and Tree Nut Farming (NAICS code 1113) (6,434); and Oilseed and Grain Farming (NAICS code 1111) (5,683). The commonwealth as a whole had 65,487 workers employed as hired farm labor.

Counties that led in the employment of hired farm labor include Lancaster (8,768); Chester (8,530); Adams (3,191); Franklin (2,652); York (2,476); Erie (2,204); Schuylkill (1,292); Cumberland (1,175); Bedford (1,046); and Snyder (1,014).

Further, using the Census, Adams (1,109); Chester (880); Franklin (441); Erie (171); Lancaster (162); Cumberland (158); Bedford (156); York (130); Columbia (105); and Washington (62) are the top counties where the migrant workforce has been deployed. The five leading crops where the migrant workforce is employed include Fruit and Tree Nut Farming (NAICS code 1113) (119); Dairy Cattle and Milk Production (NAICS code 11212) (90); Greenhouse, Nursery, and Floriculture Production (NAICS code 1114) (71); Vegetable and Melon Farming (NAICS code 1112) (43); and Oilseed and Grain Farming (NAICS code 1111) (29). Companies in the commonwealth as a whole employed 4,288 migrant workers.

In comparing these statistics, it seems clear that the agriculture community uses migrant farmworkers to supplement the workforce that they find in their local areas. There is a much higher percentage of the workforce in some counties such as Adams and Franklin than there is in the larger agriculture counties such as Lancaster and Chester. There is also a higher percentage of workers in crops that are more seasonal, presumably helping with planting and harvest at key times.

Records related to the H-2A program confirm that assumption in that the busiest times for applications are from December to January with consistent activity continuing through June and July.

In general, employers in the agriculture and food industry express the need for more workers, particularly in the seasonal parts of the business. There is intense competition for low-skill, low-wage workers between the agriculture, retail, hospitality, health care and other industries.

Temporary help services and farm labor contractors compete for the migrant workforce in the agriculture, construction and landscaping industries. This competition is reflected in the low unemployment rate in many of the counties that use hired farm labor.

This overall scarcity of workers will be the factor which most dramatically affects the agriculture and food industry in the future. Housing and transportation as well as training for agriculture tasks as the work gets more sophisticated will be additional challenges. The industry itself is experimenting with technology that may allow machines to replace some of the manual labor that is currently required.

An assessment of the unique needs of farmworkers means summarizing Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker (MSFW) characteristics (including if they are predominantly from certain countries, what language(s) they speak, the approximate number of MSFWs in the State during peak season and during low season, and whether they tend to be migrant, seasonal, or year-round farmworkers). This information must take into account data supplied by WIOA Section 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantees, other MSFW organizations, employer organizations, and State and/or Federal agency data sources such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Employment and Training Administration.

The Department of Labor & Industry, working with the PA Department of Agriculture, the National Agriculture Statistical Service of the US Department of Agriculture, PathStone (the WIOA Section 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program grantee for the commonwealth), Penn Ag Industries and other agriculture employer organizations and agriculture employers themselves, has assembled this profile of the MSFW in Pennsylvania.

Of all enrolled, eligible farmworker participants 76 percent were of Hispanic descent (Mexico, Haiti and Puerto Rico), while 24% were of Haitian, African-American, or Caucasian descent. The first languages most commonly spoken were Spanish and Creole with 44 percent of all farmworkers being limited English

proficient and illiterate in their own native tongue. Just fewer than 4,300 farmworkers are employed annually with the peak months for employment in south central Pennsylvania being May through November and in southeastern Pennsylvania being September through April. These differences can be attributed to the differing needs of the mushroom and fruit industries primarily. Of all farmworkers, 76 percent are seasonal and 24 percent are migrants.

BWPO recognizes that some farmworkers 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.

Outreach Activities

The local offices outreach activities must be designed to meet the needs of MSFWs in the State and to locate and contact MSFWs who are not being reached through normal intake activities. Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

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.

Contacting farmworkers who are not being reached by the normal intake activities conducted by the employment service offices.

Currently, every PA CareerLink® center in Pennsylvania has an employee, who may have other duties, designated as the "Agricultural Specialist." That employee is responsible for liaison with agriculture employers and serving the placement needs of MSFW. Agricultural Specialists will utilize, when feasible, the Agriculture Recruitment System to recruit and refer qualified MSFW to job openings. The commonwealth is considering reducing the number of staff designated as Agriculture Specialists and concentrating staff efforts to the areas with a high concentration of agriculture employment while ensuring all areas can be covered when needed. The State Monitor Advocate position is housed within L&I Central Office. The position is full-time and monitors outreach activities and the coordination of outreach across the commonwealth.

Providing technical assistance to outreach workers. Technical assistance must include trainings, conferences, additional resources, and increased collaboration with other organizations on topics such as one-stop center services (i.e. availability of referrals to training, supportive services, and career services, as well as specific employment opportunities), the employment service complaint system, information on the other organizations serving MSFWs in the area, and a basic summary of farmworker rights, including their rights with respect to the terms and conditions of employment.

As a component of the collaboration between the Department of Labor & Industry and the Department of Agriculture, including the NJFP grantee, outreach workers will be aware of training, development as well as technical assistance resources available to them. The Foreign Labor Certification (FLC) program is overseen by the Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations (BWPO) with a dedicated staff to implement FLC requirements, not including the Agriculture Specialists located in the PA CareerLink® centers. Through the development of a new relationship with the Department of Agriculture and the development of training plans, the BWPO will ensure outreach workers and the Agriculture Specialists clearly understand the technical assistance resources available to them. Specific WIOA services available to MSFW and employers may vary locally, and therefore are catalogued and shared at a local level with area outreach workers.

Increasing outreach worker training and awareness across core programs including the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program and the training on identification of UI eligibility issues.

The PA Department of Labor & Industry will incorporate a training plan into the outreach worker activities, to include training requirements such as PA CareerLink® 101 - a two-day in-person classroom training that reviews the foundations of workforce development, including the WIOA core programs and other commonwealth initiatives, or similar workforce foundation training activities that meet the needs of the worker, such as webinars and staff symposiums. Unemployment activities are also under the purview of the Department; Wagner-Peyser staff assigned as Agriculture Specialists in the PA CareerLink® are also trained to directly engage UI claimants in the one-stop with re-employment services and are able to provide assistance to individuals seeking to file and/or appeal UI claims. Agricultural Specialists are trained to understand and offer employment services; accordingly, domestic and MSFW jobseekers and workers are afforded universal access to employment services.

Providing State merit staff outreach workers professional development activities to ensure they are able to provide high quality services to both jobseekers and employers.

In partnership with the Department of Agriculture, the PA Department of Labor and Industry will establish an annual training plan for PA CareerLink® staff serving as Agriculture Specialists and outreach workers. Staff will receive training and development opportunities specific to the agriculture industry and MSFWs.

Coordinating outreach efforts with NFJP grantees as well as with public and private community service agencies and MSFW groups.

The NFJP grantee in Pennsylvania is Pathstone Corp. Each PathStone office serves as the focal point for outreach and recruitment to remote and less accessible areas of the state. In addition, Pathstone Corp. is a Title I provider and/or PA CareerLink® partner in select locations across the commonwealth. The Department of Labor & Industry plans to outreach to PathStone, in partnership with the Department of Agriculture to identify areas for improvement, opportunities for collaboration and coordination of outreach efforts. As a result of this outreach, an outreach plan will be developed that addresses the needs of the MSFW population and agriculture employers.

Services provided to farmworkers and agricultural employers through the one-stop delivery system. Describe the State agency's proposed strategies 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. This includes:

- *How career and training services required under WIOA Title I will be provided to MSFWs through the one-stop centers;*
- *How the State serves agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such services.*

<u>Services Provided to MSFWs through the PA CareerLink® Delivery System</u>
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. As proposed, outreach to MSFW workers and agriculture employers will be coordinated and implemented by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry and PA CareerLink® staff. Full-time capacity for outreach will occur for the Adams County Office throughout the peak season, which is September through November.

MSFWs receive a basic summary of their rights when they receive services in the PA CareerLink® center or during outreach. Outreach workers shall explain to MSFWs at their working, living or gathering areas services available from the PA CareerLink®, including the availability of referrals to agricultural and non-agricultural employment, training, supportive services, testing, counseling and other job development services, types of specific employment opportunities available in the PA CareerLink®, information on the agriculture complaint system and information on other organizations, such as PathStone, serving MSFWs. Outreach workers will encourage the MSFW to visit their local PA CareerLink® to access the full range of employment services. In the instance the MSFW cannot or will not visit the local PA CareerLink®, the worker can assist the MSFW in the preparation of applications, assistance in obtaining referral to employment opportunities currently available, as well as information regarding the type of employment opportunities which will become available; assistance in the preparation, receipt and referral of complaints; referral to supportive services; and transportation assistance to appointments at local PA CareerLink® offices or appropriate partners. Tools used to conduct outreach 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.

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.

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

There are a number of points in the system where the employment service complaint system is publicized to MSFWs. Every PA CareerLink® prominently displays an ETA-approved employment service complaint system poster in each local office and satellite or district office. The posters are also made available in retail and service establishments frequented by MSFWs in communities that have a high concentration of farmworkers. PathStone and farm labor contractors that are involved in the recruitment process are another outlet for providing information about the employment service complaint system as mandated by federal regulation at 20 CFR 653.112.

Marketing the Agricultural Recruitment System to agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such publicity.

Working together, the PA Department of Labor and Industry, the PA Department of Agriculture and PathStone provide an array of service to MSFWs and agriculture employers and are planning to upgrade those services in the coming year.

Currently, there is an Agriculture Specialist in each of the PA CareerLink® centers in Pennsylvania who is responsible for receiving job postings from employers and posting them on the state labor exchange system. The PA CareerLink® is then tasked with helping employers meet their needs for permanent, temporary, and/or seasonal labor by marketing openings to jobseekers. This process forms the core of the Agriculture Recruitment System function.

This system is complemented by the work of PathStone which conducts a Farmworker Forum comprised of local, regional, and state organizations to engage agriculture employers in supporting services to MSFWs.

Within the existing system, the PA Monitor Advocate offers quality assurance and monitoring of the activities occurring within the system.

Currently, the role of the PA Department of Agriculture (PDA) is primarily limited to inspecting the housing that is offered by agriculture employers to MSFWs. PDA has broad regulatory responsibilities within the agriculture and food industry with nearly half its staff complement involved in field activities. It has extensive contact with agriculture and food employers in these roles. It will serve as a conduit between the employers and the PA CareerLink® centers, promoting the ARS and encouraging employers to use it. PDA will also provide training and technical advice to the Agriculture Specialists in the PA CareerLink® centers as well as liaison activities to farm labor contractors that serve the industry. Strengthening the link to employers will support a demand-driven strategy to improve and increase outreach efforts to MSFW and better align job opportunities with MSFW seeking employment.

<u>Other Requirements</u>

Collaboration
Describe any collaborative agreements the state workforce agency (SWA) has with other MSFW service providers including NFJP grantees and other service providers. Describe how the SWA intends to build upon/increase collaboration with existing partners and in establishing new partners over the next four years (including any approximate timelines for establishing agreements or building upon existing agreements).

Currently, 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 US DOL and the PA Department of Agriculture to attend. These meetings are also open to the public. Working more closely with the PA Department of Agriculture, the PA Department of Labor & Industry expects to increase the number of agriculture employers who are involved in planning related to the utilization of MSFWs. The Department also intends to reach out to farm labor contractors who are important parts of the system and engage them in planning as well.

There also needs to be closer future collaboration with the local representatives of PathStone, the Section 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program grantee for the commonwealth; the PA Department of Agriculture Business Outreach Specialists; and the local PA CareerLink® offices on an ongoing basis. These are the three main components of a local and statewide system that work for agriculture employers and MSFWs alike.

Review and Public Comment.
In developing the AOP, the SWA must solicit information and suggestions from NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. In addition, at least 45 calendar days before submitting its final AOP, the SWA must provide a proposed plan to NFJP grantees, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other organizations expressing an interest and allow at least 30 days for review and comment. The SWA must: 1) Consider any comments received in formulating its final proposed AOP; 2) Inform all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore; and 3) Transmit the comments and recommendations received and its responses with the submission of the AOP. The AOP must include a statement confirming NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations have been given an opportunity to comment on the AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.

The commonwealth ensured that the WIOA Section 167 NFJP grantee, other appropriate farmworker groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations were aware that the State Plan had been posted for public comment. The commonwealth responded to all comments received during the public comment period through an addendum to the final submission of the State Plan.

Data Assessment.
Review the previous four years Wagner-Peyser data reports on performance. Note whether the State has been meeting its goals to provide MSFWs quantitatively proportionate services as compared to non-MSFWs. If it has not met these goals, explain why the State believes such goals were not met and how the State intends to improve its provision of services in order to meet such goals.

Pennsylvania previously received a waiver from the US DOL to pilot the Common Measures Management System; accordingly, some of the MSFW data elements are no longer captured and the ability to directly compare quantitatively proportionate services of MSFW to non-MSFW is limited. Less than one percent of estimated MSFWs received PA CareerLink® services in the last four years. The Department has recently incorporated the MSFW characteristic for customers receiving labor exchange services and will be able to more accurately report MSFWs receiving services under WIOA. The Department expects MSFW service goals to improve and increase as a result of the partnership with the Department of Agriculture in outreach in staff training.

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.

State Monitor Advocate
The plan must contain a statement confirming the State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved 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 and approved of its contents.

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.

PDE, Division of Adult Education will compete funds for services under Section 225 as part of the overall application for Section 231 funds. Eligible providers submitting applications under Section 231 will have the option to include corrections education under Section 225 as part of the services to be provided. Thus, Section 225 funds will be included in the multi–year grants for Title II direct service funds where there is a local need. All aspects of the grant competition as described in sections III.b.5.B.i and ii and Title II Local Activities of the state plan apply to Section 225 funds. The competition will be open to all eligible providers. 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 will conduct the grant competition through its eGrants system. Through this system all eligible providers have access to the same grant application for funds, including Section 225 funds. The applications in which Section 225 funds are included will address the seven requirements and thirteen considerations. All applications will be reviewed by teams of three using the same rubric and scoring criteria. The rubric will include special consideration to eligible providers that prioritize corrections education services to individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program. As appropriate, PDE will include individuals with knowledge of corrections education on application review teams.

Through the competition, PDE 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 related section of the grant application.

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 separate 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. Grant applications will be submitted through PDE's eGrants system. 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. 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 English language skills, achieve high school equivalency, and transition into employment and/or postsecondary education/training. While all of these measures will be considered as evidence of demonstrated effectiveness, demonstrated effectiveness in improving English language skills of English language learners will be given the greatest weight.

In addition to addressing the seven requirements and thirteen considerations identified in the Act, 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 social service organizations serving the target population, 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.

As part of the application process, applicants for Section 243 IEL/Civics 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.

For the initial competition, PDE anticipates a two-year grant period with yearly grant contracts. Renewal of the grant for the second year will be based on the following criteria: contract compliance, including success in meeting contracted enrollment and providing the contracted services; evidence of sufficient progress in helping students improve English language skills; evidence of continuous program improvement; compliance with fiscal and programmatic policies and guidelines; and the availability of funds determined by the amount of the federal award. Funds awarded under Section 243 of WIOA will be used, at a minimum, to support IEL/Civics programing, including instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation; 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. 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.

Toward the end of the second year of the grant period, PDE will hold another competition for Section 243 funds. The details of that competition will be determined at a later date and will be informed by the results of the programing at the agencies that receive Section 243 funds in the initial competition; PDE will ensure that the competition meets all the requirements of a competition identified in the Act.

PDE has policies and procedures in place to ensure that the same grant announcement for Section 243 funds 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 will conduct the grant competition through its eGrants system. Through this system all eligible providers have access to the same grant application for IEL/Civics funds under Section 243.

PDE has guidelines in place to ensure a fair and open competition. In accordance with these guidelines, grant applications will be evaluated by teams of three individuals. Team members will include staff from the Division of Adult Education, other PDE staff, other qualified commonwealth staff, and, as needed, peer reviewers, subject matter experts, and/or consultants. Division staff will create a scoring rubric specific to the Section 243 IEL/Civics grant application, which will address all items in the grant application including demonstrated effectiveness and the results of the local board reviews with recommendations. Review team members will be trained prior to beginning evaluation and scoring of applications. Once the applications have been reviewed and scored, they will be ranked from highest to lowest scoring. PDE will award grants to the highest scoring applicant and will continue to award funds until the total amount available for grants has been awarded.

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.

The quality of Pennsylvania's state leadership and professional development activities will be assessed using both formal and informal methods of evaluation. These evaluations will be completed by participants in the activities, by the providers of professional development and technical assistance [referred to collectively as the professional development system (PDS)], and by PDE staff. The goal of evaluation is to support

continuous improvement of these professional development activities and to improve instructional practices.

Local program staff will evaluate and provide feedback through several means. Participants will complete evaluations at the end of every formal professional learning opportunity. The evaluations will follow a standard format that includes questions about participant satisfaction and impact on practice, as well as open-ended questions seeking suggestions for improvement. Local program staff across the state will be invited to participate in the annual formal needs assessment conducted by the PDS. In addition to these formal methods, local program staff will provide feedback via their interactions with the PDS during the consultant meetings held at individual agencies and in the monthly Agency Professional Development Team Webinars. While the main purpose of these meetings is to support the programs' progress in implementing skills and knowledge from professional development and assist agencies in completing improvement at their programs, the discussions also help the PDS and PDE to determine if the professional development and technical assistance activities are helping to improve the use of new knowledge and skills by instructors and are positively impacting student outcomes.

In addition to input from local program staff, PDE has several tools available to directly evaluate the work of the projects funded to provide professional development and technical assistance activities. All projects will submit quarterly and final reports, which will provide evidence of progress toward and achievement of the goals specified in their grant narratives. Evidence will include both quantitative and qualitative data. Additionally, each project will write a program improvement/professional development plan similar to that required of local programs. In the first grant year, each project will identify professional development activities for project staff that support the goals and objectives of the project. In subsequent grant years, each project will examine its prior year quarterly and final reports and submit an improvement plan that includes areas of focus and a description of the professional development in which project staff will participate to meet their program improvement goals. At the end of each year, the projects will submit to PDE an evaluation with appropriate documentation of whether they met their goals for the year. PDE staff will also use its weekly meetings with the leaders of each funded project to monitor and evaluate work.

From PYs 2012-13 through 2014-15, an outside consultant conducted a formal external evaluation of the PDS. The evaluation was framed using Thomas Guskey's "Five Levels of Professional Development Evaluation," and each year's findings and recommendations were used to inform the next year's PDS activities. To build on that evaluation, PDE is examining three options. The first is an internal evaluation using a logic model approach. In PY 2016-17, PDE and PDS staff will develop a logic model to evaluate leadership project effectiveness and pilot it with one project. If it is useful, PDE will expand its use to all PDS projects in PY 2017-18. The second option is a project focused on data collection and evaluation of the effectiveness of professional learning opportunities. This work would be conducted by an entity that had no role in the provision of professional development and technical assistance to the field other than assistance with data collection. The third option is another traditional external evaluation.

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, read by using text to speech technologies, or other accessible formats as needed to ensure effective communication as required under the Americans with Disabilities Act. 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 though 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;

- Pennsylvania's Initiative on Assistive Technology (PIAT), a program of the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University, is Pennsylvania's statewide program under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act. Activities that are provided by PIAT are: device demonstrations; device lending; device reuse; public awareness activities; and trainings to raise awareness and knowledge of AT topics. Any of these activities are available to OVR staff and clients, mostly at no charge.
- 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.

<u>Orientation and Mobility Specialists and Vision Rehabilitation Therapists</u>
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 Vison 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.

OVR ensures that personnel have a 21st–century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities through staff training, professional development and continuing education on labor market information and trends, as well as, training on assessment, rehabilitation technology, Social Security work incentive programs, including programs under the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999, training to facilitate informed choice under this program, and training to improve provision of services to culturally diverse populations. Training jointly

developed between OVR and the PA Department of Labor & Industry's Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA) equip field staff with the knowledge to blend existing information about labor market trends with customer abilities, limitations and interests to develop appropriate job goals, with the hope of increasing successful long–term placements.

OVR continues its annual Business Services Outreach training to enhance professional growth and skills of staff on emerging practices relevant to job readiness/soft skill competencies, job search skills, transferrable skills, when to disclose a disability to an employer, how to address criminal history, how to request an accommodation, tax credits, and on–the–job training (OJT), and resources that focus on developing effective relationships with employers in the public and private sectors. To train and retain qualified personnel OVR will continue to provide training by university faculty, experts in the field of rehabilitation, and statewide and nationally known speakers on understanding the medical and psychosocial aspects of various disabilities; case management, best practices on developing effective relationship with employers, and understanding the effective utilization of rehabilitation technology.

To increase understanding of the needs of 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. Additionally, OVR has expanded its rehabilitation team in district offices to include Business Services Representatives (BSRs) and Early Reach Coordinators (ERCs). OVR's Early Reach Initiative was started in response to a need in the BVRS district offices to increase capacity to prepare students and youth with disabilities, beginning at age 14, for vocational planning and future OVR services. Early Reach is an outreach initiative intended to promote successful outcomes for students and youth with disabilities by increasing awareness of OVR services and the benefits of early career planning. More recently BSRs were established to represent OVR and our customer talent during outreach to Employers and Businesses throughout the geographic area of their assignments to develop job opportunities and foster good working relationships with the business community.

Staff Development. Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section101 (a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

- *(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.

<u>Special Populations</u>
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;

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.

The CSNA identified specific needs for individuals with most significant disabilities as well as barriers to employment such as transportation, significance of disability, and individuals with disabilities in rural areas. Transportation assistance would help them secure employment as many cited transportation as the single greatest barrier to employment. The CSNA found that individuals with the most significant disabilities may have difficulties receiving services due to the presence of multiple disabilities. OVR will identify strategies and best practices to increase targeted outreach to individuals to individuals in rural settings and will advocate for increased transportation options for individuals with disabilities.

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;

The most recent CSNA results indicate the state's Spanish speaker populations is growing and counselors describe increasing demand for services in Spanish. Latinos with disabilities in PA is considered an unserved and underserved population that needs greater focus and outreach. OVR plans to focus on the Latino population's rehabilitation needs by identify and expanding best practices and services. For example, Goodwill Keystone Area requests to enter into a Letter of Understanding (LOU) with the Reading District Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) to provide comprehensive basic work skills development and job placement, retention, and advancement services to Latinos with disabilities in Berks County through its Specialized Training and Employment Program (aka, Latino STEP). Latino STEP was piloted in Berks County during October 2014 through September 2015 using OVR Innovation and Expansion project funds. In addition, OVR will continue to strive for and exhibit further cultural competency and best practices in terms of serving minority populations. Staff training and professional development on cultural competency will continue to be a focus.

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

Individuals served by other components of the statewide workforce investment system, which includes PA CareerLink, PA Department of Human Services, PA Department of Education, and other partnering agencies such as Aging, Corrections, and Veterans Affairs, expressed frustration in the lack of cooperation across multiple systems. Individuals cited lack of communication across departments and funding disincentives. 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. Recommendations to help address these needs included; increased focus on communication, identifying strategies and best practices that will ensure improved collaboration and service delivery among workforce partners, and cross agency training to help staff in each program area understand the services available and how to best leverage resources.

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. This is another example of collaboration and the benefits of workforce partners working together to address the needs of all job seekers, including individuals with disabilities.

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

The results of the current CSNA identified chronic obstacles cited by CRPs that included lack of funding, understaffing and the need for minimum standards credentials for job coaches. Steps OVR will take in the coming months and years to address these needs will be to improve communication among partners, to encourage more CRPs to hire and train Community Work Incentive Counselors (CWICS) and to identify specific training required of CRP to build capacity of employment specialists to be successful in obtaining and maintain employment for people with disabilities. Additionally, OVR will identify strategies and best practices to assist CRPs to transition from sheltered and/or segregated employment programs to competitive integrated employment services.

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 2016-2018

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 for FFY 2014-2016 was completed January 2015. For the next 3 year CSNA cycle OVR has chosen to implement a plan that will take a two tiered approach. Targeted actives will be addressed through year one of the current CSNA cycle are described in detail below. After the first year a new contracting process will be implemented to address the identified activities of the remaining two years of the CSNA 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 funds: 593
    - Title VI, Part B funds to be allocated: $919,851

- In FFY 2015 the number of SE customers served by OVR with title VI funds:
    - Total Number Served - Title VI Funds: 353
    - Amount Spent - Title VI Funds $966,675.17
    - Total Number Served under Age 25 - Title VI Funds: 336
    - Amount Spent - Title VI Funds (under 25) $903,189.79

- Additional SE customers served by OVR with Title I funds:
    - Total Number Served - Title I Funds: 2,798
    - Amount Spent - Title I Funds: $6,473,740.30
    - Total Number Served under Age 25 - Title I Funds: 760
    - Amount Spent - Title I Funds (under 25): $1,815,767.32

- 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.

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.

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. Therefore, OVR has elected not to serve eligible individuals outside the current order of selection who require VR services or equipment to maintain employment unless OVR amends its State plan prior to the 2–year modification.

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 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 SE services after Title VI 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. OVR has a number of changes planned for individuals receiving SE services, such as expanding Discovery and Customized Employment pilots. The following improvements listed are intended to be considered OVR goals for title VI funds. For example, OVR is revising its SE policy that 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.

Title I Funds will be used to provide Supported Employment services after Title VI Funds have been exhausted. Another goal for Title VI funds includes 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 service coordination with partner 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.
- Enhance collaboration and partnership with the PA Business Leadership Network (PA BLN), Chambers, SHRM, and other business organizations to make connections with business leaders to promote hiring practices that enable individuals with disabilities to enter and succeed in the workplace.
- 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.

Pennsylvania's Assistive Technology Lending Library provides the opportunity for any Pennsylvanian to borrow and assess the usefulness of an AT device prior to purchase. Devices may also be borrowed as a temporary accommodation (for employment, post-secondary education, or similar purposes). The centralized inventory for this program is located on the HGAC campus; devices are shipped to/from borrowers at no cost from this location. The regional subcontractors of PIAT, the state's AT Act program, facilitate the selection, borrowing, and use of these devices across the state.

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 Pennsylvania's Initiative on Assistive Technology (PIAT) at the Institute on Disabilities 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 ADAAA 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))

The Pennsylvania Department of Education scheduled three hearings within the state. The notice of Perkins IV public hearings were sent to all stakeholders through various media. Stakeholders received a notice of the hearings by e–mail. The state has a distribution list that reaches every local education agency and is the predominate means for making announcements statewide (PennLink). An announcement was prepared and distributed through the Pennlink system to all school districts and career and technical centers. Additionally, the hearing notice was sent to all Perkins recipients. In order to notify individuals not associated with school entities, the announcement was published in the PA Bulletin. In addition, draft documents of the five year plan and guidelines were posted on the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Bureau of Career and Technical Education's Perkins webpage for review prior to public hearings scheduled for December 2007.

The announcement follows:

Perkins IV Five Year State Plan Hearing Announcement

Pursuant to Section 122 (a) (3) of the "Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006", public hearings will be conducted in the following locations to allow for stakeholder groups as defined in Section 122 (b) (1) of the Act to present their views and make recommendations regarding the Perkins IV Five Year State Plan.

To view documents, please visit our website at www.education.pa.gov

Tuesday, December 4, 2007 Community College of Allegheny County, Boyce Campus 595 Beatty Road Monroeville, PA 15146–1348 Auditorium 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm Wednesday, December 5, 2007 Central PA Institute of Science and Technology 540 North Harrison Road Pleasant Gap, PA 16823–8644 Lab 2 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Thursday, December 6, 2007 Lehigh Career and Technical Institute 4500 Education Park Drive Schnecksville, PA 18078–2501 JOC Boardroom 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

If you wish to provide public comment, please contact Ellie Bicanich at eeb6@psu.edu no later than December 1, 2007 to schedule a 15–minute time slot during one of the three regionally based public hearing sites listed above. Testimony will be restricted to issues that address CTE policy and/or programs, and not to air personal complaints. Participants are asked to summarize testimony at the hearings and submit written copies of testimony to the panel.

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))

In compliance with Section 122 (a) (3) of the "Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006", public hearings were scheduled in December 2007 at three regional locations to allow for stakeholder groups as defined in Section 122 (b) (1) of the Act to present their views and make recommendations regarding the Perkins IV Five Year State Plan. Three public hearings were scheduled for December 4–5, 2007 and were held regionally across Pennsylvania. The Central Region hearing was cancelled due to lack of participation. In addition to the hearings, the state plan was made available to the public through the Pennsylvania Department of Education website and was distributed to directors of career and technical education and others requesting copies through e–mail correspondence.

Hearing panel members were moderated by administration of Workforce Investment Boards and members included individuals from business and industry. Six individuals provided public comment. The Perkins IV State Plan reflects responses to the comments.

Comments included:

- Ensuring sending schools and career and technical centers strengthen their relationships to implement comprehensive high school reform.
- Ensuring secondary students are prepared academically for postsecondary education
- Developing a statewide articulation agreement that will have a positive impact on student participation in postsecondary career and technical education programs.
- Developing or identifying reliable methods of technical skill attainment and occupational competency testing for postsecondary programs.
- Ensuring programs of study are connected to the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) initiative.

One comment addressed Pennsylvania Department of Education regulation Chapter 339, which has no impact on the Perkins IV State Plan.

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)

The five year Perkins IV State Plan was developed in consultation with vested stakeholders. A list of State Plan Committee members is found on pages 87–88. The State Plan Committee met monthly from September through October. The time period between meetings involved continued consultation with committee members and other interested stakeholders.

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))

All state planning documents were distributed as e–mail attachments and hard copy to state planning team committee members. All team members received copies of the transition state plan and state planning guide prior to the initial meeting conducted in July to facilitate communication between the members and Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). During the meetings state plan committee members provided their input into the policies and procedures included in the state plan. They also drafted and approved final language.

Draft copies of the plan were made available throughout the planning process to stakeholders not on the planning committee. Their input was presented to the state plan committee members and discussion was held. In addition, committee members discussed the plan with other interested stakeholders in between meetings. E–mail exchanges took place among state plan committee members. Throughout this process consensus was reached in all areas of the plan. The State Board of Vocational Education was also actively involved in providing input. During each Standing Committee meeting and SBVE meeting, updates were provided to the Board members and their input and questions were addressed and changes made to the plan.

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))

There is one state agency responsible for secondary and postsecondary education. The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) is responsible for secondary career and technical education (CTE), adult CTE, postsecondary CTE and tech prep education. CTE is included in two offices within the PDE. Both offices, Elementary and Secondary Education and Postsecondary and Higher Education, were active members of the state planning committee. The state plan committee agreed on the amount and uses of funds.

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;*

A one–year Transition Plan was submitted and approved for 2007–2008. This plan is a five–year plan and covers the years of operation July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2013.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) will ensure during the implementation of the five–year plan all school entities receiving funds through Perkins IV will have, at minimum, at least one "Program of Study." The local plan guidelines will include the requirement of Perkins IV legislation and the contract approval process will require evidence of, at minimum, one "Program of Study."

The existing CTE program approval system requires secondary entities to submit secondary and postsecondary scope and sequence. Articulated credits are submitted as part of the approval process. The current program approval system does request that secondary schools evidence in the program approval request the secondary and postsecondary education elements.

In consultation with PDE's state level development committee, both secondary and postsecondary entities are required to identify their respective partners and to ensure the components at the secondary and postsecondary levels are aligned. PDE has existing statewide committees developed during the "transition year" having the following required representations: secondary academic and technical instructors, postsecondary academic and technical faculty, counselors and college admissions, business and industry, trade associations and professional associations.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education will develop and make available a scope and sequence by Pennsylvania's Targeted Industry Cluster. http://www.paworkstats.pa.gov. Each recommended scope and sequence will evidence secondary planned academic and technical courses aligned to the postsecondary general education requirements, with the technical courses articulated according to the state authorized articulation agreement. The purpose of all secondary programs, as noted in Pennsylvania's legislated Chapter 4 regulations, is to establish rigorous academic standards and assessment to facilitate the improvement of student achievement…(Levin, 2003, p. 1221). Research has evidenced that Pennsylvania's academic standards will lead to college preparedness. PDE monitors all approved career and technical education programs currently and will continue to monitor them during the Perkins IV authorization to insure the integration of academic standards across CTE content area and the academic course sequencing. The "Programs of Study" (POS) ensure the secondary planned academic and technical courses are aligned to the postsecondary general education and technical courses.

Tech Prep “Programs of Study” historically have been designed to provide students with a non-duplicative sequence of courses consisting of at least two years of secondary education and two years of postsecondary education. This “Program of Study” was developed between participants in the Tech Prep consortium and operates under an articulation agreement. Existing Tech Prep programs will be revisited to ensure the secondary planned academic and technical courses are aligned to the postsecondary general education and technical courses.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education in cooperation with Perkins recipients and stakeholders will coordinate the development of “Programs of Study” that meet Perkins IV requirements. On an ongoing basis, PDE will develop, evaluate and update “Programs of Study” aligned with state designated “High Priority” occupations during the five year authorization period

State Board of Education regulations require all school districts and career and technical centers in the design of their educational programs to provide for the attainment of the academic standards. Attainment of the academic standards requires students to demonstrate the acquisition and application of knowledge. School districts and CTCs shall prepare students to attain academic standards in 12 content areas, which include mathematics, reading, writing, speaking and listening as well as career education and work. School districts and CTCs develop a local assessment plan that includes a description of how the academic standards will be measured and how information from the assessments is used to assist students having difficulty meeting the academic standards. (Levin, 2003, p. 1224)

Pennsylvania has in place a statewide assessment for Math, Science, Reading and Writing. The State assessment system was designed to determine the degree to which school programs enable students to attain proficiency of academic standards and provide results to school districts and CTCs. (Levin, 2003, p. 1232) The State assessments shall be administered annually and levels of proficiency shall be advanced, proficient, basic and below basic (p. 1233).

The State Board of Education recently adopted Academic Standards, Career Education and Work (CEW). The CEW standards will assist all students, K–12, to assess their educational opportunities and academic achievement in light of their chosen career path(s). Local plans will evidence how schools are integrating the standards and assisting students with career pathways through the development of individualized career plans and career portfolios.

Postsecondary entities are involved as the “Programs of Study” are developed. Their role is to serve on the statewide committees that identify the technical standards that cover secondary to postsecondary completion. This involvement assures that the technical content is non-duplicative. They also review the State Board of Education academic standards and ensure there is alignment of secondary academic standards to the postsecondary general education courses. The academic standards and general education courses are aligned to the technical content and occupations related to each “Program of Study.”

State legislation provides state funds to support dual enrollment activities. Funds are awarded competitively and support academic dual enrollment activities. Dual enrollment activities are for high school students to take college–level, credit–bearing courses at local community colleges and four–year colleges and universities. These courses will also count towards high school graduation requirements. Pennsylvania’s dual enrollment program also emphasizes early college, middle college and gateway to college programs. State funds are targeted to at–risk students and academically challenged school districts. Career and technical schools are eligible to apply for these state funds.

Pennsylvania Department of Education standards for career and technical education also assure that students enrolled in secondary career and technical education will have the occasion to participate in opportunities where college credit is awarded for postsecondary coursework during high school.

The State program approval system for career and technical education programs ensures all programs are aligned with industry standards where applicable. All "Programs of Study" must align with industry credentials or certificates at the secondary level. This is evidenced upon the State's approval of the program. As the "Programs of Study" are implemented, the postsecondary recipients will also align with industry credentials where appropriate and applicable.

The "Program of Study" is itself aligned to industry credentials. The statewide committee comprised of business, industry and trade associations, will identify appropriate and related industry credentials and certifications. The statewide committee will also identify the appropriate opportunity for a student enrolled in a "Program of Study" to obtain the credential or certificate.

In addition, An Industry Certification Resource Guide was developed by the State utilizing the state identified statewide and regional high demand/skill wage occupations, as well as the PDE approved lists of industry–recognized certifications for Career and Technical Education programs currently used by the CTCs within the Commonwealth. This resource guide will also be used by the postsecondary entities in identifying program areas that align to this need of industry recognized credentials and certifications.

- *How the State, in consultation with eligible recipients, will develop and implement the career and technical programs of study described in (a) above;*

PDE has developed statewide committees to develop and implement "Programs of Study" defined by classification of instruction (CIP) and the Department of Labor's designated "High Priority" occupations derived from Pennsylvania's Targeted Industry clusters. The committees have the following required representations: secondary academic and technical instructors, postsecondary academic and technical faculty, counselors and college admissions, business and industry, trade associations and professional associations.

During the transition year, the PDE identified a statewide ad hoc committee to discuss a template for the "Programs of Study." The committee developed a "Program of Study" template that all funded recipients must follow during the five year authorization period to develop at least one "Program of Study".

The "Programs of Study" template requires that the programs be based on national databases such as O*Net, VTECs, MAVCC and state and national certifications, industry skill standards and licensing boards, as applicable. The "Programs of Study" serve as the basis for alignment to the classification of instructional program (CIP) titles and identifies related occupational end of program assessments, industry certifications and specific student outcomes at secondary and postsecondary levels.

- *How the State will support eligible recipients in developing and implementing articulation agreements between secondary education and postsecondary education institutions;*

The Office of Elementary and Secondary Education continues to work with the Office of Postsecondary and Higher Education to evaluate the implementation of the (POS) statewide articulation agreement. The template for the statewide articulation agreement was developed during Perkins III. As each "Program of

Study" is developed, the statewide committee develops and finalizes the statewide articulation agreement that is specific to the "Program of Study."

Because the "Program of Study" covers secondary and postsecondary levels, the statewide committee has identified the appropriate alignment of the related industry recognized credentials and certifications. If the student earns a credential or certification at the secondary level, the articulation agreement will recognize student achievement of the credential through articulated credit. The agreement also recognizes student achievement of proficiency on the state academic assessment.

As the PDE approved and supported statewide committees meet to identify the secondary and postsecondary academic and technical standards, the committees will also identify the courses that will articulate as transferred credit. The support that PDE provides to the eligible recipients in developing and implementing the articulations agreements will be phased in during "Program of Study" development. . The PDE will work with the Tech Prep consortia annually to ensure the implementation of the "Programs of Study" in their assigned regions is achieved. This support includes meeting with the Tech Prep consortia members, providing technical assistance and professional development.

- *How programs at the secondary level will make available information about career and technical programs of study offered by eligible recipients;*

Current State Board of Education regulation requires that career and technical education courses shall be developed in a planned instruction format and shall be accessible to all high school students attending those grades in which career and technical education courses are offered. All students and their parents or guardians shall be informed of the students' rights to participate in career and technical education programs and courses. Recipients of federal Perkins funds will provide program information to students at least one year prior to the start of the program year at the career and technical center.

The State Board of Education has also adopted the academic standards of Career Education and Work. The standards address career awareness and preparation, career acquisition, career retention and advancement and entrepreneurship for all students beginning at the elementary grades and continuing through to the twelfth grade. Students are to develop career plans and career portfolios.

Each "Program of Study" follows a scope and sequence that was developed by the statewide committees. The scope and sequence outlines the required academic and technical coursework at the secondary and postsecondary levels. Schools place the scope and sequence in student course selection guides currently. By establishing identified "Programs of Study," the individual student will be able to plan and develop an education plan to incorporate his/her targeted career objective.

The state is supporting various statewide professional development and technical assistance efforts to strengthen career counseling. These efforts include development of an online toolkit to implement PA Career Education and Work Standards and launch PDE's new PA Career Zone. In addition, PDE will provide on–going professional development opportunities focused on "Career Pathways" aligned with "Programs of Study." The toolkits will include each "Program of Study" with associated scope and sequences.

- *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;*

This agency will use funds to support school entity purchase of appropriate technology for the purpose of training students in approved "Programs of Study" that align with State identified "High Priority Occupations."

According to Chapter 4, a school district or CTC administering career and technical education programs will appoint a local advisory committee and occupational advisory committees shall be established for each CTE program offered at the school district or CTC. The Occupational Advisory Committee (OAC) is comprised of business and industry representatives. The purpose of the OAC is to verify that the programs meet industry standards, licensing board criteria where applicable and that students are prepared with occupational related competencies. The OAC also provides advice on the curriculum, "Program of Study," instructional tools and equipment, safety requirements and program evaluation. This ensures that each program has the appropriate technology in place. (Levin, 2003, p. 1231)

PDE reviews each secondary school that has approved career and technical education programs according to state regulation. During the approved program review, PDE staff ensures that the OAC is a viable and active committee and the local advisory committee and school administration address the recommendations of the committee.

Annually, 20 percent of the underperforming Perkins funded recipients will be selected for on–site compliance technical assistance visits based on the following criteria: most recent validated performance data putting the program at risk of non–compliance with Perkins performance measures as identified in the FAUPL; mismanagement of the plan as evidenced by guideline violations in regards to timely submission of the annual application, performance assessment, program data and fiscal reporting. In addition: of the 20% of programs selected annually for on–site reviews, one–third of the lowest performing consortiums will be required to participate in BCTE determined professional development, technical assistance workshops, conferences and related CTE improvement activities. The state Perkins Five Year Plan requires each secondary and postsecondary eligible agency to organize and operate a Participatory Planning Committee (PPC). The purpose of the PPC is to provide advice on the "Programs of Study," instructional tools and equipment, program evaluation, professional development and related required uses of funds as outlined in the Perkins Local Plan guidelines. The committee ensures that technology is addressed in the offering of the postsecondary portion of the "Program of Study."

During technical assistance and monitoring reviews, PDE staff will evaluate the effectiveness of the PPC to ensure committee recommendations are shared with LEA administration.

The State approved program reviews also ensure that the programs are meeting the State's program standards. The program standards are a means of verifying the quality of every career and technical education program provided by the local entities by ensuring that they meet the established standards. It allows the local entities to review their programs and systems and establish goals for improvement to meet the standards. Areas covered by the standards review cover Program Planning, Curriculum Development

and Offering, Guidance Plans and Services, Personnel Qualifications and Learning–Centered Facilities and Equipment and Organizational Performance Results. This process involves faculty, staff, student and the public/community. The process that is used is one of continuous improvement, which means it focuses on educational systems and examines the results. The review ensures each "Program of Study" offers quality programming, including the use of industry–relevant instructional equipment and technology.

- *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;*

Data is collected by school entity at the secondary and postsecondary level. This data is also collected by "Program of Study" (specific CIP). Local entities have access to student level data. Data at the State level will be examined and compared to the negotiated levels between the State and USDOE and the negotiated levels between the local entities and the State. Review of the data will allow the State to assess the extent local plan activities are achieving continuous improvement in academic achievement.

The local plan requires recipients to indicate how they will promote continuous improvement. The review criteria will examine the activities and connection to research based practices. The reviewers will ensure eligible recipients are utilizing research based practices and the entities are meeting or making progress toward established performance levels. Pennsylvania uses the NCLB Adequate Yearly Progress academic targets on Reading, Writing and Math state assessments for the secondary recipients. Postsecondary accountability measures do not include academic proficiency as a measure. The current data collection system is under revision and by the end of Perkins IV, the system will reflect required data elements. The data elements will include data that allows for analysis that evidences continuous improvement at the postsecondary level.

This response is similar to (i), but has an emphasis on technical skill attainment. Data is collected by recipient at the secondary and postsecondary level. This data is also collected by "Program of Study" (specific CIP). Local entities have access to student level data. Data at the State level will be examined and compared to the negotiated levels between the State and USDOE and the negotiated levels between the local entities and the State. Review of the data will allow the State to assess the extent local plan activities are achieving continuous improvement in technical achievement. At the secondary level, Pennsylvania uses PDE approved end of program assessments and establishes cut scores annually for each occupational area assessment.

During the term of Perkins IV, the State will work with postsecondary entities to identify appropriate and available industry recognized assessments that will measure postsecondary technical achievement. The postsecondary technical standards will be identified during the development of the "Programs of Study." The identification of technical standards will serve as the basis of the technical skills to measure.

The statewide business and industry committee will identify the relevant technical standards. The statewide "Program of Study" committees will align the technical standards secondary through postsecondary. The

statewide articulation agreement will ensure technical standards and student proficiency at the secondary level are recognized.

Programs must align with national industry standards where applicable. The statewide committees will identify applicable industry standards and credentialing opportunities and align the technical standards to the industry standards. The State will review the "Programs of Study" to ensure the technical coursework is aligned with the recognized industry standards or credentialing opportunities and has been validated by a viable statewide occupational advisory committee.

Data associated with the performance indicator, 2S1 Technical Skill Attainment, is collected annualy. The State has collected data related to this indicator as part of Perkins III. Currently, PDE examines the number of career and technical education concentrators who successfully achieve competency levels at or above the competent level on PDE approved job ready assessments and who complete the PDE approved occupational tests in the reporting year.

New to the data collection is 1P1 Technical Skill Attainment. The current data collection system needs to change in order to collect relevant data. Until the change occurs, the State will use grade point average. Once the data collection system changes and assessments designed, the State will be able to measure continuous improvement at the postsecondary level.

The local plan submission will be reviewed to ensure the eligible recipients are addressing "High Skill/Wage/Demand/Priority Occupations." The State has conducted analysis of state economic and labor market data and identified occupations that are considered "High Priority" established by regional Workforce Investment Boards (WIB's). High priority means the occupation will lead to economic growth for the state and nation and will provide opportunity for employment at a life sustaining wage.

Pennsylvania Departments of Labor and Industry and Education have worked together to identify a valid and reliable CIP/SOC crosswalk. All recipients are to align the "Programs of Study" with the "High Priority Occupations" identified by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. The State will only approve requests for new "Programs of Study" as long as the programs are aligned with State identified "High Priority Occupations" or meet the State criteria for "High Priority Occupations."

Community colleges apply for the Economic Development Stipend. This state supported reimbursement program supports only those programs aligned to "High Priority Occupations" including emerging occupational opportunities.

In some cases, statistical analysis and projections can miss differences and dynamics in regional and local labor markets. In order to ensure that the "High Priority Occupations" list has appropriate input from regional businesses, the following mechanism was put in place in order to obtain local input.

It is important for all career and technical education institutions to be aware of this process and get involved as is appropriate, if a local emerging occupation is not reflected in the regional "High Priority Occupations" list. Information on the 'appeal process' is available at www.paworkforce.state.pa.us. Local Workforce

Investment Board (LWIB) Directors are key contact for the petition process and should be contacted to initiate such a process.

- *How programs at the secondary level will prepare career and technical education students, including special populations, to graduate from secondary school with a diploma;*

With the adoption of the State Board of Education academic standards of Career Education and Work, all students K–12 are to have a career plan. The State has developed online toolkit and professional development opportunities to assist local entities in implementing the standards. The local entities are to teach, challenge and support every student to realize his or her maximum potential and to acquire the knowledge and skills needed for career awareness and preparation, career acquisition, career retention and advancement and entrepreneurship.

As the students move through the educational system, they are to develop career plans. The "Program of Study" ensures that all career and technical education students will follow a rigorous academic sequence of courses while gaining in–depth technical training that prepares them for profitable employment or college as required by state school code regulation. The "Program of Study" includes aligned secondary and postsecondary coursework. This alignment ensures students will graduate prepared to enter the workforce or to continue into the postsecondary component of the "Program of Study."

According to Chapter 4, the record of a student enrolled in a CTE program shall include the student's educational and occupational objectives and the results of the assessment of student competencies. Chapter 4 also notes that CTE courses shall include content based upon occupational analysis, clearly stated performance objectives deemed critical to successful employment and assessment of student competencies based upon performance standards. (Levin, 2003, p. 1231)

The State provides financial resources and technical assistance to support schools in meeting the needs of special populations' students. In addition, the State supported and approved teacher education programs provide instruction in addressing the needs of special populations in the pre–service and in–service programs.

- *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;*

The local plan guidelines include the requirements of the "Program of Study," statewide articulation agreement, Pennsylvania academic standards, technical skill credentialing and "High Priority Occupations." Assurance will be given by the recipients that the "Programs of Study" also meet State Board of Education regulations and Department of Education career and technical education standards. Both the regulations and standards require equal access and support services for students identified in special population categories.

Funds support programs that align with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry identified industry clusters and "High Priority Occupations," or entry into high–skill, high–wage and high–demand occupations. Other criteria identified in funding guidelines include: (a) improving career and technical

education students' occupational and academic knowledge and skills required to perform successfully in high–priority, high–demand, high–wage, high–skill positions; (b) gaining industry credentials and/or eligibility to sit for credentialing exams, which provide skills portability and career mobility by enhancing lateral and upward career moves and (c) developing partnerships and linkages with business, industry, labor and community groups.

In order for local entities to receive approved career and technical education program status, the entity must evidence a labor market analysis and use of an occupational analysis and alignment with "High Priority Occupations" and postsecondary opportunities. The "Program of Study" must address the state recommended academic standards. This will ensure all students, including special populations enrolled in "Programs of Study," are prepared for "High Priority Occupations" or emerging occupations. The data is submitted to the State for review. The entities not meeting the requirements will not receive approved program status.

State Board of Education and Pennsylvania Department of Education regulations require all "Programs of Study" to address Pennsylvania academic standards and assess student achievement in the areas of academic and technical competence. Through on–site reviews, compliance monitoring and review of requests for program approval status; the State will ensure students, including special populations, will be prepared academically and technically for profitable employment and postsecondary education. The State recommends academic coursework that is focused on career and postsecondary preparation and has been identified by research as appropriate for postsecondary enrollment and employment. The State reviews the basis for program development and determines if the Occupational Advisory Committee has been active in the occupational analysis, curriculum revision and instructional tools/equipment requirements. The review also ensures that recipients are providing appropriate support services, counseling services and equal access. Best practices in this area have been identified.

- *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;*

Eighty–five percent of the Perkins funds are allocated to local education agencies, both secondary and postsecondary, to improve, expand or modify existing programs or implement new programs where existing programs do not meet educational and training needs. Of the 85 percent local allocation amount, 70 percent of the funds are allocated to secondary entities.

Eligible secondary entities applying for Perkins IV funds will submit a five year local plan that covers July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2013, with annual updates to the Budget and Action Plans (see Perkins Local Plan Guidelines). Each local entity shall include and describe in their plan the following:

1. How the career and technical education programs will be carried out with Perkins IV funds;

2. How the career and technical education activities will be carried out with respect to meeting State and local adjusted levels of performance;

3. How the eligible recipient will (a) offer the appropriate courses of not less than one of the career and technical "Programs of Study," (b) improve the academic and technical skills of students participating in career and technical education programs by strengthening the academic and career and technical education components of such programs through the integration of coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant career and technical education programs to ensure learning in (i) the core academic subjects and (ii) career and technical education subjects, (c) provide students with strong experience in and understanding of all aspects of an industry, (d) ensure that students who participate in such career and technical education programs are taught the same coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards as are taught to all other students and (e) encourage career and technical education students at the secondary level to enroll in rigorous and challenging courses in core academic subjects;

4. How comprehensive professional development for career and technical education, academic, guidance and administrative personnel will be provided that promotes the integration of coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant career and technical education;

5. How parents, students, academic and career and technical education teachers, faculty, administrators, career guidance and academic counselors, representatives of tech prep consortia, representatives of the entities participating in activities described in Section 117 of Public Law 105–220 (if applicable), representatives of business and industry, labor organizations, representatives of special populations and other interested individuals are involved in the development, implementation and evaluation of career and technical education programs assisted under this title, and how such individuals and entities are effectively informed about, and assisted in, understanding the requirements of this title, including career and technical "Programs of Study";

6. Provide assurances that the eligible recipient will provide a career and technical education program that is of such size, scope and quality to bring about improvement in the quality of career and technical education programs;

7. The process that will be used to evaluate and continuously improve the performance of the eligible recipient;

8. How the eligible recipient will (a) review career and technical education programs and identify and adopt strategies to overcome barriers that result in lowering rates of access to or lowering success in the programs for special populations; (b) provide programs that are designed to enable the special populations to meet the local adjusted levels of performance and (c) provide activities to prepare special populations, including single parents and displaced homemakers, for high–skill, high–wage or high–demand occupations that will lead to self–sufficiency;

9. How individuals who are members of special populations will not be discriminated against on the basis of their status as members of special populations;

10. How funds will be used to promote preparation for nontraditional fields;

11. How career guidance and academic counseling will be provided to career and technical education students, including linkages to future education and training opportunities and

12. Efforts 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. (Perkins IV, S. 250–50 to S. 250–52)

Comprehensive professional development, which includes initial teacher preparation for career and technical, academic, guidance and administrative personnel, will be provided through planned scheduled seminars, workshops, conferences and courses in accordance with the objectives.

The Pennsylvania State Department of Education's Bureau of Career and Technical Education has developed and implemented a comprehensive professional personnel development program by working with universities to establish Professional Personnel Development Centers. The Centers were established and approved by the Pennsylvania State Board of Education on July 1, 1978. The Centers are located at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, The Pennsylvania State University and Temple University. The mission of each Center is to provide comprehensive regional professional personnel development for career and technical educators and administrators that are specifically designed to prepare, update and upgrade career and technical teachers, administrators and other career and technical education support personnel. The Centers provide a wide range of professional personnel development activities for career and technical educators.

During 2006–2007, the Centers provided pre–service and in–service professional development for approximately 12,000 prospective and current career and technical educators. The following is a partial listing of the required use of funds that are also major functions of the Centers:

1. Provide Center management for career and technical professional personnel development.

2. Develop and maintain a comprehensive Occupational Competency Assessment (OCA) program.

3. Provide outreach services (Vocational Intern/Instructional Certification Program) for personnel off–campus through traditional undergraduate courses.

4. Provide outreach services (Vocational Intern/Instructor/Coordinator and Cooperative Education Certification Programs for personnel off–campus through Field–Based Competency–Based Teacher Education (FB–CBTE).

5. Provide outreach services (Vocational Administrative, Supervisory and Teacher Leadership) for personnel off–campus through traditional graduate courses and Field–Based Competency–Based Leadership Training (FB–CBLT).

6. Provide continuing technical and professional development, including workshops, seminars and academies for all personnel involved in vocational programming.

7. Provide pre–induction, professional education for clients recruited from business, industry and the health occupations with little or no pedagogical education or experience.

8. Provide an occupational experience program.

9. Provide placement services for career and technical education professional personnel.

10. Provide a recruitment system for career and technical education teachers and leadership personnel.

11. Assist schools with the selection, development, dissemination and implementation of "Programs of Study" that include rigorous academics and industry based career and technical content. The "Programs of Study" provide a non-duplicative sequence of courses that align secondary and postsecondary instructional programs.

12. Provide assistance for career and technical educators who serve special populations as defined in Perkins IV.

The Professional Personnel Development Centers guidelines are provided in Attachment 2.

Eighty–five percent of the Perkins funds are allocated to local education agencies both secondary and postsecondary to improve, expand or modify existing programs or implement new programs where existing programs do not meet educational and training needs. Of the 85 percent local allocation amount, 30 percent of the funds are allocated to postsecondary entities.

Eligible postsecondary entities applying for Perkins IV funds will submit a local plan that covers July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2013 following Perkins Local Plan Guidelines. Each local entity shall include in their local plan the following:

1. How the career and technical education programs will be carried out with Perkins IV funds;

2. How the career and technical education activities will be carried out with respect to meeting State and local adjusted levels of performance;

3. How the eligible recipient will (a) offer the appropriate courses of not less than one of the career and technical "Programs of Study," (b) improve the academic and technical skills of students participating in career and technical education programs by strengthening the academic and career and technical education components of such programs through the integration of coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant career and technical education programs to ensure learning in (i) the core academic subjects and (ii) career and technical education subjects, (c) provide students with strong experience in and understanding of all aspects of an industry, (d) ensure that students who participate in such career and technical education programs are taught to the same coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards as are taught to all other students and (e) encourage career and technical education students at the secondary level to enroll in rigorous and challenging courses in core academic subjects;

4. How comprehensive professional development for career and technical education, academic, guidance and administrative personnel will be provided that promotes the integration of coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant career and technical education;

5. How parents, students, academic and career and technical education teachers, faculty, administrators, career guidance and academic counselors, representatives of tech prep consortia, representatives of the entities participating in activities described in Section 117 of Public Law 105–220 (if applicable), representatives of business and industry, labor organizations, representatives of special populations and other interested individuals are involved in the development, implementation and evaluation of career and

technical education programs assisted under this title, and how such individuals and entities are effectively informed about, and assisted in understanding the requirements of this title, including career and technical "Programs of Study";

6. Provide assurances that the eligible recipient will provide a career and technical education program that is of such size, scope and quality to bring about improvement in the quality of career and technical education programs;

7. The process that will be used to evaluate and continuously improve the performance of the eligible recipient;

8. How the eligible recipient will (a) review career and technical education programs and identify and adopt strategies to overcome barriers that result in lowering rates of access to, or lowering success in, the programs for special populations; (b) provide programs that are designed to enable the special populations to meet the local adjusted levels of performance and (c) provide activities to prepare special populations, including single parents and displaced homemakers, for high–skill, high–wage or high–demand occupations that will lead to self–sufficiency;

9. How individuals who are members of special populations will not be discriminated against on the basis of their status as members of special populations;

10. How funds will be used to promote preparation for nontraditional fields;

11. How career guidance and academic counseling will be provided to career and technical education students, including linkages to future education and training opportunities and

12. Efforts 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. (Perkins IV, S. 250–50 to S. 250–52)

The State has followed a policy that the best means of preparing secondary career and technical education completers for opportunities in postsecondary education and/or entry into high–priority, high–skill, high–wage, high–demand occupations is to have the students complete a rigorous planned sequence of academic and technical courses as well as to integrate the academic standards into the technical courses. Secondary program approval criteria include a description of both the academic and technical course sequence at the secondary and postsecondary levels. The approval system also requires submission of articulated courses.

Local plan guidelines require assurances that career and technical education programs at the secondary and postsecondary level are aligned with "High Priority Occupations." "High Priority Occupations" are identified by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry and are updated on an annual basis. The program approval process developed by the State ensures that all "Programs of Study" are aligned with "High Priority Occupations." The program approval process includes an on–site review process to ensure the entity conducts labor market and occupational analysis, and aligns with "High Priority Occupations" and postsecondary opportunities.

The State also requires postsecondary entities offering career and technical education programs to align with "High Priority Occupations." The State reimbursement for such programs is provided to only programs that prepare graduates for "High Priority Occupations."

- *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;*

The State sponsors an annual conference that focuses on evidenced–based best practices. One strand at the annual conference is focused on Tech Prep strategies. The State also works with two associations (Pennsylvania Association of Career and Technical Educators, Pennsylvania Association of Career and Technical Administrators) to cosponsor annual conferences, symposiums and regional workshops. In addition, through on–site reviews, technical assistance visits, data review and program approvals, the State identifies the evidenced–based best practices eligible recipients.

To facilitate and communicate evidenced–based best practices, the State will also identify school districts, career and technical education centers and postsecondary institutions that are having difficulties in meeting the Perkins IV indicators. The State will provide resources that will enable the educational entities to improve program quality and student achievement.

Technical assistance to the school districts, career and technical centers and postsecondary institutions includes:

- Assistance in developing a program improvement plan that specifically identifies the strategies, techniques and methods to improve program quality and student achievement.
- Assistance in identifying and realigning resources to improve program quality and student achievement.
- Assistance in monitoring program quality and progress.

The State staff will analyze each entity's performance data. Those school districts, career and technical centers and postsecondary institutions with "Programs of Study" that are not meeting the standards will be required to develop a program improvement plan that specifically addresses program improvement and student achievement. Once the State receives the plan, State teams will work with the entity by providing appropriate resources. Dissemination of evidenced–based best practices will also occur through the State's website.

- *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*

The State is working with the Tech Prep consortia to identify statewide committees. The statewide committees are comprised of business and industry related to a given "Program of Study." There are also statewide committees that include representatives from secondary and postsecondary entities. This includes academic and technical instructors and counselors/college admissions. The "Programs of Study" that are developed align secondary and postsecondary academic and technical courses. This alignment

lends to articulated credit. The statewide committees will develop an articulation agreement that identifies the areas that can be articulated.

The developed "Program of Study" identifies academic and technical standards relevant for given careers. Once the standards are identified, they are sequenced in a manner that leads to planned courses and non-duplicative sequencing. Each grade level serves as the foundation for the next grade level.

The State adopted academic standards of Career Education and Work also support the development of "Programs of Study," and individual student career plans. The plans ensure students will graduate from high school prepared to enter into a postsecondary program that meets their career goals.

State Board of Education regulation requires all school districts and career and technical centers to integrate the Pennsylvania academic standards into courses. The State has been providing in–services, conferences, workshops and pre–service sessions on integrating Pennsylvania academic standards into technical content areas. State supported research has also been conducted and results disseminated that evidence integration of academic standards into technical content has led to increased student achievement levels on the state academic assessment.

The State will commit funds through a competitive process to enable the part–time career and technical centers to strengthen the linkage between the part–time career and technical centers and the participating school districts. The efforts will ensure that the participating school districts are meeting the state academic standards and working toward meeting Adequate Yearly Progress for all students, including those students enrolled in the "Programs of Study."

- *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))*

The extent of such integration will be evident during the on–site reviews and compliance monitoring. The local plan reporting documents reflect the extent of compliance with state and federal requirements. In addition, the Consolidated Annual Report (CAR) includes a summary of the extent of integration.

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;*

Professional Development Centers include academic integration strategies into technical program content in their program requirements.

PDE sponsors an annual conference that is focused on academic and technical integration strategies. The conference is attended by academic and technical instructors of high schools and Career and Technical Education Centers. PDE also sponsors faculty from Perkins eligible postsecondary institutions. PDE provides registration, travel and subsistence costs for the postsecondary faculty attending the conference.

To ensure that sustained professional development is provided, PDE has entered into contract with Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) and EdTrust. Both entities are providing yearlong training, including coaching activities, at the participating school districts and career and technical centers. SREB is providing training and coaching that assists the part–time career and technical centers with establishing a culture of high expectations and incorporating literacy strategies into the technical education courses. EdTrust is working with school districts and the participating career and technical centers to transform school counseling.

Throughout the term of Perkins IV, PDE will continue to seek additional sustained professional development opportunities and various means of offering the training, such as utilizing technology (Webinars) and regional opportunities with continued assistance through the Commonwealth's intermediate units.

- *Increases the percentage of teachers that meet teacher certification or licensing requirements;*

In an attempt to increase the percentage of teachers that meet teacher certification or licensing, the Professional Development Centers will work closely with the Career and Technical Education Directors and assist them when possible in identifying highly qualified potential candidates for teaching positions. The school entity administrators and personnel managers will be provided with criteria that will assist them in selecting the best candidate for the available teaching position. Currently recruiting is done by the directors of the career and technical centers. The recruitment is done in collaboration with the Professional Development Centers. Guidelines for certification and recruitment will be readily available. Guidelines for certification are currently found on the PDE Website, www.education.pa.gov

- *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;*

Continuing professional education is required in Pennsylvania. To address ongoing professional development, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania legislated Act 48 for all certified teachers in 1999. Act 48 of 1999 requires all Pennsylvania educators holding Pennsylvania public school certification, including Instructional I and II, Educational Specialist I and II, Administrative, Supervisory, letters of Eligibility and all vocational certificates, to participate in ongoing professional education. Act 48 requires all education professionals to acquire six credits/180 hours/a combination of professional development hours/credits equivalent to 180 hours every five years to maintain an active certificate. Certified educators must enroll in professional development related to pedagogy, content knowledge and skills.

Act 48 applies to all certified education professionals, effective July 1, 2000, or beginning the date a certificate is awarded, whether or not the educator is employed in education.

- *Encourages applied learning that contributes to the academic and career and technical knowledge of the student;*

Career and Technical Education in Pennsylvania at the secondary level is based on contextual (applied) learning. Students enrolled in Career and Technical Education are taking a career major that ranges from 720 to 1,440 hours of instruction in technical education, as well as being exposed to inquiry–based and project based learning.

At the postsecondary level, because the students are enrolled in a career major, the training must include contextual (applied) learning. Students are engaged in demonstrations and project–based instruction.

Both secondary and postsecondary entities work with Occupational Advisory Committees. The Occupational Advisory Committees ensure that learning contributes to the specific occupational needs aligned with the programs. Each program is assigned to a CIP Code.

Pennsylvania also requires all programs to be aligned to industry standards and ensure students are eligible to sit for certification examinations as appropriate and applicable.

- *Provides the knowledge and skills needed to work with and improve instruction for special populations; and*

PDE has the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN). PaTTAN provides educators, parents and agencies involved in special education with a consistent, statewide network of technical assistance opportunities and services. PaTTAN, with offices in King of Prussia, Harrisburg and Pittsburgh, supports the efforts of the Bureau of Special Education (BSE) to build the capacity of Local Education Agencies to provide appropriate services to children/students who receive Special Education or who are at risk. PaTTAN includes training and onsite support for Early Intervention providers and personnel. These services are collaborated between the Bureau of Special Education and the Office of Child Development, Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare.

PaTTAN delivers onsite guided practice workshops, team training, publications, distance learning and videoconferencing. PaTTAN's training centers, meeting facilities and support services make it possible for clients to participate in professional development opportunities locally and statewide. Interactive videoconference meetings and trainings link PaTTAN offices to outside sites. Live satellite broadcasts can also be downlinked to multiple sites across the Commonwealth.

PaTTAN works with school district and intermediate unit personnel in Pennsylvania to help them achieve adequate yearly progress for all students, including students with disabilities, as required by the federal "No Child Left Behind Act."

Teacher certification regulations have changed this past year. All CTE 60 credit teacher certification programs must now embed three credits of English language learner and six credits of special needs instruction.

English as a Second Language (ESL) is an instructional program housed within the Bureau of Teaching and Learning Support at the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). As part of curriculum and instruction, professional development for ESL is provided statewide and planned and developed by the ESL/Bilingual Education Advisors at the PDE. Information regarding state sponsored ESL professional development activities can be found on the Web at www.pde.state.pa.us/esl. PDE requires all CTC staff be prepared to work with ESL students and receive ongoing professional development as part of strategic planning and Chapter 4.26 of the PA School Code/BEC.

PDE/BCTE funds a dedicated staff person to promote nontraditional programs at the statewide level. Programs receiving Perkins allocation must document on their annual local plan application the uses of funds to support nontraditional programming. In addition, each program is required to maintain assurances on nontraditional program improvement activities for PDE onsite review.

- *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))*

Professional development for Career and Technical Education educators and administrators in Pennsylvania is developed and structured through the local education agency's (LEA) Strategic Plan and more specifically within their Professional Education Plan. The Strategic Plan encompasses all aspects of the LEA's vision and direction for a six year period with a Mid–point Review conducted three years into the plan. The Professional Education Plan that is a component of the Strategic Plan is developed by the LEA every three years. All these afore mentioned plans are reviewed and approved by Pennsylvania Department of Education regional directors in accordance with approved state guidelines.

The Professional Education Plan shall include the LEA's proposed plan for providing professional development opportunities for their educators and administrators that include strategies and models to support the integration of the core academic subjects (Math, Science, Language Arts) into each of their career and technical curriculums.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education provides statewide assistance to these LEAs through several initiatives:

The Department also offers online professional development courses at no cost to the educational community that can be utilized by any educator or administrator that holds a Pennsylvania teaching certificate.

Each of the 29 Pennsylvania Intermediate Units provide many professional development courses that are reviewed and approved by the Department's regional directors prior to availability or at time of modification. The intermediate units cooperate with all regional LEAs to develop specific professional development courses that meet the LEA's current needs. Several IUs have developed courses designed to address strategies and models for the integration of core academic subject matter into career and technical curriculum.

The Bureau of Career and Technical Education will also be providing technical assistance to the educational community regarding these efforts.

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;

In recruitment and retention of CTE teachers, faculty and career counselors PDE will focus on the following:

1) Work closely with administrators and assist them in identifying specific criteria that are associated with success in the classroom setting.

2) Assist the administration in providing career ladders for staff.

3) Work with school based staff in creating a pleasant working environment.

4) Continue to provide pre–induction workshops for new teachers, expand the mentoring program and provide additional in–classroom supporters as appropriate.

Pennsylvania conducted a research based study that examined retention of secondary Career and Technical Center teachers. The findings evidenced that in Pennsylvania there is an older entrant, average age 37, who has attained life skills. Due to the Professional Development Center programs and regulated in education programs, the mentoring and financial support of the school entities ensure that 90 percent of the teachers remain in the teaching profession.

PDE encourages local school districts receiving federal funds to actively recruit teachers from 'underrepresented' groups, which mirror student "special populations" as defined in federal legislation, with the intent of aligning teachers who come from diversified backgrounds (economically disadvantaged, single parent, migrant, ESL, non–traditional, etc.) to these student populations. The PA Department of Education strongly believes a diversified teacher workforce will serve as good role models for students who face similar obstacles.

and (B) the transition to teaching from business and industry, including small business. (section 122(c)(3)(A)-(B))

1) Applicants are screened by the administrators and during the screening process, the candidates are given information on the basic requirements and the instructional and certification process. The Professional Development Centers are contacted by the applicant.

2) The Professional Development Centers provide each candidate with specific instruction as to the process the applicant needs to follow in order to become a teacher.

3) The pre–induction workshops for new teachers focus exclusively on the transition from business/industry to an educational setting. All new candidates (small businesses or large businesses) are provided the same type of assistance.

4) The mentoring programs are another specific effort to address retention. Each new teacher is assigned a mentor that is located within the same school. This is a Pennsylvania requirement for all schools to develop an induction plan and ensure a new teacher is working with a mentor within the district.

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 "Programs of Study" shall be in compliance with five template elements, which includes as one of the activities the opportunity for secondary education students to earn postsecondary education credits through dual or concurrent enrollment, articulated credit or other ways leading to a Pennsylvania recognized industry–based credential, credit–bearing certificate, associate or baccalaureate degree. BCTE will work with community college/two–year programs to demonstrate that an articulation agreement exists that enables the student who completes an associate degree and transfers credits earned to an institution of higher education in pursuit of a bachelor's degree. Additionally, the Transfer and Articulation provisions of state Act 114, requires the state system universities and community colleges to develop and approve a set of course equivalency standards and 30 credits of foundation–level courses that will be accepted across all state system institutions. Students will not have to repeat the credit–bearing courses at other institutions.

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))

The State utilizes numerous means to involve various partners in the development, implementation and evaluation of the Career and Technical Education programs. PDE has established collaborative relations with various state agencies and nonprofit organizations that are focused on workforce development. This includes the PA Partners, PACTEC, Transition Council, PAVSNP, PACTA. Attendance at the meetings held by each organization ensures that their concerns related to Career and Technical Education are heard and policy changes have occurred due to interaction with the various groups. The State has an approved program onsite evaluation process in place. The evaluation process involves establishing a team that visits secondary school entities that hold approved Career and Technical Education programs. The team is comprised of business, postsecondary faculty, career guidance and academic counselors, secondary teachers and administrators. During the review, parents and students are interviewed. The purpose of the review is to ensure quality program offerings are available at the school entity and findings are reported as commendations, recommendations and corrective actions. The school entity submits a plan that describes how changes will occur. This review examines the connection to postsecondary programs, specifically those operating under an articulation agreement.

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;*

Reform efforts began in 2005 to ensure improvement in student achievement. Specific activities include regional workshops, revision of the career and technical education approval system and identification of approval requirements.

PDE has aligned CTE programs with statewide high school reform efforts under a state initiative entitled Project 720.

Chapter 4 (PA school code) 4.31. Vocational–Technical Education.

Vocational–technical education programs shall consist of a series of planned academic and vocational–technical education courses that are articulated with one another so that knowledge and skills are taught in a systematic manner. When appropriate, vocational–technical education programs may also include cooperative vocational–technical education and participation in vocational student organizations to develop leadership skills.

Vocational–technical education courses shall include content based upon occupational analysis, clearly stated performance objectives deemed critical to successful employment and assessment of student competencies based upon performance standards. In listing planned instruction in its strategic plan under §4.13 (relating to strategic plans), a school district or AVTS shall indicate which courses meet the requirements of this section.

The Governor's Office of Administration is requiring an alignment of CTE programs to academic and industry standards. PDE has redirected state funds to support alignment of programs to academic and industry standards.

- *Provide students with strong experience in, and understanding of, all aspects of an industry; and*

The "Programs of Study" will be developed that meet the requirements and are established as a statewide minimum. Please review website for complete roll–out and strategy PA is using to align secondary with postsecondary CTE programs. http://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/Career%20and%20Technical%20Education/Programs%20of%20Study/Pages/default.aspx#.V3Zzh3rD

- *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))*

CTE curriculum requires joint planning to align academic courses. PDE program approval process ensures program scope and sequence is aligned with regular academic courses per Chapter 4. Technical assistance will be provided to those not meeting the requirements. Evidence based "Best Practices" will be identified and shared with non–performing programs.

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. This occurs at the request of the local entities or is based on a review of data related to the performance measures. Technical assistance workshops will be developed based on LEA needs and PDE assessment of performance data, (e.g., program approval, data submission, assessment administration, counseling, integration of academics into CTE). PDE annually sponsors an : Integrated Learning Conference (ILC); Pennsylvania Career and Technical Education Conference (PACTEC) and Pennsylvania Career and Technical Administrator's Association (PACTA) conference that is focused on integration of academics into CTE programs, career counseling, secondary to postsecondary alignment and instructional strategies. PDE also supports week long training sessions that focus on academic and technical instructors learning how to integrate Reading and Mathematics Pennsylvania academic standards across the technical content areas.

PDE will identify evidence based "Best Practices" that lead to student success and facilitate collaboration between school entities that need assistance with school entities that are successful. PDE continues to explore additional means of providing sustained Professional Development activities and will do so throughout the term of this grant. PDE is exploring study groups and Webinars as alternative means of providing sustained Professional Development. PDE has entered into agreements with SREB, EdTrust and PACTA. These agencies will provide sustained Professional Development during the Perkins IV Authorization.

Topics for Professional Development will be based on a review of the CAR data, as well as, onsite evaluation reports. The onsite evaluation reports are generated from BCTE's Approved Program Evaluation (APE) reviews and Perkins IV compliance monitoring visits.

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))

All newly approved programs are contingent on preparing students for "High Priority Occupations." PDE/BCTE coordinates its funding and development of high–priority occupations based on the Commonwealth's labor market data for local, regional and statewide economic and workforce development sectors as outlined on the PA Workforce Development website at www.dli.pa.gov

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))

Reform efforts since 2005 are aligned. The goal is to develop a K–12+ system.

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.

BCTE has been working with PDE's Office of Postsecondary and Higher Education's Bureau of Adult Basic Literacy Education (ABLE) through the release and assignment of incentive grant funds generated during the Perkins III authorization to directly fund and implement ABLE program initiatives. BCTE has also assisted higher education to develop and pilot a monitoring tool to track ACT 101 (a state funded program to support at risk postsecondary students with academic remediation and career counseling) progress, as well as, identifying strengths and needs of the program.

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.

See Local Plan Guidelines.

The State Plan must provide a description of the State's governance structure for vocational and technical education.

State Board of Education to the Secretary of Education to the Deputy Secretary, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education to the Bureau of Career and Technical Education to the Division of Data Analysis, Assessment and Contracts, Division of Professional Development and Support Services, Division of Program Standards and Quality Assurances, Division of Adult and Postsecondary CTE

The approximate number of eligible secondary recipients is 120 school entities and 40 postsecondary institutions programs.

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.

In Pennsylvania, postsecondary career and technical education is an important component in the services of the one–stop career center delivery system established by Title I of WIA. Postsecondary Perkins funded programs partner directly with regionally based one–top CareerLink Centers established by the Department of Labor to coordinate the development of postsecondary career and technical education programs which complement Title 1 activities to prepare adult students for high–priority, high–skill, high–wage and high–demand occupations. The following is a listing of collaborative activities:

- Job search and placement assistance
- Labor market information
- Initial assessment of skills and needs
- Information about available jobs
- Comprehensive assessments
- Development of individual employment plans
- Group and individual counseling
- Case management

- Short–term pre–vocational services
- Training services which are directly linked to job opportunities in their local area
- Occupational skills training
- On–the–job training
- Entrepreneurial training
- Skill upgrading
- Job readiness training
- Adult education and literacy activities

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.*

Secondary and Postsecondary Strategies 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 individual to become an independent adult, economically, financially and socially. This is pursued through assurances that address equal access to all occupational programs, provisions for supporting supplemental services to assure the success of each special populations group, and an assessment strategy to monitor the success of each special population, thus the success of the state strategy.

Special populations will be provided equal access to activities assisted under this title through guidelines written for use of Perkins funds. Required signed assurances and descriptions of how members of special populations will be provided equal access to CTE programs and services assisted under Title I and II of the Perkins Act will be documented locally. This is evidenced in the submission of the local plan by the secondary and postsecondary entities. Routine on–site reviews to secondary and postsecondary entities will examine documentation relative to participation of special populations. Department of Education staff will investigate thoroughly and promptly any written complaints.

- *Will not be discriminated against on the basis of their status as members of special populations; and*

Secondary and Postsecondary Strategies Special populations will not be discriminated against based on their status as members of the special populations through appropriate requirements of civil rights legislation incorporated into program assurances. Initial reviews of secondary and postsecondary recipients' applications, on–site reviews investigation of complaints will insure that discrimination does not occur on the basis of status as a member of a special population.

- *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))*

Secondary and Postsecondary Strategies Special populations will be provided with services designed to enable them to meet or exceed state–adjusted levels of performance. Programs will prepare special populations for further learning and for high–skill, high–wage careers. The local plan design requires the

evaluation of each CTE program and the success of each special population group on adjusted levels of performance. Guidelines further require the use of funds for programs and activities where performance is below adjusted state standards.

The Bureau of Career and Technical Education will annually utilize a Special Populations Needs Assessment for incorporation into local plan applications via the eGrant, fulfilling the requirements of Section 124(b) 1; a series of questions from the legislation relating to what the needs of the special populations students are from each funded LEA and how each LEA plans to address these assessed needs.

Special populations will participate in career guidance and academic counseling programs designed to promote improved career and education decision making skills regarding postsecondary education and training options in preparation for high–skill, high–wage or high–demand occupations and nontraditional fields.

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))

Pennsylvania regulations established Alternative Education programs for disruptive youth. The programs are implemented by a school district, an area career and technical education school, a group of school districts or an intermediate unit, which removes disruptive students from regular school programs in order to provide those students with a sound educational course of study and counseling designed to modify disruptive behavior and return the students to a regular school curriculum. Notwithstanding Section 1502, Alternative Education Programs may operate outside the normal school day of the applicant district, including Saturdays. School districts shall adopt a policy for periodic review of students placed in the Alternative Education program for disruptive students. This review shall occur, at a minimum, at the end of every semester the student is in the program or more frequently at the district's discretion. The purpose of this review is to determine whether or not the student is ready to return to the regular school curriculum. Programs may include services for students returning from placements or who are on probation resulting from being adjudicated delinquents in a proceeding under 42 PA C.S. Ch. 63 (relating to juvenile matters) or who have been judged to have committed a crime under an adult criminal proceeding. These programs address the academic, social and emotional needs of youth.

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))

Secondary and Postsecondary Strategies All newly submitted programs must meet the criteria developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry (L&I). The Department of Labor and Industry has developed a CIP/SOC crosswalk that identifies which "High Priority Occupations" are aligned to each CIP program. The Department of Labor and Industry develops a career guide and other resources that can be used as instructional materials. The materials can be used with all students beginning at the middle school. The materials show students how to choose a career and how choosing a career and the education path is linked to Career and Technical Education. The recently adopted statewide academic standards of Career Education and Work require all school districts to develop education and career plans for all students beginning with Grade K. PDE has also developed resources that can be used by school districts and career and technical education centers. The materials not only evidence high–priority occupations but also provide information on nontraditional fields and connection to postsecondary opportunities. All postsecondary institutions participating in Perkins must establish a working relationship with the local WIBs and PA CareerLink Centers to ensure that postsecondary Perkins local occupational advisory committees are

addressing current state, regional and local labor market needs in high–priority, high–skill, high–wage and high–demand occupations. To improve nontraditional participation and completion, PDE/BCTE is identifying state non–traditional occupations by CIP and aligning with NAPE's national listing of nontraditional occupations by industry cluster. All funded secondary and postsecondary programs are required to maintain assurance folders on nontraditional program efforts and overall improvement of nontraditional performance measures.

The State Plan must describe how funds will be used to serve individuals in State correctional institutions. (section 122(c)(19))

The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections Inmate profile reveals the following characteristics: (A) the average inmate is functioning on a 7.5 grade level in reading and a 6.7 grade level in math, (B) almost 46 percent of the inmates lack a high school diploma and 32 percent have not completed the 9th grade, (C) 75 percent claim they have little or no vocational skills and over 80 percent were unemployed upon arrest and (D) 85 percent report that they need some type of drug/alcohol treatment. The average inmate spends approximately 49 months incarcerated and there are approximately 42,000 inmates in the system, thus a significant need for educational programs. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania provides an education/training appropriation in which full–time academic, vocational and counseling staffs are hired. The funds received from this grant ($431,453) provide five institutions with supplemental vocational funding, specifically, the salary and benefits for five vocational instructors.

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

Secondary and Postsecondary Strategies PDE requires all eligible recipients to submit a proposal that outlines the actions and use of funds the recipient will follow. The grant application is reviewed by regionally assigned staff members whose responsibility is to ensure Perkins IV funds are used as required. The review of the grants ensures that the eligible recipients will meet the requirements of 427(b). Inclusion of all special population's sub–groups is monitored during the local plan application process, on–site reviews and annual reporting of disaggregated data for federal CAR reporting.

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))

Accountability is a foundation of the Commonwealth's emerging workforce development system. Programs and providers will be measured on the results they achieve as a return on investment of public funds. The state accountability system will ensure quality performance, as well as be compatibility with the seamless delivery system of the Pennsylvania Performance Management System. This system collects and examines workforce development efforts supported by state and federal funds.

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 identified core performance indicators to be measured as part of the education improvement efforts. Pennsylvania will incorporate the core indicators of performance into its accountability system. Pennsylvania Department of Education sought input into the Perkins accountability system and the five year state plan from representatives of the eligible recipients. A task force was formed. The purpose of the task force was to assist in outlining actions for the State to pursue and to assist in developing the core indicators of performance.

The steps that the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Career and Technical Education, took to involve representatives of eligible recipients in the development of core indicators of performance and the state adjusted levels of performance are as follows:

(a) An email and phone calls inviting input from eligible recipients to develop core indicators and the state adjusted levels of performance. The eligible recipients acknowledging an interest in participating formed a Task Force.

(b) Seven face–to–face consultation meetings were held with representatives from the Pennsylvania Vocational Administrators of Pennsylvania, Bucks County Community College, Community College of Allegheny County, Lackawanna College, Luzerne County Community College, the Penn State University System, Lehigh Career and Technical Institute and Cumberland Perry Technical School.

(c) The five year state plan will be presented to the State Board of Vocational Education for approval prior to April 1, 2008 submission deadline. Final comment was gathered during regional statewide public hearings held in December 2007.

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))

An advisory committee was convened, consisting of representatives from all stakeholder groups required under Perkins IV including: high schools, adult programs, postsecondary institutions, members of special populations, charter school organizers, parents and students, labor organizations, counselors and members from business and industry including a state WIB member. The initial state adjusted performance levels have been decided upon by USDOE for those indicators whose definitions have not changed. The initial state adjusted performance levels are based on most recent available data. The advisory committee supports the process and the use of appropriate existing performance measures used in the previously submitted FAUPL.

The state will only establish baselines on those measures for which data is available (1S1, 1S2, 2S1, 5S1, 6S1, 6S2, 1P1 4P1, 5P1 and 5P2). For the new indicators we are establishing baselines during the transition year (3S1 and 2P1).

In regards to graduation rate–4S1*, multi-year identification of CTE students will begin in 2007–2008 utilizing PDE's unified data collection system which uses a unique student identifier, entitled Pennsylvania Information Management System, (PIMS) to establish graduation rates by the 2012 school year. PDE is still ascertaining a valid collection vehicle to obtain 4S1 data.

Student Retention and Transfer (3P1)**: PDE is exploring a working relationship with the National Student Data Clearing House to report 3P1 on the 2008–2009 CAR.

The State established Annual Measurable Outcomes (AMO) for Math, Reading and Graduation Rates based on state established targets. The Skill Attainment, at Competent and Advanced (2S1), baseline has been calculated based on the most recent past performance.

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))

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 our non-regulatory guidance, we have prepopulated the measurement definitions on the Final Agreed Upon Performance Levels (FAUPL) form for your convenience. You do not need to describe how these definitions and measures are valid and reliable in your 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 Secretary is considering whether to issue regulations requiring a State to agree to use the student definitions and measurement approaches for the core indicators of performance for academic attainment in reading/language arts and mathematics and graduation rates as contained in the guidance document. If the Secretary decides to regulate on these issues and adopts final rules, a State may be required to amend its State plan.

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 measures that we are using are part of the Pennsylvania State System of Academic assessment. The measures 1S1, 1S2 have undergone extensive research and development and annual review by test publishers and third party to ensure maximum validity and reliability. We adhere to the Standards for Educational and Psychological Measurement.

Graduation rate 4S1 has been calculated using procedures defined in the Pennsylvania Accountability Workbook (which has received USDOE approval).

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 our non–regulatory guidance, we have prepopulated the measurement definitions on the Final Agreed Upon Performance Levels (FAUPL) form for your convenience. You do not need to describe how these definitions and measures are valid and reliable in your 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 Secretary is considering whether to issue regulations requiring a State to agree to use the student definitions and measurement approaches for the core indicators of performance for academic attainment in reading/language arts and mathematics and graduation rates as contained in the guidance document. If the Secretary decides to regulate on these issues and adopts final rules, a State may be required to amend its State plan.

The performance measures used to meet the Act's accountability requirements are the same performance measures used in monitoring and evaluating career and technical education programs. The state provides funds to support career and technical education programs and effectiveness of the programs is determined by reviewing the data associated with performance measures for the core indicators established for this Act. This data is the same data that is reported for the state's performance management system that examines workforce development systems across agencies.

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))

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) 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))

Pennsylvania has provided performance levels for the Five Year Plan FAUPL. At the conclusion of the transition year, after baseline data is collected for updated definitions, PA will request to update FAUPL. (a) 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.

(b) 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 others States have defined AYP only to require improvement in the graduation rate each year.

For three of these indicators (1S1, 1S2 and 4S1*) the performance levels are already established under NCLB.

Student Graduation Rates (4S1)* – Individual student data collection will begin with the 2007–2008 school year, high school graduation rates will not be available using PASecureID information until February 2012 for the Class of 2011. By definition, graduates include students that graduated over the summer following the usual June graduation and dropouts are not determined until October 1 for the preceding 12–month period. Therefore, the potential exists to track occupational career/technical center student graduation rates starting with the Class of 2011.

The negotiations for 2S1, 3S1, 5S1, 6S1, 6S2, 1P1, 2P1, 4P1, 5P1, 5P2 will be based on each recipient's previous performance which will establish their baseline. The baseline will be the most recent data when available.

The following response refers to the indicators not associated with NCLB. Pennsylvania is expected to conduct negotiations with local eligible recipients on levels of performance for five of the eight secondary indicators (2S1, 3S1, 5S1, 6S1, 6S2) and all 6 postsecondary indicators (1P1, 2P1, 3P1**, 4P1, 5P1, 5P2.

When presented with an established baseline, the eligible recipient will be given an opportunity to demonstrate continuous yearly improvement. All eligible recipients must maintain continuous improvement over the previous year's performance in all performance measures.

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))

Reviews and revisions of local adjusted performance levels will be made when the circumstances clearly prevent the eligible recipient from meeting the levels. Requests must be accompanied by a recovery plan containing a realistic timeline. During the transition year, objective criteria and methods were developed.

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)

To insure that accurate data is reported to PDE, general data reporting workshops are provided for local education agencies throughout the state. Technical assistance is provided on a one–to–one basis as requested. This includes visits to schools when necessary. In addition, Perkins on–site monitoring includes a review of data and local reporting procedures. Postsecondary data is reviewed at two levels first through the Division of Data Services and second through the Bureau of Career and Technical Education. Data is not accepted until both levels are satisfied.

All student data reports are subjected to extensive edits, both computerized and manual, at the state level. PDE is in the process of implementing a unified data collection system entitled the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS) to collect all required data for federal reporting.

For each group of indicators, a review is made by using the Data Quality Manual. There is a series of questions on the checklist requiring a yes/no and a commentary with the initials of the reviewer. For all measures, common items include a comparison of current and previous year data for consistency and inclusion of all categories (gender, ethnicity, special populations, tech prep). The reviewers also follow the rules of CAR data quality used by the OVAE. For those data from third party and administrative records, it is required that they contain the data initiator and a supervisory sign–off.

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))

Local negotiations have been developed and conducted for the first two years and submitted via the annual eGrant application. This process will be used per Perkins IV requirements during the third and fifth year. During the negotiations period, years three and five, each consortium will be given its respective trend data that will determine its baseline. If this baseline is equal to or greater than the state's Final Agreed Upon Level, the consortium's proposed performance level will be the same as the state FAUPL. If the consortium's baseline is below the state baseline, the initial proposed level will be the number halfway between the states and the consortiums. PDE will also accept any modest increase over the consortium's baseline.

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))

Pennsylvania's performance management system is created on the premise of continuous improvement. Continuous improvement is a cyclical, never ending process of planning, implementing, evaluating and improving services.

Simply measuring performance alone does not guarantee service/program improvement. The institutional framework of Pennsylvania's workforce strategy is based upon the Malcolm Baldridge seven principles of quality management with a focus on continuous improvement.

WIA offered the opportunity for significant change and unprecedented cooperation between the public and private sectors in supporting Pennsylvania's economic and workforce development needs. Successful implementation of the WIA in Pennsylvania required a constant focus on the employer and job seeker to effectively integrate economic and workforce development at the local, regional and state levels.

Pursuant to Section 113 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006, the Department of Education, Bureau of Career and Technical Education, has developed and implemented a state performance accountability system based on measures and standards approved by the State Board of Education designed to evaluate annually the effectiveness of approved career and technical education programs at the secondary and postsecondary levels. The Perkins requirement to establish a State Performance Accountability system includes the use of evaluation methods containing both process and product.

Each secondary and postsecondary eligible recipient is evaluated annually to determine the effectiveness of all approved career and technical education programs; and provide information on how to maximize the return of investment of state and federal funds in career and technical education activities.

To implement the Five Year Plan beginning July 1, 2008, local entities will be required to submit a five year local plan application via PDE's eGrant system and will include the following: required uses of funds with yearly budget updates; annual amendments to PPC designated Action Plans; a detailed set of descriptions and assurances for the local application covering all aspects of the local program. Attention must be given to the scope of the local program and local accountability issues. The annual evaluation will be based on the state performance measures and standards described above, developed with input from the eligible recipients and approved by the State Board of Education, as prescribed in the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006.

The design of the State Performance Accountability System has been guided by input from the eligible recipients. In addition, the design addresses the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation – 1994 Program Evaluation Standards. These standards were established to provide guidance to effective evaluation. The Joint Committee believes the standards will lead to useful, feasible, ethical and sound program evaluations and that these evaluations will, in turn, contribute significantly to the betterment of education and training in diverse settings. (1994, p. XVIII)

The standards provide a guide for evaluating educational and training programs, projects and materials in a variety of settings. They are intended both for users of evaluations and for evaluators. (1994, p. 1)

The standards are organized around the four important attributes of an evaluation: utility, feasibility, propriety and accuracy. The Joint Committee believes that these four attributes are necessary and sufficient for sound and fair evaluation. (1994, p. 5)

The four attributes are defined as follows:

Utility: These standards guide evaluations so that they will be informative, timely and influential. The seven standards included in this category are Stakeholder Identification, Evaluator, Credibility, Information Scope and Selection, Values Identification, Report Clarity, Report Timeliness and Dissemination and Evaluation Impact.

Feasibility: These standards recognize that evaluations usually are conducted in a natural, as opposed to a laboratory, setting and consume valuable resources. The three standards in the category are Practical Procedures, Political Viability and Cost Effectiveness; moreover, they require the evaluation to be realistic, prudent, diplomatic and economical.

Propriety: These standards reflect the fact that evaluations affect many people in a variety of ways. They are intended to facilitate protecting the rights of individuals affected by an evaluation. The eight standards for propriety are: Service Orientation, Formal Agreement, Rights of Human Subjects, Human Interactions, Complete and Fair Assessment, Disclosure of Findings, Conflict of Interest and Fiscal Responsibility.

Accuracy: These standards determine whether an evaluation has produced sound information, that is the information must be technically adequate and the judgments rendered must be linked logically to the data. The twelve standards are: Program Documentation, Context Analysis, Described Purposes and Procedures, Defensible Information Sources, Valid Information, Reliable Information, Systematic Information, Analysis of Quantitative Information, Analysis of Qualitative Information, Justified Conclusions, Impartial Reporting and Meta–evaluation.

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;*

- *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*

- *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.*

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.

The definitions are included on the form provided in Part C.

Data for the required core indicators are provided in Part C. The baseline data that is required of states submitting a transition plan are provided. The state is using the AMOs for those indicators measuring academic performance and graduation rate. All other indicators evidence a performance level developed as described above. These are located on the form provided in Part C. BCTE is in the process of aligning approved program areas to an industry based third party national assessment. Barring unforeseen circumstances, it is expected that 86 percent of CTE concentrators will be the minimum participation rate for all concentrators who will be tested for job readiness in general or industry credentials in particular.

BCTE is continually seeking to add to the list of approved tests for use in assessing student skill attainment. We annually invite industry representatives and test developers to present their assessments for review. The evaluations will be conducted on the basis of the criterion checklist which includes data availability, test security and validity. To date BCTE has recognized three test developers. During the Perkins IV authorization, as program of studies are developed, related assessments will be identified or developed on the basis of industry standards alignment.

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))

The application submitted for all consortiums must contain a plan for the development and implementation of "Programs of Study" that will be reviewed and endorsed by the local Workforce Investment Board. Beginning in the 2008–2009 the current 16 Tech Prep regional consortia will be realigned. Tech Prep awards will be granted on a competitive basis

PDE will give special consideration to Tech Prep applications that –

- Develop and implement statewide "Programs of Study" by CIP, as recognized by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE).
- Establish, as part of that "Program of Study," an approved statewide articulation agreement that supports the CIP and the Guidelines designed for all PDE approved Career and Technical Education "Programs of Study."
- Facilitate the alignment of academic and technical curriculum between secondary and postsecondary levels that meets industry standards related to an approved "Program of Study."
- Facilitate the alignment of curriculum between secondary and postsecondary levels that meets Pennsylvania academic standards related to the approved "Programs of Study."

- Facilitate the alignment of academic and technical curriculum between secondary and postsecondary levels to eliminate the need for remediation at the postsecondary level.
- Assess, plan, develop organize and implement "Program of Study" activities within the state defined regions that prepare graduates for "High Priority Occupations" as identified by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry.
- Maintain communication with all consortium schools that have PDE approved Career and Technical Education "Programs of Study."
- Assist all consortium schools in the identification and reporting of Tech Prep students within PDE approved Career and Technical Education "Programs of Study" within the state defined regions that prepare graduates for "High Priority Occupations" as identified by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry.

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))

BCTE has developed a "Program of Study" template that will require Tech Prep Regions in the state to assist in the development of "Programs of Study" by CIP Code t CIPs will be selected and approved for development by the BCTE and will be based on the program's potential to lead to high–wage, high–skill and high–demand jobs to include emerging technology, in which there is a significant workforce shortage. These "Programs of Study" will lead to employment opportunities or the transfer of students to baccalaureate or advanced degree programs. The "Programs of Study" will be developed in consultation with business and industry, institutions of higher education and labor organizations to incorporate and align secondary and postsecondary programs. "Programs of Study" will effectively address the issues of school dropout prevention and reentry by aligning "Programs of Study" with Pennsylvania academic standards and employability competencies.

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))

There will be equitable distribution of awards between urban and rural through Pennsylvania's designated Workforce Investment Regions.

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;*
- *Consists of a program of study that meets the requirements of section 203(c)(2)(A)-(G);*

Includes the development of tech prep programs for secondary and postsecondary education that meet the requirements of section 203(c)(3)(A)-(D);

- *Includes in-service professional development for teachers, faculty, and administrators that meets the requirements of section 203(c)(4)(A)-(F).*

- *Includes professional development programs for counselors that meet the requirements of section 203(c)(5)(A)-(F);*

- *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));*

- *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))*

Every "Program of Study" will operate under a statewide articulation agreement. The required statewide articulation agreements between secondary and postsecondary institutions shall include:

1. Content specified in courses offered by the secondary institution that aligns with course content at the postsecondary institution syllabi and/or competency lists of courses from the institutions involved must be maintained in the appropriate offices.

2. The operational procedures and responsibilities of each party involved in the implementation of the articulation agreement.

3. The student evaluation plan and process including descriptions of required proficiency levels and criteria for measurement.

4. Evaluation plan that includes an annual review and a renewal date not to exceed three years.

5. A description of student admission requirements.

6. Signatures of authorized representatives of participating institutions.

7. On a case–by–case basis, provide options for out–of–county students to articulate without sanction if equivalent articulation elements are satisfied.

"Programs of Study" will be carried out under a statewide articulation agreement between participants in the consortium and combine a minimum of two (2) years of secondary education with a minimum of two(2) years of postsecondary education in a nonduplicative, sequential course of study or an apprenticeship program of not less than two (2) years following secondary education instruction. Instruction will integrate academic and career and technical education instruction and utilize work–based and worksite learning experiences where appropriate and available to build student competency. "Programs of Study" will lead to a career field that is high–skill, high–wage and high–demand. Technical skills and core academic subjects will be attained in a coherent sequence of courses that lead to technical skill proficiency, an industry–recognized credential, a certificate or a degree in a specific career field. The goal is to have each student in a "Program

of Study" that leads to placement in high–demand, high–skill or high–wage employment or to further education.

Pennsylvania "Programs of Study" will include coherent and rigorous academic content aligned with Pennsylvania academic standards and relevant career and technical education content integrated in a coordinated, non–duplicative progression of courses that align secondary and postsecondary education to adequately prepare students to succeed in careers. Pennsylvania academic standards link secondary schools and two–year postsecondary institutions, and if possible and practicable, four–year institutions of higher education. These "Programs of Study" will also include the opportunity for secondary education students to earn postsecondary education credits through dual or concurrent enrollment, articulated credit or other ways leading to a Pennsylvania recognized industry–based credential, credit–bearing certificate, associate or baccalaureate degree. If appropriate and available, work–based or worksite learning experiences, in conjunction with business and all aspects of an industry, will be made available. As appropriate, educational technology and distance learning will involve all the participants in the consortium.

Inservice professional development will include teachers, faculty and administrators to support the effective implementation of "Programs of Study," to encourage joint training in the Tech Prep regions, to support the needs, expectations and methods of business and all aspects of an industry, to support the use of contextual and applied curricula, instruction and assessment, to support the use and application of technology and to assist in accessing and utilizing data, information available pursuant to Section 118 and information on student achievement, including assessments.

The annual integration conference and specially designed videoconferences and regional workshops will address "Programs of Study." In addition, the agency will work with PA Association of Career and Technical Education (PACTEC) and the PA Association of Career and Technical Education Administrators (PACTA) to deliver POS training.

In light of the Perkins IV legislation, any professional development programs for school counselors must focus active support in the creation of a middle and high school environment that is student centered, results focused, data informed and personalized. In particular to the State Tech Prep Plan, it is imperative that school counselors assist all students to feel connected to and complete the "Programs of Study," to promote access and equity for all students and to assist in designing a school counseling program that ensures all students meet high academic standards.

To accomplish these goals of professional development under the State Tech Prep Plan, it is suggested the Bureau contract with outside consultants in conducting five regional training sessions or webinars. Selected regional sites could be: IU 7 (Southwestern), IU 5 (Northwestern), IU 14 (Southeastern), IU 18 (Northeastern), IU 15 (Central Pa). The following suggested topics could guide the day long training session: (1) How to use the new websites of: www.pacareerstandards.com, www.pacareerzone.com and using the Pa Career Guide more effectively within the classroom, (2) Understanding/ Implementing the new Career Education and Work Standards, (3) Understanding and using career software for career research and developing online career plans and career portfolios, (4) Understanding, collecting and using data to drive change.

“Programs of Study” will provide equal access to individuals who are members of Special Populations and include the development of “Programs of Study” services appropriate to the needs of Special Populations. All entities receiving Perkins funds adhere to regulations addressing Special Populations including Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Civil Rights and PA Chapters 11. 14. 4 and 339.

Preparatory services will assist “Program of Study” participants. All entities receiving Perkins funds are required to provide preparatory services.

“Programs of Study” will coordinate with activities conducted under Title I. The agency requires all career and technical education programs to follow the components of “Programs of Study.” All recipients of Perkins IV Title I funds will participate with Tech Prep Consortia to assist in the development of “Programs of Study.” Each entity will also report required data.

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))

Each consortium receiving Perkins IV Title II funds enters a contractual agreement. This agreement includes agreeing to meet the required performance indicators. The agency will establish minimum levels of performance for each indicator on the previous year’s data. When the performance indicator is a new indicator and previous year’s data is not available, the 2007–2008 year will serve as the baseline.

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))

Funds received under Section 111 for allocations to secondary and postsecondary eligible recipients were divided as follows: 70 percent to secondary recipients, 30 percent to postsecondary recipients. The split was determined by the following criteria:

(a) History of set aside amounts

(b) Number of career and technical enrollees

(c) Number of career and technical programs

(d) Consideration of full–time and part–time enrollment

(e) Consideration of overlap of facilities for programs

(f) Amounts of other state/federal reimbursement

Formulas described in the Act will be utilized for allocation among secondary and postsecondary eligible recipients.

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); section202(c))

$28,620,398.00

- 2016-17 Secondary Allocations
- 2016-17 Postsecondary & Adult Allocations

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))

$12,140,538.00 was made available to postsecondary institutions during the 2007–2008 year. Allocation distribution is based on a percentage derived by dividing the individual number of each institution's student vocational Pell count by the total number of vocational Pell counts for all postsecondary and adult programs. The percentage of vocational Pell per institution is then applied against the total allocation awarded to the state producing a percentage of the total to be allocated to each individual postsecondary and adult program.

Allocation = (Pells/State Sum of Pells) X Allocation amount

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))

$18,697,795.00 was made available to secondary consortia during the 2007–2008 year.

When local consortia fall below the minimum allocation amount of $15,000, the consortia is contacted and notified of the need to join new consortia. All fiscal agents operate under a memorandum of understanding. The distribution of funds in the new consortia is not based on a pro–rata distribution.

Pennsylvania will continue to utilize the current formula to allocate Perkins funds to the local consortia. This has proven to be an objective and equitable means of allocating the funds.

Allocations are calculated based on the following formula: After elimination criteria – Get percentage of individual population 5–17 by dividing individual Population 5–17 by state total of Population 5–17 Get percentage of Poverty 5–17 by dividing individual Poverty 5–17 by state total Poverty 5–17 70% allocation = Poverty percentage from above x (allocation amount x .7) 30% allocation = Individual population percentage from above x (allocation amount x .3) Total allocation = 70% allocation + 30% allocation

Allocations are summed up and enrollments collected via PDE's unified data collection system utilizing a secure ID identifier for each student.

Percentages of total student enrollments for each member of the consortia are collected by dividing each individual member of the consortia against the total number of all enrollments within the consortia to get a final percentage for each school.

Total allocation is then divided by this percentage and allocated to the consortium fiscal agent.

A consortia file is generated from the Division of Data Services, which drives the distribution to the fiscal agent.

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))

$1,968,794.00 was made available to postsecondary consortia during the 2007–2008 year.

When local consortia fall below the minimum allocation amount of $50,000, the consortia is contacted and notified of the need to join new consortia. All fiscal agents operate under a memorandum of understanding. The distribution of funds in the new consortia is not based on a pro–rata distribution.

Postsecondary consortia that are currently formed will receive the allocations as determined by federal regulation. Any new consortia that form will request and notify PDE of the formation. PDE will adjust the postsecondary allocations and assign a fiscal agent.

A consortia file is generated from the Division of Data Services based on known memberships. This file drives the distribution to the fiscal agent. The rationale for such an allocation is based on the formula for calculating the distribution to the individual schools. The formula is:

As per item 3, the allocation distribution is based on a percentage derived by dividing the individual number of each institution's student vocational Pell count by the total number of vocational Pell counts for all postsecondary programs. The percentage of vocational Pells per institution is then applied against the total allocation awarded to the state producing a percentage of the total to be allocated to each individual postsecondary and adult program.

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))

Changes to the allocation will be based on the use of the most current census data for secondary entities and annual collection of Pell data for postsecondary entities.

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.

The State Plan must include a detailed project budget, using the forms provided in Part B of this guide.

The State Plan must provide a listing of allocations made to consortia (secondary and postsecondary) from funds available under sections 112(a) and (c).

The estimated detailed budget is provided on the form found in Part B. The detailed budget is based on the 2007 allocation amount. The budget will change upon notice of the allocation for 2008.

Tentative 2016-2017 Secondary Allocations: A listing of allocations made to consortia from funds available under Sections 112 (a) and (c) of the Act for secondary institutions.

Tentative 2016-2017 Postsecondary/Adult Allocations: A listing of allocations made to consortia from funds available under Sections 112 (a) and (c) of the Act for postsecondary/adult institutions.

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 following formulas are used to allocate funds to the postsecondary and secondary local entities:

Postsecondary: Allocation = (Pells/State Sum of Pells) x Allocation amount

Secondary: After elimination criteria – Calculate percentage of individual population ages 5–17 by dividing individual population ages 5–17 by state total of population ages 5–17

Calculate percentage of poverty ages 5–17 by dividing individual poverty ages 5–17 by state total poverty ages 5–17 70% allocation = Poverty percentage from above x (allocation amount x .7) 30% allocation = Individual population percentage from above x (allocation amount x .3) Total allocation = 70% allocation + 30% allocation

Allocations are then summed. Enrollments are collected. Dividing school enrollments by a district total collects percentage of enrollments. Total allocation is divided by this percentage.

The State Plan must describe the competitive basis or formula to be used to award reserve funds under section 112(c).

At this time, reserve funds will not be established during the administration of the Five Year Plan beginning July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2013.

The State Plan must describe the procedures used to rank and determine eligible recipients seeking funding under section 112(c).

This is not applicable.

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 recognizes secondary and postsecondary CTE programs located in rural and sparsely populated areas generating less than the minimum allocation under Sections 131 and 132 of the Act. Pennsylvania, upon request, by a secondary LEA, not meeting the minimum allocation, shall waive the application of Paragraph (1) as required under Section 131(c)(2) in accordance with current state guidelines of providing a program of sufficient size, scope and quality. Pennsylvania may waive the application of Paragraph (3)(A)(i) for postsecondary consortiums.

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)(i) 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:

Defining Needy Families: A needy family is defined as a minor child and his parent(s) or other adult specified relative with whom he lives who meet the income and resource standards established under this TANF State Plan. Eligibility for TANF is also extended to pregnant women who have no other children living with them.

Minor Child: A minor child is under age 18 or is age 18 and a full-time student in a secondary school or in the equivalent level of vocational or technical training.

Specified Relative: A specified relative is defined as an adult who:

- Is exercising responsibility for the care and control of the child by making and carrying out plans for the support, education and maintenance of the child and applying for assistance on behalf of the child. The finding that a relative is exercising care and control of the child is made whether the relative is the parent or other relative of the child.

- Is maintaining a home in which the child lives with him or her, or is in the process of setting up a home where the child will go to live with him or her within 30 days after receiving the first TANF payment.

- Is related to the child as follows:

    - blood relative who is within the fifth degree of kinship to the dependent child, including a first cousin once removed. Second cousins and more remote cousins are not within the fifth degree of kinship. A first cousin once removed is the child of one's first cousin or the first cousin of one's parent. The fifth degree of kinship includes great-great grandparents and great-great-great grandparents. The fifth degree of kinship also includes other relationships prefixed by great, great-great, grand or great- grand. Blood relatives include those of half-blood.

    - A parent by legal adoption and any of the adopting parent's blood or adoptive relatives as described above

    - Stepfather, stepmother, stepbrother, and stepsister.

    - A spouse of any of the relatives described above even though the marriage is terminated by death, separation or divorce.

Minor Parent: A minor parent is defined as:

A TANF eligible individual under 18 years of age who has never been married and is the natural parent of a dependent child living with the minor parent, or is pregnant. A minor parent is required to live in the home of the minor parent's parent, legal guardian or other adult relative who is at least 18 years of age or in an adult-supervised supportive living arrangement unless exempt. If the minor parent cannot return to the home of a parent, legal guardian, or other adult relative, the Department, in consultation with the county children and youth agency, will provide assistance to the minor parent and dependent child in locating a second-chance home, maternity home or other appropriate adult-supervised supportive living arrangement unless the agency determines that the minor parent's living situation is appropriate. When both parents are living with a child, the family may qualify for TANF only if one or both parents are incapacitated, unemployed or employed with earnings that are low enough to qualify the family for supplemental TANF assistance. Certain individuals who live with the minor child must be included in the application for assistance. These members of the TANF mandatory budget group include the TANF child, the biological or adoptive parents of the TANF child and blood-related or adoptive siblings of the TANF child as long as they also meet TANF eligibility requirements.
A family, for purposes of the 60-month time limit, is defined as a minor child and his parent(s) or other adult specified relative with whom he lives and who is applying on the child's behalf. A family does not include a specified relative who is not included in the TANF mandatory budget group and is seeking TANF assistance only for the minor child.

Absence of a Minor Child: Under TANF, a specified relative may continue to receive benefits for an otherwise eligible minor child who is absent, or expected to be absent, from the home. The State may choose between several periods of temporary absence: not less than 30 days, up to 45 days, up to 180 days or more than 180 days if good cause is established.

Pennsylvania elects to define temporary absence as one that does not exceed 180 consecutive days. A caretaker relative of a minor child who fails to notify the CAO of the minor child's absence by the end of the five-day period, that begins with the date it becomes clear to the specified relative that the child will be absent for more than 180 consecutive days, is ineligible for TANF for a period of 30 days.

Personal Responsibility - The Agreement of Mutual Responsibility

Pennsylvania exercises the TANF option to establish an individual responsibility plan, known as the Agreement of Mutual Responsibility (AMR). The AMR is a plan of action the TANF recipient and the caseworker develop together. The purpose of the AMR is to direct the person's efforts toward self-sufficiency by identifying reasonable goals and determining what activities the person will complete to achieve those goals. The AMR is used to identify the person's short-term and long-term goals. The plan addresses how the recipient will overcome identified barriers and lists participation activities and hours of required participation as well as supportive services provided by the Department. The following individuals are required to sign the AMR:

- Adult applicants and recipients who are required to sign the Application for Benefits, whether or not they are exempt from or have good cause for not meeting the work requirements.

- Pregnant teens or minor parents who sign the Application for Benefits on their own behalf.

The AMR stresses the temporary nature of cash assistance and focuses on the steps the recipient must take to establish a path toward self-sufficiency. The AMR also specifies the penalties for failure to comply and the actions to be taken by the Department to support the efforts of the recipient. An individual who refuses to complete or sign the AMR without good cause is ineligible for TANF cash assistance and removed from the cash grant. The person remains ineligible for cash benefits until he or she completes and signs an AMR. The entire family is ineligible if the individual had previously received 60 months of TANF cash assistance which is considered Extended TANF.

NOTE: The explanation of the Extended TANF program can be found in Section B "Special Provisions" of this document. As part of completion of the AMR, the CAO determines whether the individual is exempt from or has good cause for not participating in work or work activities. For individuals required to participate in work and work activities, the AMR includes a requirement to conduct an initial job search or participate in a work activity. The initial activity assesses the skills, work experience and employability of each adult recipient.

The AMR is also used to outline other work participation activities and obligations for nonexempt individuals. New legislation effective July 1, 2012 changed the penalties for noncompliance, without good cause, with work requirements set forth on the AMR. Pursuant to Act 35, the AMR will include the following obligations, when appropriate to the individual or family situation:

- Receive prenatal care as recommended by the doctor or clinic and/or ensure that children are immunized, receive periodic health screening and appropriate medical treatment.

- Take steps, if needed, which will improve a child's school attendance and improve his or her chances for earning a high school diploma.

- Submit to a substance abuse assessment by the local county drug and alcohol authority if the CAO determines that an individual may have a substance-abuse problem that presents a barrier to employment. If the assessment indicates that a drug or alcohol problem exists, the individual will be required to participate in and complete an approved treatment program as indicated by the local drug and alcohol authority. If an individual fails to enter or complete a program, he or she can comply by providing proof of substance-free status by submitting to periodic drug testing.

- Make appropriate payments to service providers from allowances provided to enable the individual to fulfill his or her commitment to engage in work or a work activity.

- Comply with work and work activity requirements.

- Meet other obligations specified on the AMR related to self-sufficiency and parenting responsibilities.

These obligations are basic personal and parental responsibilities which are important to the physical and mental well-being of the family. If not addressed, they not only represent potential barriers to employment, but could increase the likelihood that welfare dependency will be passed from one generation to the next.
The Department established penalties and good cause criteria for noncompliance before implementing sanctions associated with these obligations.

Time Limit and Work Requirements for Receipt of TANF

Receipt of TANF assistance is limited to a total of 60 months (five years) in the lifetime of an adult head-of-household or spouse of head-of household. The assistance received as an adult (age 18 and over) head of household or spouse of head of household counts towards the limit. Assistance received by a pregnant minor head of household, minor parent head of household or minor married to the head of household also counts towards the limit. Periods of receipt need not be consecutive to count towards the 60 months. If the TANF budget group includes only children, the 60-month limit does not apply.

Beginning March 3, 1997, the Department activated both the 60-month TANF time clock and the pre-/post-24 month clock which tracks the number of days of receipt of cash assistance. For applicants, these clocks are activated when cash assistance is authorized.

Determining Eligibility

Pennsylvania is following rules, regulations and procedures in effect prior to the TANF implementation date, except for the following provisions that are authorized or required by State law (Act 35 and Act 58) or by federal law:

Earned Income Disregard: The gross earned income of recipients is subject to a continuous 50% disregard. The disregard encourages recipient families to work and provides additional financial support as they make the transition from welfare to self-sufficiency. Applicants may qualify for the 50% disregard if they have received TANF in one of the four months prior to application or if their income is equal to or less than the standard of need. The deduction for the cost of dependent care for an incapacitated adult is made following application of the 50% disregard.

Reimbursement for Work Expenses: Effective March 28, 2009, all TANF families with earned income are eligible for $50 a month as a reimbursement for work expenses.

Income Exclusions: Income is excluded as provided in state regulation at 55 Pa. Code §183.81.

Funds deposited into a Saving for Education, Entrepreneurship and Downpayment (SEED) account, including interest earned on the account, are excluded as income when determining eligibility. These accounts are currently being funded with private funds as a demonstration project. Funds may be withdrawn for qualified purposes only. If rolled over to a Roth IRA, the money is counted against the resource limit according to 55 Pa. Code Chapter 177, Resources.

The policy on SEED accounts became effective April 1, 2006.

Earned income from temporary employment with the U.S. Census Bureau is excluded. This policy became effective February 1, 2000.

Resources: Resources are excluded as provided in State regulation at 55 Pa. Code §§177.21(a) and 177.22.

Funds deposited in SEED accounts, including interest, are excluded as a resource when determining eligibility.

The policy on SEED accounts became effective April 1, 2006.

Lump Sum Income: Lump sum income is counted as income only in the month that it is received. Any funds that remain from the lump sum in months following the month of receipt are counted as a resource. Final rulemaking for this change was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on August 23, 2002.

Budgeting Method: Semi Annual Reporting (SAR): The income of applicants and recipients affects the TANF benefit as follows:

- The income adjustment is based on the best estimate of the expected income (prospective budgeting). The estimate is based upon verified information provided by the client.

- Monthly income is determined by multiplying the gross average weekly income by four (4.0).

- Recipients are required to complete and submit a reporting form once every 12 months. Since eligibility must be reviewed no less often then every six months, a complete redetermination interview occurs in the alternate six-month period.

- Recipients are required to report increases in gross monthly earned income in excess of $100 and all other changes such as household composition, address, job start, etc. within the first 10 days of the month following the month of the change.

- Recipients are required to report increases in gross monthly unearned income in excess of $50.

- There is no reconciliation of income. No overpayments (underestimates) will be processed unless it was due to a client's failure to properly report income or agency error. Underpayments (overestimates) will not be corrected unless they are the result of a worker error.

- An income adjustment that reduces or increases the grant will be made for the first TANF payment date for which the deadline can be met following proper notice to the client.

SAR was implemented in May of 2003. The Cash Assistance Handbook is updated to reflect the changes.

- 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.

Participation in Work or Work-related Activities

To increase work participation rates and to promote self-sufficiency, Pennsylvania has adopted a work-first approach to help clients succeed in their pursuit of self-sufficiency. Pennsylvania requires each adult, minor head of household or minor child age 16 or 17 who is not in school to engage in work or an approved employment and training activity. While the Department wants all clients to be engaged in activities, the focus is on those individuals who are required to participate in RESET.

Participation must begin within seven calendar days after authorization of assistance. Participation includes full-time work, job search, education, or training. The work activity requirement may be met by participation in any one or combination of the following:

- Unsubsidized Employment
- Subsidized Private Sector Employment
- Subsidized Public Sector Employment
- Work Experience
- On-the-Job Training
- Job Search and Job Readiness Assistance
- Community Service Programs
- Vocational Educational Training
- Job Skills Training Directly Related to Employment
- Education Directly Related to Employment
- Satisfactory School Attendance at Secondary School or in a Course of Study Leading to a Certificate of General Equivalence
- Providing Child Care Services to an Individual Who is Participating in a Community Service Program

After 12 months of participation in vocational education, a recipient may continue education or training, but must also participate in another core work activity. Since implementation of RESET in 1997, Pennsylvania has allowed individuals under the age of 22, including pregnant or parenting recipients, to meet the work participation requirement by attending high school or participating in a GED program.

Exemptions

To be considered exempt from RESET requirements, recipients must be:

- under the age of 18 and pursuing a high school diploma or GED; or
- an individual with a verified physical or mental disability which temporarily or permanently precludes him from any form of employment or work activity; or

- the parent/caretaker relative of a child under the age of 6 for whom an alternate child care arrangement is unavailable; or
- the custodial parent in a one-parent household who is caring for a child under the age of 12 months. Pennsylvania exercises the option to allow this exemption, which is limited to a total of 12 months in the parent's lifetime. The 12 months do not need to be consecutive; or
- a parent with a medically-documented need to provide care for a disabled family member living in the home.

An individual who is exempt because of a physical or mental disability is required to participate in a work or work activity when the condition ceases.

A specified relative who is exempt for providing care to a child under the age of six is required to participate in a work or work activity as soon as child care is available.

An exempt individual under 18 years of age is required to participate in RESET upon:

- becoming 18 years of age;
- attaining a high school diploma or a certificate of high school equivalency; OR
- ceasing to pursue a high school diploma or a certificate of high school equivalency.

An exempt custodial parent in a one-parent household who is caring for a child under the age of 12 months is required to participate when the child becomes 12 months old, the parent chooses to end the exemption, or when the parent has exhausted the 12-month lifetime limit for this exemption.

A parent providing care for a disabled family member living in the home is not considered work eligible and is exempt from participation in RESET. Medical documentation must be provided to support the need for the parent to remain in the home to care for the disabled family member. When the medical

need to remain in the home ceases or can no longer be documented, then the parent becomes work eligible and must comply with RESET requirements.

An individual who is exempt may volunteer to participate in RESET. Exempt volunteers may participate in the RESET activity of their choice, provided they meet the eligibility criteria for those activities or programs. Exempt individuals who volunteer to participate in contracted programs must meet all of the requirements of those programs. Such requirements include, but are not limited to, attendance and participation. Exempt volunteers need not conduct an initial job search prior to beginning to participate and are not subject to sanction for noncompliance with the work requirements.

Determinations of exemption will be made using the criteria found in 55 Pa. Code §165.21.

Good Cause

Clients who are mandatory to participate in RESET may be granted good cause from participation in work or work activities. Good cause may be granted due to circumstances beyond a client's control. When determining good cause, the Department will consider all the facts and circumstances. Even after the CAO has made a preliminary determination of the lack of good cause, an individual may offer evidence of good cause to avoid sanction. The Department may grant good cause for up to six months at a time.

Determinations of good cause will be made using the criteria found in 55 Pa. Code §165.52.

NOTE: The time an individual spends in "Exemption" or "Good Cause" status counts towards the 60-month time limit.

Special Allowances for Supportive Services (SPALs) for Work and Work Activities

Individuals who participate in work or work activities specified on their AMR may be eligible for supportive services provided by the Department. Except for child care, payments for SPALs, when approved, will be made by the CAO for actual costs up to the Department's established maximums. The Department promotes the use of community and faith-based organizations when a recipient has the ability to obtain work supports through these types of organizations. Eligibility for child care is determined by the CAO and payments are made by Child Care Information Services (CCIS). In many areas of the state, clothing is provided as required through PA WORKWEAR.

Monitoring of SPALs issued to recipients in support of their RESET participation is necessary to assure that expenditures are verified, required, and used for their intended purpose. If it is determined that a SPAL was issued in error or if the payment was misused, an overpayment referral may be filed.

Education in the Work First Environment

Since the implementation of welfare reform in Pennsylvania, education in the form of literacy initiatives, pursuit of a high school diploma or GED, ESL, Adult Basic Education, post- secondary schooling, and vocational skill training has been a part of the continuum of work activities.

Employment always has been the primary goal of our TANF program. We continue to encourage individuals to begin developing a work history early in their welfare experience.

However, the role of education will continue to be emphasized for individuals who have not been successful in finding employment and are now seeking career advancement in order to move to self-sufficiency.

Some of our current refinements include:

- Counseling and case management provided by CAO and contractor staff. These activities focus on encouraging clients to pursue education that leads to employment in targeted industry clusters designated by the commonwealth's workforce development partners. This assures clients will be educated in areas where there is a demand in the labor market.
- Contracted programs that currently include various courses of education. The Department will strive to maintain these and increase them when appropriate;
- Structured outreach efforts that began with post-secondary institutions and will be expanded to include community literacy programs;
- Programs and procedures that assist individuals in completing their educational activities; and
- Employment and training programs that will assist individuals enrolled in post- secondary education to stay in school and meet the challenges of parenthood as well as those associated with participation in education while working.

Pennsylvania will continue to integrate employment and training efforts designed specifically for welfare recipients into the larger workforce development system at every appropriate point.

Noncompliance with the RESET Program

A sanction is imposed on any nonexempt individual required to participate in RESET who willfully, without good cause:

- Fails to accept a bona fide offer of employment in which the individual is able to engage;
- Voluntarily terminates employment;
- Fails or refuses to participate in or continue to participate in an available work activity, including work activities specified on the AMR;
- Fails to seek employment;

- Fails to maintain employment;
- Fails to participate for an average of at least 20 hours per week in work or a work activity; or
- Fails to apply for work at the time and in the manner as the Department may prescribe.

If good cause is not established, the individual will receive an Advance Notice advising of the proposed sanction. The sanctions for failure to comply with the work or work activity requirements are required by 62 P.S. §432.3.

Sanctions for Failure to Comply with RESET Requirements

A mandatory RESET participant who willfully fails to cooperate with the work or work activity requirement, participate in RESET or accept a bona fide offer of employment, or who terminates employment, or fails to apply for work, without good cause, shall be disqualified from receiving cash assistance.

The period of the sanction is:

- First sanction: The noncompliant individual in the budget group will be sanctioned for a minimum of 30 days. The sanction will continue until the individual demonstrates and maintains compliance for at least one week and thereafter, or establishes good cause or an exemption. After 90 days of noncompliance, the entire budget group will become ineligible and will remain ineligible until the noncompliant sanctioned individual demonstrates and maintains compliance for at least one week and thereafter, or establishes good cause or an exemption.

- Second sanction: The noncompliant individual in the budget group will be sanctioned for a minimum of 60 days. The sanction will continue until the individual demonstrates and maintains compliance for at least one week and thereafter, or establishes good cause or an exemption. After 60 days of noncompliance, the entire budget group will become ineligible and will remain ineligible until the noncompliant sanctioned individual demonstrates and maintains compliance for at least one week and thereafter, or establishes good cause or an exemption.

- Third sanction: The entire budget group is permanently disqualified.

In lieu of the sanctions set forth above, if an employed individual voluntarily, without good cause, reduces his earnings by not fulfilling the minimum work requirement, the cash grant is reduced by the dollar value of the income that would have been earned if the individual would have fulfilled his minimum hourly work requirement, until the minimum hourly work requirement is met.

The Department has opted not to impose a sanction on Medical Assistance benefits for recipients who fail to comply with work and work activity requirements.

Supporting Employment with Child Care

The Department has provided information about subsidized child care benefits available under the "Child Care Works" program in the Child Care Development Block Grant State Plan submitted for the period October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014. Child care costs are paid through the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), except for child care costs of employed individuals who receive TANF, which are paid through commingled TANF funds. Support for child care costs for eligible TANF recipients participating in approved work activities provides access to a full range of child care opportunities.

To help ease the transition for individuals whose TANF benefits end but their need for child care continues, Pennsylvania has implemented Child Care Unification. Verification requirements are also less stringent for individuals who contact the Child Care Information Services (CCIS) in a timely manner to apply for Former TANF child care benefits.

During the period of November 1, 2006 through June 1, 2007, unification of subsidized child care services was implemented throughout the state. As a result, the CCIS agencies are responsible for the issuance of all subsidized child care statewide. The CAOs are still the eligibility agent for TANF recipients in need of child care, but refer these families to the CCIS agencies for child care enrollment and payment.

Unification of the subsidized child care program promotes a local focus on clients and families, streamlined and provided through a single office that can more effectively manage resources and provide services to a greater number of eligible families. Unification insures that all low- income families get the help of professionals trained to assist with their child care needs and receive information on the benefits of quality child care and early education. It also provides subsidy providers with a single point of contact – the CCIS. All child care providers must now sign a provider agreement which results in payments going directly to the provider.

The CCIS agencies also determine eligibility and issue child care payments for working persons who previously received TANF cash assistance or that have income at or below 235 percent of the FPIGs for their family size. Individuals must either have previously received TANF cash assistance or have income at or below 235 percent of the FPIG and be meeting the work requirement established by DHS.
In order to be potentially eligible for child care under the Former TANF program, the parent/caretaker must:

- Contact the CCIS within 183 days of the date his/her TANF benefits ended. If the CCIS is contacted on day 184 or later, the parent/caretaker is no longer eligible to receive Former TANF child care. Eligibility will then be assessed under the Low Income child care program.

- Be working and have a need for child care. The parent/caretaker must be working an average of at least 20 hours per week (this may include training, but at least 10 hours per week must be work) no later than the 184th day following the date TANF ended.

When TANF cash assistance ends and a need for child care exists, verification requirements are less strict at the CCIS if the parent/caretaker contacts the CCIS within 60 days of TANF benefits ending. If no changes have occurred for the parent/caretaker within the 60 days following TANF closing and the CCIS is contacted during that period, the parent/caretaker may self-certify required information. Additional verification is not required to receive Former TANF child care.

If the parent/caretaker contacts the CCIS within 60 days and changes have occurred since TANF closed, or contact with the CCIS is made beyond the 60 day period, the parent/caretaker must provide verification for all required information. Families who previously received TANF benefits may apply for and potentially be found eligible for Former TANF child care up to 183 days from the date TANF closed. Consumer education materials and information about minimal health and safety standards are available to all TANF clients and participating providers. Information about child care options, as well as availability and location of care, continues to be available through the Department's contracted CCIS agencies. CCIS agencies offer a parent counseling system that educates participants on the importance of quality early education and child care services. The counseling system also educates parents/caretakers on how to secure high- quality child care in the neighborhood.

CCIS agencies provide resource and referral services to all TANF clients participating in the Department's employment and training programs. These resource and referral services educate parents/caretakers about:

- CCIS services
- Child care choices
- Impact of child care choice on care and early development and the school readiness of children
- Impact of child care choice on ability to retain employment

Parent counseling is also available at the employment and training site on an optional basis to any TANF client seeking the service and on a mandatory basis for TANF clients demonstrating poor attendance at the program or an inability to retain employment due to unstable child care arrangements. This initiative meets TANF purpose number two – end dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.

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)(iii) of the Social Security Act]

Pennsylvania will comply with Section 402(a)(A)(iii) 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 AccessMatters 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, sexually transmitted disease (STD) screening and pregnancy testing, and referrals to school, community based resources, and the family planning network for free or low-cost reproductive health services. Currently AccessMatters is issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to expand the HRC model from the Philadelphia region to nine additional counties with high rates of teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections (STI) and school dropouts. The nine additional counties are: Allegheny, Beaver, Berks, Dauphin, Fayette, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Lycoming, and Venango. HRC sites will screen all adolescents utilizing HRC services for adolescent relationship abuse and will enter into an agreement with the Department's STD program for STD testing.

- In September 2010, the Department was awarded funding from the Administration for Children and Families for the Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP). PREP is a statewide project that serves adolescents in licensed residential programs serving delinquent children, youth development centers, youth forestry camps, licensed residential drug and alcohol treatment facilities, psychiatric residential treatment facilities, licensed partial hospitalization or outpatient drug and alcohol facilities, and licensed partial hospitalization or outpatient mental health facilities (implementation sites). The goal of the PREP 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 are providing 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 is provided to staff at implementation sites on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) cultural competency. The Department recently selected new PREP implementations sites through a Request for Applications (RFA) to begin services October 1, 2015. The first RFA was completed in early summer 2015, and twelve sites were selected. The Department added five additional sites through a second RFA. Schools, not-for-profit 501 (c) (3) organizations, city or county health departments, and community-based health or human services agencies serving at- risk youth have been added to the list of eligible PREP implementation sites, and sites may choose from a list of twenty approved evidence-based curricula.

- 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 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.

The Department is using an approach that utilizes evidence-based or evidenced-informed programming that combines mentoring, adult-supervised activities, adult-led group discussions, and parenting education as a means to increase the protective factors of youth ages 9-14. By utilizing the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets framework, youth will be provided with building blocks for healthy development to help them grow into healthy, caring and responsible young adults. The Search Institute's developmental assets framework includes 20 external assets organized under the following four categories: support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, and constructive use of time; and 20 internal assets organized under these four categories: commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity. The developmental assets serve as protective factors to help youth avoid negative risky behaviors. The positive effects of these protective factors increase as the number of assets a youth has increases. Enhancing the developmental assets of youth provides an opportunity for them to transition into sexually healthy adolescents who are able to realize their individual potential around critical developmental tasks related to sexuality.

Services are focused on adolescents and provided by current contractors. These initiatives are funded with 100 percent federal funds.

In 2013, there were 139,606 births in Pennsylvania, of which 58,129 or 41.6 percent were out-of-wedlock. Of the out-of-wedlock births, 8,180 or 14 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 2013. This is the most recent data as of November 2015.

Year	Births	Out-of-Wedlock	Out-of-Wedlock – 19 years of age or younger
2013	139,606	58,129 (41.6%)	8,180 (14%)
2012	140,146	58,744 (41.9%)	9,514 (16.1%)
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's (PCAR) effort to reduce sexual violence has shifted to changing societal norms that reinforce gender–based violence and promoting healthy relationships. Research provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention consistently shows that while programming to teens is important, it is only one component of prevention. Perhaps the most important component is involving the community in prevention by teaching about how stereotypes reinforce gender-based violence (community could be defined as a city, town, college campus, high school, or peer group). Resources and training provided by PCAR assist rape crisis centers in developing comprehensive prevention plans that include parents, teachers, staff, students, and bystanders. PCAR is requiring multiple sessions with groups, rather than the single, risk reduction programming typically provided to schools. These prevention activities are funded by Title XX and Rape Prevention and Education.

PCAR's 50 sub-grantees continue to use PCAR's initiatives and materials to enhance their own prevention education programming within their respective communities. The following initiatives continue to be used throughout Pennsylvania. Please note that none of these initiatives are funded with TANF funds.

Continuing initiatives include:

1. Use of multi-media including websites, Facebook and Twitter:

   PCAR continues its use of several websites. These websites provide information about healthy relationships and sexual violence awareness and prevention, in addition to providing resources for teens to seek help. During FY 2014-2015, the PCAR website (www.pcar.org) had 255,940 page views. The content for the Teen PCAR website was relocated on the www.pcar.org site; this is to keep the content more current and active. The TeenPCAR site had become static and the number of visits were dropping. PCAR has also developed a Facebook page which it updates daily and has begun using Twitter (@PCARORG) to communicate upcoming events. As of June 30, 2015, the Facebook page has 2,081 likes and 405 new followers. PCAR has 4,023 followers on Twitter and had 9,849 tweets, 1,593 known retweets and 467 mentions during FY 2014-2015. Social media activity continues to be a growth area.

2. Sexual Assault Awareness Month:

The 2015 theme for Sexual Assault Awareness Month was *Safer Campuses, Brighter Futures*. PCAR's Communications team distributed promotional items to rape crisis centers throughout Pennsylvania for Sexual Assault Awareness Month. This year's items included stress balls, teal ribbon pins, and lip balm. Although the campaign focused on campus sexual assault materials could be modified for use in middle and high schools. The communications team also developed several blogs and social media efforts to engage the community regarding the topic of sexual violence.

3. Engaging men:

The Engaging Men initiative still continues through the PCAR website to include tips on engaging men. In addition, training about providing counseling to male survivors, engaging men and boys in the prevention of sexual violence, and other similar topics is available to local rape crisis centers.

4. Development and Distribution of Print materials:

PCAR Resource Materials

During FY 2014-2015, the Communications Department and the Training and Technical Assistance Team worked to update and/or develop the following resource materials. Among the materials were the following:

Public Awareness

Bi-weekly mailings: 27 issues per year

PCAR newsletter: The Horizon- July 2014, October 2014, April 2015

PCAR Annual Report- January 2015

Manuals

Parents in the Know

Parents' Journal (English and Spanish)

Facilitator's Guide (English and Spanish)

Primary Prevention and Evaluation Resource Kit

Volume 1: Choosing Prevention Strategies

Volume 2: Evaluating Prevention Strategies

Volume 3: Analyzing Evaluation Data

Volume 4: Analyzing Qualitative Data

Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) - updated October 2014

Facts about Sexual Assault in Prison

Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA): A Pennsylvania Perspective

Commonly Used Terms in Prisons

How to Implement an Institution-Based Sexual Assault Response Team

What Happens when a person is incarcerated

Working with Victims who are Inmates

Understanding Rape in Prison

Factsheets

Budget Advocacy – May 2015

Legislative Priorities - April 2015

Policy Brief: Termination of Parental Rights of Convicted Rapists - March 2015

Gov. Wolf Transition Agenda - December 2014

Act 31/HB 431: Education and Training - March 2015

Act 32/HB 436: Privileged Communications and penalties for failure to report or to refer

Act 33/SB 21: Omnibus Amendments (Reporting Child Abuse)

Act 105: Trafficking of Individuals - April 2015

Act 107: Custody and Child Welfare Involvement - March 2015

Act 108: Amendment to Child Abuse definition - March 2015

Act 117/SB 23: Expunction of child abuse perpetrators under 18 when offense was committed - March 2015

Act 118: Increased penalties for simple assault, aggravated assault and false reporting of child abuse

Brochures

What is Sexual Violence (English and Spanish)

Mandated Reporting

Sexual Violence: Men & Boys (December 2014) (English and Spanish)

Guides

Police Response to Sexual Assault - November 2014

A Guide for Friends and Family of Sexual Violence Survivors - updated April 2015

Infographics

Funding Pennsylvania's Rape Crisis Centers - July 2014

Understanding the Age of Consent in Pennsylvania - May 2015

Pennsylvania Sex Offense Statute of Limitations: Criminal Charges - October 2014

Technical Assistance Bulletins

Survivors in Crisis: Suicide Prevention and Intervention technique for sexual assault - October 2014

How Community Partners Can Work with Students on Title IX - February 2015

Talking points

NFL Ray Rice Incident- September 2014

5. 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 Statewide Sexual Assault Conference. The following workshops in the prevention track were offered at the conference:

- Using Intersectionality to Engage Men in Primary Prevention Efforts
- Primary Prevention: Using a Social Norms Approach with Middle School & High School Students
- Engaging Student Athletes in Prevention
- Linking the Roads: Working with Youth who Experience Homelessness & Sexual Violence
- Primary Prevention Resource Took Kit
- Activating the Community to Engage in Prevention
- Human Trafficking of Children

In addition to the Annual Statewide Sexual Assault Conference, PCAR provided a number of trainings to local rape crisis centers during FY 2014-2015. Some of the topics included:

Victims' Response to Sexual Assault

Trauma Informed Response to Sexual Violence

Trauma Informed Investigation of Sexual Assault

New PA Child Protection Legislation

Parents In The Know (Curriculum developed by PCAR)

Preventing Child Sexual Abuse

Working with the Media

Self-injury

Mandated Reporting

Mandatory Reporting: Maintaining Relationships with the Youth We Serve

Human Trafficking

Human Trafficking in Pennsylvania

Campus Sexual Violence

Play Therapy for Traumatized Children

Sexual Abuse of Children in Farmworker and Immigrant Communities

Technology and Human Trafficking

LGBTQ Inclusivity

Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)

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 asked third party processors to block, voluntarily, 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 four transactions 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. The EBT RMU also screens all cash transactions using the keyword "liquor" for the entire month. 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.

- DHS has elected to send letters to individuals with prohibited transactions reminding them not to use their TANF assistance at one of the prohibited locations. Since 2014, DHS has sent 39 letters to individuals found to have used their EBT card at out-of-state liquor stores and one who had used their EBT card at an establishment that provides adult-oriented entertainment in which performers disrobe.

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.

TANF State Plan

TANF PURPOSE

This document outlines and updates the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's plan for providing assistance to families with children from funds provided under Title I of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996 (P.L. 104-193), and the TANF Final Rules published in the Federal Register on April 12, 1999. The Act amends Section 402 of the Social Security Act to require that states submit a plan to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) that outlines how the state will provide Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits. Implementation was effective March 3, 1997. Submission of this State Plan renewal commits Pennsylvania to continue operation of its TANF State Program. Implementation was effective October 1, 2014.

II. INTRODUCTION

On May 6, 1996, Act 1996-35 (Act 35) was signed into law. It was a dramatic welfare reform plan designed to move families off the welfare rolls and into the work force. The provisions of the Act encourage personal and parental responsibility, emphasize self-sufficiency through employment, strengthen child support requirements, and increase penalties for welfare fraud. It is a common-sense approach that provides Pennsylvania with the core components for reform of our welfare system. The TANF provisions of PRWORA provided the opportunity to make that reform a reality.

When signed into law on August 22, 1996, PWRORA ended the 60-year federal welfare entitlement program known as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and the Federal JOBS employment and training program. In its place, each state was provided with a block grant for designing and operating its own welfare program within broad TANF requirements. These requirements include stringent work activity participation rates and a lifetime limit of five years for the receipt of benefits. The TANF Block Grant and the

Final Rules published in the Federal Register on April 12, 1999, provided Pennsylvania with the opportunity to build on the core components of Act 35 to create a welfare system that makes the best use of welfare dollars. The Final Rule for reauthorization of TANF, published in the Federal Register on February 5, 2008, added definitions for each accountable core activity, defined a work-eligible individual, changed the base year for determining caseload reduction from FY 1995 to FY 2005 and required states to submit a Work Verification Plan explaining how hours of participation are documented for each core activity. Pennsylvania's changes to the work requirements in this State Plan were necessitated by the Final Rule. The TANF Program in Pennsylvania is designed to provide short-term assistance to families when the support of one or both parents is interrupted. It also provides supplemental support when family income from employment and other sources is not sufficient to meet basic needs. It is not intended to provide long-term support or become a way of life. Families undergo assessments of skills, employability and are required to engage in activities that enhance self-sufficiency and ensure the well-being of their children. The provisions of the TANF Program are intended to meet one or more of the following basic purposes of this program as articulated in the federal statute and regulation:

- Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives;
- End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage;
- Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies; and
- Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

Pennsylvania's TANF Program does not discriminate on basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, or sex. Additionally, no person will be denied TANF services and benefits as the result of the inability or limited ability to communicate in the English language.

III. PROGRAM GOALS

The primary goal of Pennsylvania's TANF Program is to provide support to families as they make the transition from dependence on welfare to self-sufficiency and, finally, to long-term self-support. The following goals provide the framework on which the Program is designed:

1. Promote Personal Responsibility

Pennsylvania's TANF Program is based on the principle that welfare should provide temporary cash assistance to families and individuals, providing basic support that enables them to move to self-sufficiency. Inherent in this belief is the notion that the welfare recipient must be personally responsible for taking the necessary steps to end his or her dependence on a welfare "check."

2. Ensure Participation in Work or Work-related Activities

As a result of the federal TANF Reauthorization legislation and to improve work participation rates, Pennsylvania requires every adult, minor head of household and minor child age 16 or 17

who is not in school participate in approved activities as part of their plan for self-sufficiency. Refer to Section VI. A. General Provisions, 9. Work and Self-sufficiency, for further discussion.

3. Move Recipients into Jobs

For most recipients, the way to self-sufficiency and economic independence is through a job. Pennsylvania's approach provides the client with the opportunity to build work skills and a work history. Pennsylvania is adopting a "Work First" approach to help TANF recipients move from welfare to work.

4. Provide Work Incentives and Supports

If we are to encourage employment, families must be better off if they work than if they depend on welfare. By allowing eligible families to receive supplemental cash assistance in addition to a paycheck, Pennsylvania's TANF Program rewards work and helps families establish a financial base that will support self-sufficiency. The TANF Program also supports family efforts to work by providing allowances for work expenses, such as child care and transportation.

5. Break the Cycle of Dependence Through Education

A high school diploma is critical to both short-term and long-term prospects for independence through employment. It opens the door to meaningful, productive employment. Training in a skill or trade, on-the-job training, job-search and job-readiness preparation classes and workshops, among other activities, provide a menu of opportunity for long-term self-sufficiency. Pennsylvania's Road to Economic Self-sufficiency through Employment and Training (RESET) Program encourages people to pursue education and training that is career specific as a means of, and in addition to, meeting work requirements. Additionally, it is important to educate parents regarding the role of high quality early learning experiences to help break the intergenerational cycle of poverty. Parents who work need to understand that the choices they make when placing their children in early care and education programs can influence their child's readiness for school and later success in life.

6. Strengthen Families and Support Children

Both parents play a role in achieving self-sufficiency. The TANF Program requires parents to fulfill their fundamental responsibilities to their children through a strengthened child support enforcement system.

7. Simplify Program Administration

Pennsylvania must be able to use resources productively -- to assist the client in developing and successfully implementing his or her own plan for self-sufficiency. As administrators of the public welfare system, we must have two goals: to help recipients of public assistance become self-sufficient and to ensure that tax dollars funding welfare programs are used wisely.

IV. MEASURING RESULTS

Monitoring implementation progress and evaluating attainment of program goals is an integral component of Pennsylvania's TANF Program. The primary focus of monitoring and evaluating activities is to gather data about a comprehensive set of performance indicators and performance measures which are used to document clear, specific program outcomes.

The detailing of a definitive set of performance indicators and measures continues to evolve as program planning decisions are made and modified. The ongoing program evaluation information system includes such performance indicators and measures as the following:

- Number and percentage of active adult TANF individuals who are employed.
- Number and percentage of mandatory TANF adults participating in an employment/training/education activity.
- Number and percentage of mandatory TANF adults not participating in an employment/training/education activity.
- Number of TANF adults with a sanction, exemption or good cause.
- Number of TANF adults in educational activities.
- Number of TANF adults in independent or contracted training activities.
- Number of TANF adults in job search activities.
- Number of TANF adults in transition to a work activity scheduled, but not yet started.
- Number of TANF adults who are self-employed.
- Number and percentage of job placements.
- Job placement rate.
- Cost per enrollment.
- Cost per outcome.
- Number and percentage meeting job retention.
- Number of individuals obtaining jobs with benefits.
- Number and percentage of TANF adults increasing hours of employment.
- Number of TANF adults graduating from community college.
- Number of TANF adults who receive child care subsidies that select high quality early care and education programs.

A primary focus of program evaluation efforts associated with implementation of the TANF Program is to develop, maintain and refine, where necessary, an integrated and comprehensive evaluation information system which provides data and information on outcome and performance measures related to key components of TANF. This data is then used to provide ongoing monitoring assessments of program implementation and to provide summary statements describing attainment of program goals. To ensure the appropriate degree of program accountability, the measures used are defined by data and information which are timely, accurate, valid, reliable, credible and easily communicated.

This information system is composed of TANF data and available data for pre-TANF assistance programs. The information system is supplemented by those data and information necessary to track the provisions of the TANF legislation and satisfy mandated reporting requirements. This collection of data about TANF participants, combined with data detailing critical program components, provides documentation of specific

outcome and performance measures established for the TANF goals. Additionally, analyses of the data available in this information system combined with data from other sources provide important information about the configurations of participant and program characteristics which produce the most favorable long-term outcomes. Comparisons of these relationships between participant and program characteristics and their effects on outcome measures across time permit systematic, evolutionary, incremental shaping of TANF programs to effectively meet the TANF goals.

With an increased awareness of the need to strengthen accountability, promote program integrity, and limit fraud, monitoring of Special Allowances (SPALs) issued to recipients in support of their RESET participation is necessary to assure that expenditures are verified, required, and used for their intended purpose.

V. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

A. Public Availability and Review

A Notice of Availability of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's TANF State Plan was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on August 16, 2014, to allow for the public comment period. Copies of the TANF State Plan are available at the 67 County Assistance Offices (CAOs) around the state and on the Department of Human Services' (the Department) website (http://www.dhs.state.pa.us). The *Pennsylvania Bulletin* is the official gazette of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and is the temporary supplement to the Pennsylvania Code, the official codification of agency rules and regulations. The Notice published in the *Bulletin* indicated that comments on the TANF State Plan are to be directed to the Department of Human Services, Office of Income Maintenance.

The State Plan was also submitted to key stakeholder groups for review and comment. These groups include members of the legislature and the Governor's Cabinet, as well as associations representing county government, client advocacy groups, business interests, and community agencies providing a variety of services to recipients of public assistance.

B. Additional Outreach

The Income Maintenance Advisory Committee (IMAC) received a briefing on the TANF State Plan. IMAC is composed of current and former welfare recipients, representatives of welfare rights organizations, employment and training specialists, and other client advocates. IMAC advises the Department on policies, procedures and other activities related to the programs administered by the Office of Income Maintenance.

C. Public Comments

The Department of Human Services accepted comments on the TANF State Plan from the general public.

The Department's ongoing review of the TANF Program includes review and consideration of public comments along with the tracking of outcomes of the TANF Program. The Department will submit amendments to the State Plan on an as-needed basis.

VI. OUTLINE OF PENNSYLVANIA'S TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF) PROGRAM

Although the TANF Program replaced the former federal cash benefits program known as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), many of the rules and procedures under which the Department administered AFDC remain in effect as part of the TANF Program. These rules and procedures are contained in Chapter 55 of the Pennsylvania Code of regulations (55 Pa. Code), Notices of Rule Change to the Code published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*, Office of Income Maintenance (OIM) Bulletins, OIM Operations Memoranda and Departmental Handbooks.

Financial eligibility criteria for Maintenance of Effort (MOE) –funded assistance and services are the same as for other TANF assistance and services, except MOE claimed for child care under the provisions of 45 CFR §263.3 follows the financial eligibility criteria established under the Child Care and Development Fund State Plan and associated state regulations.

New or revised rules and procedures are set forth in the State Plan. These changes and revisions are adopted pursuant to the authority of PRWORA, Pennsylvania's Act 35, §§201(2) and 403(b) of the Public Welfare Code (62 P.S. §§201(2) and 403(b)) and Act 1997-58 (P.L. 549, No. 58).

Federal statute at 42 U.S.C.A. §609(a)(7)(B)(i) provides for the possibility of separate and segregated state programs. Stakeholders were consulted and input was solicited. The decision to create a segregated state program is incorporated and included in this State Plan.

A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. Program Administration

The Department is responsible for administering the TANF Program in 67 CAOs. While program requirements are applied consistently statewide, the maximum TANF benefit varies from county to county based on the four benefit schedules currently in effect.

The Department continues to use private contractors to supplement the work of the CAOs to provide services, such as job search, job-readiness preparation, education and training services, and to assist clients to enter the work force, retain jobs and advance in employment.

Individuals who receive TANF benefits on or after March 3, 1997, are subject to all requirements of the TANF Program. Recipients are subject to the 60-month lifetime limit and the work requirements of Act 35 beginning March 3, 1997.

2. Defining Assistance/Non-Assistance Benefits

Assistance

For purposes of applying TANF time limits, work and work activity requirements and child support cooperation (including assignment) requirements, the term "assistance" is defined as cash payments, vouchers and other forms of benefits designed to meet a family's ongoing basic needs (i.e., for food, clothing, shelter, utilities, household goods, personal care items and general incidental expenses). "Assistance" also includes:

- Supportive services such as transportation and TANF-funded child care provided to non-employed cash assistance recipients.

If a benefit falls within the definition of assistance, the benefit counts as assistance even when receipt of the benefit is conditioned on participation in work, community service or other work-related activities.

Financial eligibility for TANF, Time-Out and Extended TANF cash assistance is determined by comparing the net countable income for a calendar month to the budget group's Family Size Allowance (FSA), plus any special need allowances. If the income equals or exceeds the FSA plus any special needs allowances, the budget group is ineligible for cash assistance. Current FSA levels are found in 55 Pa. Code, Chapter 183, Income, Appendix B. Table 3. The resource limit is $1,000.

Funding for TANF is commingled state and federal funds. Funding for Time-Out is segregated state funds and funding for Extended TANF is all federal monies.

Non-Assistance

The final Federal TANF Rules of April 12, 1999, include the potential for funding a class of benefits known as "non-assistance." Pennsylvania excludes from the definition of "assistance" activities that support employed former TANF recipients or those who are eligible for, but not receiving "assistance." For example, case management services, job retention programs, child care and wage subsidies may be provided as on-going supports to employed former cash assistance recipients. These services and benefits received by the family are considered "non-assistance," and the family receiving them after leaving cash assistance is no longer using months of time-limited TANF assistance.

In Pennsylvania, the Department constantly reviews its programs to ensure they meet the needs of low-income families as envisioned in the four TANF purposes. The Department incorporated a total of seven non-assistance initiatives included in the FY 2014-2015 budget that provide short-term benefits, work supports and other services to eligible low-income families and non-custodial parents. Although these short-term benefits, work supports and services are funded with TANF funds, they are excluded from the definition of "assistance" in 45 CFR §260.31 and do not count towards the 60-month TANF time limit.

In addition, individuals receiving these benefits are not subject to the TANF work requirement or to a federally-imposed child support requirement. Pursuant to 45 CFR §260.31, the term "non-assistance" is defined below:

☐ **Non-Assistance** includes:

- Non-recurrent, short-term benefits that:

  - Are designed to deal with a specific crisis situation or episode of need;
  - Are not intended to meet recurrent or ongoing needs; and
  - Will not extend beyond four months.

  OR

- Work subsidies (i.e., payments to employers or third parties to help cover the costs of employee wages, benefits, supervision and training);

  OR

- Supportive services such as child care and transportation provided to families who are employed;

  OR

- Services such as counseling, case management, peer support, child care information and referral, transitional services, job retention, job advancement and other employment-related services that do not provide basic income support.

In accordance with 45 CFR §260.31 and subject to the availability of resources, the Department intends to provide funding included in the FY 2014-2015 budget for the following non-assistance initiatives to certain needy families, based on the program descriptions and eligibility set forth in each initiative appearing below:

☐ **Child Care Provided to Employed Families**

Effective July 2000, this initiative provides subsidized child care benefits to eligible *employed* families who need child care to participate in unsubsidized employment, subsidized employment and/or education/training activities.

Eligibility for this initiative is limited to needy families, as defined in this State Plan, who have a gross annual earned income that does not exceed 235% of the FPIGs. The parent or responsible adult must be a current or former TANF recipient and must be working a number of hours established by the Department as a means to support the parent's transition to self-sufficiency.

This initiative meets TANF purpose number two – end dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage, and is funded with commingled funds.

- **The ELECT Initiative**

Effective July 1, 2012, the Education Leading to Employment and Career Training (ELECT) Initiative became a joint venture between the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and Office of Child Development (OCDEL). Effective July 1, 2015, the Office of Maintenance (OIM) acquired oversight of the ELECT program and will be working collaboratively with PDE to manage the program. Funds are now transferred from DHS to PDE through a Memorandum of Understanding for the administration of this program. The ELECT initiative is designed to assist parents of minor children, including expectant parents, to return to or remain in school, prevent repeat pregnancy, maintain attendance, obtain their high school diploma or GED, develop responsible parenting skills, and secure post-graduation employment, education, or training that will help them become successful parents and self-sufficient adults. Acknowledging paternity is not required to participate.

This initiative meets TANF purpose number two, which is to end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage; purpose number three, which is to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies; and purpose number four, which is to encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

- **Family Savings Account**

The Pennsylvania Family Savings Account (FSA) program became operational in 1998. This initiative is administered by the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). The FSA program first received Assets for Independence (AFI) support in FY 1999. Since that time, DCED has allocated over $25 million in State and Federal funds to the program. Funding sources have included the AFI program ($9,582,000); State appropriations ($10,228,000); the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program ($6,000,000); and the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program ($46,000).

The FSA program allows participants to use FSA savings toward the following allowable assets: homeownership, postsecondary education or training, business capitalization, home repair, car purchase, computer purchase (if the car or computer is related to employment or education). Federal AFI funds are used to match savings for any of these asset purchases. Starting in 2000, participants have been allowed to put their FSA savings in a Section 529 college savings plan to save for future post-secondary education. FSA account holders do

not have to be the beneficiary of the college savings plan. For example, a grandparent may save for a grandchild.

Participation in the FSA Program is limited to recipients of TANF and other eligible individuals and working families whose earned income at the time of enrollment is not more than 200 percent of the FPIGs.

This initiative meets TANF purpose number two which is to end dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage, and is operated under 42 U.S.C.A. § 404(a)(1). This initiative is funded with federal and state match funds.

This program has not been funded in the budget for the past 8 years.

☐ **Nurse-Family Partnership**

Effective October 2001, this initiative provides home visitation management services to eligible low-income, first-time mothers only. The home visitors are nurses who follow guidelines that focus on the mother's personal health, quality of care provided to the child and the parent's own life-course development.

The purposes of this initiative are as follows:

- Improve pregnancy outcomes by helping women engage in good preventative health practices including obtaining thorough prenatal care from their health care providers, improving their diets and reducing use of cigarettes, alcohol and illegal substances.
- Improve child health and development by helping parents provide more responsible and competent care for their children.
- Improve families' economic self-sufficiency by helping parents develop a vision for their own future, plan future pregnancies, continue their education and find jobs.

Eligibility requirements for this initiative are as follows:

- Must be enrolled into the program by 28 weeks gestation; and pregnant with the first child, and
- Must have a gross annual earned income that does not exceed 235 percent of the FPIGs

This initiative meets TANF purpose number two, which is to end dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage and purpose number three, which is to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies. This initiative is funded with commingled funds.

☐ **Head-Start Collaboration Project**

This initiative offers classroom services or home visits to children from age three to five and their families. There are 38 grantees and 5,567 children served. Programs can serve children either as new enrollments or extending the day for existing children. If programs choose the latter, they must add a full half day to make a full day.

As mandated by the Head Start performance standards, Head Start grantees provide an educational program and comprehensive family-oriented services including parent education, early education enrichment, health, nutrition, family goal setting, literacy and intervention programs that support the child success in school and the community and support the family's education and training enabling them to make educated decisions.

Eligibility requirements for the HSSAP year funding are as follows:

- Must be a Head Start/Early Head Start grantee or delegate agency, and
- Must use the grant to provide Head Start services to children from low-income families who meet the Head Start eligibility criteria (whose incomes do not exceed 130 percent of the FPIGs).

The Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts program provides high-quality early childhood education to Pennsylvania children in diverse settings, ranging from school-based programs, Keystone STARS 3 and 4 child care centers, private academic preschool and Head Start agencies.

This initiative meets TANF purpose number two, which is to end dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage and TANF purpose number three, which is to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies. This initiative is funded with TANF Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funds

☐ **Pennsylvania Pregnancy and Parenting Support Services Program**

Effective July 2002, this initiative provides pregnancy and parenting support to women in need. The program primarily provides information and counseling that promote childbirth instead of abortion and assists pregnant women in their decisions regarding adoption or parenting. Services are free to women participating in the program.

Eligibility requirements for this initiative are as follows:

- A woman must be pregnant, or suspect she is pregnant, or be the parent of an infant less than 12 months of age, and
- Have a gross annual earned income that does not exceed 185 percent of the FPIGs.

This initiative meets all four TANF purposes and is funded with 100 percent segregated Federal funds.

☐ **Diversion Component**

This initiative provides funds to certain eligible families to meet a specific crisis situation or episode of need that is intended to eliminate a family's need for ongoing cash assistance.

To be eligible for a diversion benefit the applicant family must meet income/resource requirements and definitive conditions (minor child, specified relative and deprivation) for receipt of TANF.

The Diversion component provides a one-time non-assistance payment to eligible families. The adult in the family must have an expectation of receiving income and must have a recent work history or job skills training. A recent work history is defined as having worked within the 90-day period immediately preceding the date of application, or within 180 days of the date of application in areas qualified as waived areas for time limited SNAP benefits. The Diversion payment is equal to the Family Size Allowance (FSA) for one, two or a maximum of three months, depending upon a family's need. A family will be eligible for only one payment in a 12-month period.

Examples of a crisis situation or episode of need are:

- The threat of homelessness, eviction, or utility shut off
- Employment, school, or training related needs
- Car repairs, inspections, payments, insurance premium payments and other transportation costs
- Costs to relocate to secure employment
- Child care costs

This initiative meets TANF purpose number one, which is to provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives and number two, to end dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage. This initiative is funded with 100% federal funds.

4. Defining Needy Families

A needy family is defined as a minor child and his parent(s) or other adult specified relative with whom he lives who meet the income and resource standards established under this TANF State Plan. Eligibility for TANF is also extended to pregnant women who have no other children living with them.

☐ **Minor Child**

A minor child is under age 18 or is age 18 and a full-time student in a secondary school or in the equivalent level of vocational or technical training.

☐ **Specified Relative**

A specified relative is defined as an adult who:

- Is exercising responsibility for the care and control of the child by making and carrying out plans for the support, education and maintenance of the child and applying for assistance on behalf of the child. The finding that a relative is exercising care and control of the child is made whether the relative is the parent or other relative of the child.
- Is maintaining a home in which the child lives with him or her, or is in the process of setting up a home where the child will go to live with him or her within 30 days after receiving the first TANF payment.
- Is related to the child as follows:

  - A blood relative who is within the fifth degree of kinship to the dependent child, including a first cousin once removed. Second cousins and more remote cousins are not within the fifth degree of kinship. A first cousin once removed is the child of one's first cousin or the first cousin of one's parent. The fifth degree of kinship includes great-great grandparents and great-great-great grandparents. The fifth degree of kinship also includes other relationships prefixed by great, great-great, grand or great-grand. Blood relatives include those of half-blood.

  - A parent by legal adoption and any of the adopting parent's blood or adoptive relatives as described above.

  - Stepfather, stepmother, stepbrother, and stepsister.

  - A spouse of any of the relatives described above even though the marriage is terminated by death, separation or divorce.

☐ **Minor Parent**

A minor parent is defined as:

A TANF eligible individual under 18 years of age who has never been married and is the natural parent of a dependent child living with the minor parent, or is pregnant.

A minor parent is required to live in the home of the minor parent's parent, legal guardian or other adult relative who is at least 18 years of age or in an adult-supervised supportive living arrangement unless exempt.

If the minor parent cannot return to the home of a parent, legal guardian, or other adult relative, the Department, in consultation with the county children and youth agency, will provide assistance to the minor parent and dependent child in locating a second-chance home, maternity home or other appropriate adult-supervised supportive living arrangement unless the agency determines that the minor parent's living situation is appropriate.

When both parents are living with a child, the family may qualify for TANF only if one or both parents are incapacitated, unemployed or employed with earnings that are low enough to qualify the family for supplemental TANF assistance.

Certain individuals who live with the minor child must be included in the application for assistance. These members of the TANF mandatory budget group include the TANF child, the biological or adoptive parents of the TANF child and blood-related or adoptive siblings of the TANF child as long as they also meet TANF eligibility requirements.

A family, for purposes of the 60-month time limit, is defined as a minor child and his parent(s) or other adult specified relative with whom he lives and who is applying on the child's behalf. A family does not include a specified relative who is not included in the TANF mandatory budget group and is seeking TANF assistance only for the minor child.

☐ **Absence of a Minor Child**

Under TANF, a specified relative may continue to receive benefits for an otherwise eligible minor child who is absent, or expected to be absent, from the home. The State may choose between several periods of temporary absence:

- not less than 30 days, up to 45 days, up to 180 days or more than 180 days if good cause is established.

Pennsylvania elects to define temporary absence as one that does not exceed 180 consecutive days.

A caretaker relative of a minor child who fails to notify the CAO of the minor child's absence by the end of the five-day period, that begins with the date it becomes clear to the specified relative that the child will be absent for more than 180 consecutive days, is ineligible for TANF for a period of 30 days.

5. Personal Responsibility - The Agreement of Mutual Responsibility

Pennsylvania exercises the TANF option to establish an individual responsibility plan, known as the Agreement of Mutual Responsibility (AMR). The AMR is a plan of action the TANF recipient and the caseworker develop together. The purpose of the AMR is to direct the person's efforts toward self-sufficiency by identifying reasonable goals and determining what activities the person will complete to achieve those goals. The AMR is used to identify the person's short-term and long-term goals. The plan addresses how the recipient will overcome identified barriers and lists participation activities and hours of required participation as well as supportive services provided by the Department. The following individuals are required to sign the AMR:

- Adult applicants and recipients who are required to sign the Application for Benefits, whether or not they are exempt from or have good cause for not meeting the work requirements.
- Pregnant teens or minor parents who sign the Application for Benefits on their own behalf.

The AMR stresses the temporary nature of cash assistance and focuses on the steps the recipient must take to establish a path toward self-sufficiency. The AMR also specifies the penalties for failure to comply and the actions to be taken by the Department to support the efforts of the recipient. An individual who refuses to complete or sign the AMR without good cause is ineligible for TANF cash assistance and removed from the cash grant. The person remains ineligible for cash benefits until he or she completes and signs an AMR. The entire family is ineligible if the individual had previously received 60 months of TANF cash assistance which is considered Extended TANF.

NOTE: The explanation of the Extended TANF program can be found in Section B "Special Provisions" of this document.

As part of completion of the AMR, the CAO determines whether the individual is exempt from or has good cause for not participating in work or work activities. For individuals required to participate in work and work activities, the AMR includes a requirement to conduct an initial job search or participate in a work activity. The initial activity assesses the skills, work experience and employability of each adult recipient.

The AMR is also used to outline other work participation activities and obligations for nonexempt individuals. New legislation effective July 1, 2012 changed the penalties for noncompliance, without good cause, with work requirements set forth on the AMR.

Pursuant to Act 35, the AMR will include the following obligations, when appropriate to the individual or family situation:

- Receive prenatal care as recommended by the doctor or clinic and/or ensure that children are immunized, receive periodic health screening and appropriate medical treatment.

- Take steps, if needed, which will improve a child's school attendance and improve his or her chances for earning a high school diploma.
- Submit to a substance abuse assessment by the local county drug and alcohol authority if the CAO determines that an individual may have a substance-abuse problem that presents a barrier to employment. If the assessment indicates that a drug or alcohol problem exists, the individual will be required to participate in and complete an approved treatment program as indicated by the local drug and alcohol authority. If an individual fails to enter or complete a program, he or she can comply by providing proof of substance-free status by submitting to periodic drug testing.
- Make appropriate payments to service providers from allowances provided to enable the individual to fulfill his or her commitment to engage in work or a work activity.
- Comply with work and work activity requirements.
- Meet other obligations specified on the AMR related to self-sufficiency and parenting responsibilities.

These obligations are basic personal and parental responsibilities which are important to the physical and mental well-being of the family. If not addressed, they not only represent potential barriers to employment, but could increase the likelihood that welfare dependency will be passed from one generation to the next.

The Department established penalties and good cause criteria for noncompliance before implementing sanctions associated with these obligations.

6. Time Limit and Work Requirements for Receipt of TANF

Receipt of TANF assistance is limited to a total of 60 months (five years) in the lifetime of an adult head-of-household or spouse of head-of household. The assistance received as an adult (age 18 and over) head of household or spouse of head of household counts towards the limit. Assistance received by a pregnant minor head of household, minor parent head of household or minor married to the head of household also counts towards the limit. Periods of receipt need not be consecutive to count towards the 60 months. If the TANF budget group includes only children, the 60-month limit does not apply.

Beginning March 3, 1997, the Department activated both the 60-month TANF time clock and the pre-/post-24 month clock which tracks the number of days of receipt of cash assistance. For applicants, these clocks are activated when cash assistance is authorized.

7. Determining Eligibility

Pennsylvania is following rules, regulations and procedures in effect prior to the TANF implementation date, except for the following provisions that are authorized or required by State law (Act 35 and Act 58) or by federal law:

☐ **Earned Income Disregard**

The gross earned income of recipients is subject to a continuous 50% disregard. The disregard encourages recipient families to work and provides additional financial support as they make the transition from welfare to self-sufficiency. Applicants may qualify for the 50% disregard if they have received TANF in one of the four months prior to application or if their income is equal to or less than the standard of need. The deduction for the cost of dependent care for an incapacitated adult is made following application of the 50% disregard.

☐ **Reimbursement for Work Expenses**

Effective March 28, 2009, all TANF families with earned income are eligible for $50 a month as a reimbursement for work expenses.

☐ **Income Exclusions**

Income is excluded as provided in state regulation at 55 Pa. Code §183.81.

Funds deposited into a Saving for Education, Entrepreneurship and Downpayment (SEED) account, including interest earned on the account, are excluded as income when determining eligibility. These accounts are currently being funded with private funds as a demonstration project. Funds may be withdrawn for qualified purposes only. If rolled over to a Roth IRA, the money is counted against the resource limit according to 55 Pa. Code Chapter 177, Resources.

The policy on SEED accounts became effective April 1, 2006.

Earned income from temporary employment with the U.S. Census Bureau is excluded. This policy became effective February 1, 2000.

☐ **Resources**

Resources are excluded as provided in State regulation at 55 Pa. Code §§177.21(a) and 177.22.

Funds deposited in SEED accounts, including interest, are excluded as a resource when determining eligibility.

The policy on SEED accounts became effective April 1, 2006.

☐ **Lump Sum Income**

Lump sum income is counted as income only in the month that it is received. Any funds that remain from the lump sum in months following the month of receipt are counted as a resource.

Final rulemaking for this change was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on August 23, 2002.

☐ **Budgeting Method: Semi Annual Reporting (SAR)**

The income of applicants and recipients affects the TANF benefit as follows:

- The income adjustment is based on the best estimate of the expected income (prospective budgeting). The estimate is based upon verified information provided by the client.
- Monthly income is determined by multiplying the gross average weekly income by four (4.0).
- Recipients are required to complete and submit a reporting form once every 12 months. Since eligibility must be reviewed no less often then every six months, a complete redetermination interview occurs in the alternate six-month period.
- Recipients are required to report increases in gross monthly earned income in excess of $100 and all other changes such as household composition, address, job start, etc. within the first 10 days of the month following the month of the change.
- Recipients are required to report increases in gross monthly unearned income in excess of $50.
- There is no reconciliation of income. No overpayments (underestimates) will be processed unless it was due to a client's failure to properly report income or agency error. Underpayments (overestimates) will not be corrected unless they are the result of a worker error.
- An income adjustment that reduces or increases the grant will be made for the first TANF payment date for which the deadline can be met following proper notice to the client.

SAR was implemented in May of 2003. The Cash Assistance Handbook is updated to reflect the changes.

Penalty for Non-cooperation with Child Support Requirements

If a parent or other caretaker relative fails to cooperate in establishing paternity or in establishing, modifying or enforcing a child support order, without good cause in accordance with Act 58, state regulation provides that the cash assistance allowance, which is the monthly

assistance grant, is reduced by 25%. The grant remains reduced until the parent or caretaker relative demonstrates cooperation or establishes good cause for noncooperation.

Penalty for Conviction of Welfare Fraud

An applicant or recipient who has been convicted of securing or attempting to secure, or aiding or abetting or attempting to aid or abet any individual in securing TANF, Medical Assistance or Federal SNAP by means of a willfully false statement or misrepresentation, or by impersonation, or by willfully failing to disclose a material fact regarding eligibility either before or at the time of, or subsequent to the application for assistance is ineligible for cash assistance. The period of ineligibility is 6 months from the date of the first conviction, 12 months from the date of the second conviction, and permanently from the date of the third conviction.

To identify instances of potential fraud the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania uses the Income Eligibility Verification System (IEVS), the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) Program and the Master Client Index (MCI). IEVS provides information on:

- Wages and unemployment compensation through the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry.
- Supplemental Security Income and other income through the Social Security Administration.
- Both earned and unearned income through the Internal Revenue Service.
- Deceased person matches through the Department of Health.
- Simultaneous receipt of TANF benefits in multiple states through the Public Assistance Reporting Information System.
- Criminal history information through the Commonwealth Judicial Inquiry System.

Additionally, a data exchange for lottery winner's match is available.

The SAVE Program verifies citizenship, identity and immigration status for non-citizens. MCI matches the TANF file with the Child Care Management Information System and the Home and Community-Based Information System to defer fraud by the elimination of duplicate services across programs.

☐ **Satisfaction of Criminal Penalties**

An individual who has been sentenced for a felony or misdemeanor offense and who has not satisfied the penalty imposed by the court is ineligible for TANF. An individual who is required to pay fines, cost and restitution, and who is in compliance with an approved payment plan, may be eligible for TANF.

☐ **Fraudulent Misrepresentation of Residence**

An individual is ineligible for TANF for a period of ten years if he is convicted in a federal or state court of fraudulent misrepresentation of residence for the purpose of receiving TANF, Medical Assistance, SNAP or Supplemental Security Income in two or more states simultaneously.

☐ **Penalty for Conviction of a Felony Offense for Possession, Use or Distribution of a Controlled Substance**

As permitted under federal law, Pennsylvania enacted legislation to opt out of the federal requirement that imposes permanent ineligibility on an individual who is convicted under Federal or state law of a felony offense that was committed after August 22, 1996, related to the possession, use or distribution of a controlled substance. Act 44 was signed into law on December 23, 2003. An individual may receive cash assistance, but he or she must agree to assessment/treatment if assessment/treatment is needed based on his or her statement, current participation in a treatment program or other substantial evidence that the Department may have. The individual must comply with assessment/treatment if the treatment is necessary, available and appropriate for benefits to continue, unless there is good cause for not doing so.

☐ **Failure To Appear At Criminal Court Proceeding**

An individual who, as a defendant, fails to appear at a criminal court proceeding when issued a summons or bench warrant is ineligible for TANF until he complies with the summons or bench warrant.

☐ **Fugitive Felon**

An individual who is fleeing to avoid prosecution or custody or confinement following a conviction for a felony or who is violating probation or parole imposed under Federal or State law is ineligible for cash assistance. If the individual receives a Presidential pardon for the conduct the individual is not ineligible as a fugitive felon or probation/parole violation, for any month beginning after the pardon.

☐ **Violation of Probation or Parole**

An individual who is in violation of the terms of probation or parole is ineligible for TANF until he or she complies.

8. Child Support Requirements

Prerequisites to receiving TANF cash benefits include cooperation with the Department, the Domestic Relations Section of the County Court of Common Pleas or the County Court of Common Pleas in identifying a non-custodial parent, establishing paternity and establishing an order for support. Cooperation is required unless the applicant/recipient establishes good cause for not doing so.

To be eligible for benefits, applicants or recipients are required to:

- Furnish his or her Social Security number or provide proof an application has been filed to obtain a Social Security number.
- Assign to the Department support rights for all family members who are receiving benefits by affixing their signature to an application for benefits.
- Cooperate with the Department, Domestic Relations Section and the court in establishing paternity of a child, unless the applicant or recipient establishes good cause for failing to do so.
- Cooperate in obtaining support payments for the applicant or recipient and for the child, unless the Department determines that the applicant or recipient has good cause for failing to do so.

The Department may waive cooperation requirements for good cause. Good cause includes:

- The child was conceived as a result of incest or rape.
- Legal proceedings for the adoption of the child are pending before a court.
- The applicant or recipient is currently being assisted by a public or licensed private social agency while the decision is being made whether to relinquish the child for adoption and the discussions have not progressed for more than three months.
- Establishing paternity or obtaining child or spousal support increases the risk to the family of further domestic violence.

The applicant or recipient of cash assistance shall provide relevant verification of good cause.

Applicants must appear before, and obtain from, the Domestic Relations Section of the County Court of Common Pleas, a certification of cooperation with child support enforcement requirements prior to authorization of TANF benefits. The Secretary of the Department may waive the personal appearance requirement for a county court or Domestic Relations Section following review of a written request from the county which establishes that another procedure would be as efficient and effective.

The applicant or recipient must cooperate and take the following actions:

- Identify the parent(s) of any child for whom assistance is sought or received. This includes an appearance by the applicant or recipient, with the child, for scheduled genetic testing. The failure of the mother to identify by name the father of a child creates a presumption of noncooperation which may be rebutted only by clear and convincing evidence. If an applicant or recipient provides the names of two putative

fathers subsequently excluded from paternity by genetic testing, the second exclusion creates a presumption of noncooperation, which may be rebutted only by clear and convincing evidence.

- Keep scheduled appointments with the Department or Domestic Relations Section.
- Provide truthful and accurate information and documents requested by the Department or Domestic Relations Section.
- Sign and return any forms requested by the Department or Domestic Relations Section.
- Appear as a witness and provide testimony at judicial and other hearings as requested by the Domestic Relations Section.
- Pay to the Department any support payment received directly from the non-custodial parent after an assignment of support has been made.

The Department, the Domestic Relations Section of the Court of County Common Pleas or the County Court of Common Pleas may determine whether the applicant or recipient has failed to cooperate without good cause.

In accordance with Title 23 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes (23 Pa.C.S.) §4374(c)(1), the State may retain the support collected on behalf of a family receiving TANF up to the amount of the cumulative assistance paid to the family.

The State will distribute child support collected on behalf of families receiving TANF cash assistance as follows:

- Effective October 1, 2008, from the amount of current support collected, pass through to the assistance group the first $100 per month for one child or the first $200 per month for two or more children, or the first $50 per month for spousal support, without decreasing the amount of cash assistance. In no case will an assistance group be paid more than one support pass through per month. The support pass through will be capped at $200 maximum per month.
- Pay the federal government's share and retain the remainder of the amount collected to reimburse the Commonwealth until the amount equals the amount of unreimbursed cash assistance paid to the assistance group.
- Pay to the assistance group receiving TANF any support collected in excess of the amounts distributed or retained as listed above.

In accordance with 23 Pa.C.S.§4352(a.1), TANF child support orders must be reviewed and adjusted, as necessary, on a 3-year cycle absent of any specific request from the Department.

Effective October 1, 2008, in accordance with 23 Pa.C.S. §4374(d), the state will pay support collected through the Federal Tax Refund Offset Program to families to whom current support or arrears is owed prior to retaining such collections to pay the federal or state shares of assigned support. Specifically:

For a family receiving cash assistance, arrears collected through the Federal Tax Refund Offset Program shall be retained by the Commonwealth to the extent past due support has been assigned to the department as a condition of receiving assistance.

For a family that formerly received cash assistance, arrears collected through the Federal Tax Refund Offset Program shall first be applied to the monthly support obligation, and the balance shall be applied to arrears owed the family, including assignments of arrearages that accrued before the family received assistance from the Commonwealth and that were executed between October 1, 1997 and September 30, 2009.

Any remaining arrearages shall be paid to the department.

In accordance with 23 Pa.C.S.§4378(b), the state limits the assignment of support rights only up to the amount of cash assistance received during the period that a family received assistance. Effective October 1, 2009, the assignment shall exclude arrears that accrued prior to receipt of assistance.

Participation in Work or Work-related Activities

To increase work participation rates and to promote self-sufficiency, Pennsylvania has adopted a work-first approach to help clients succeed in their pursuit of self-sufficiency. Pennsylvania requires each adult, minor head of household or minor child age 16 or 17 who is not in school to engage in work or an approved employment and training activity.

While the Department wants all clients to be engaged in activities, the focus is on those individuals who are required to participate in RESET.

Participation must begin within seven calendar days after authorization of assistance. Participation includes full-time work, job search, education, or training. The work activity requirement may be met by participation in any one or combination of the following:

- Unsubsidized Employment
- Subsidized Private Sector Employment
- Subsidized Public Sector Employment
- Work Experience
- On-the-Job Training
- Job Search and Job Readiness Assistance
- Community Service Programs
- Vocational Educational Training
- Job Skills Training Directly Related to Employment
- Education Directly Related to Employment
- Satisfactory School Attendance at Secondary School or in a Course of Study Leading to a Certificate of General Equivalence
- Providing Child Care Services to an Individual Who is Participating in a Community Service Program

After 12 months of participation in vocational education, a recipient may continue education or training, but must also participate in another core work activity.

Since implementation of RESET in 1997, Pennsylvania has allowed individuals under the age of 22, including pregnant or parenting recipients, to meet the work participation requirement by attending high school or participating in a GED program.

☐ **Exemptions**

To be considered exempt from RESET requirements, recipients must be:

- under the age of 18 and pursuing a high school diploma or GED; or
- an individual with a verified physical or mental disability which temporarily or permanently precludes him from any form of employment or work activity; or
- the parent/caretaker relative of a child under the age of 6 for whom an alternate child care arrangement is unavailable; or
- the custodial parent in a one-parent household who is caring for a child under the age of 12 months. Pennsylvania exercises the option to allow this exemption, which is limited to a total of 12 months in the parent's lifetime. The 12 months do not need to be consecutive; or
- a parent with a medically-documented need to provide care for a disabled family member living in the home.

An individual who is exempt because of a physical or mental disability is required to participate in a work or work activity when the condition ceases.

A specified relative who is exempt for providing care to a child under the age of six is required to participate in a work or work activity as soon as child care is available.

An exempt individual under 18 years of age is required to participate in RESET upon:

- becoming 18 years of age;
- attaining a high school diploma or a certificate of high school equivalency; OR
- ceasing to pursue a high school diploma or a certificate of high school equivalency.

An exempt custodial parent in a one-parent household who is caring for a child under the age of 12 months is required to participate when the child becomes 12 months old, the parent chooses to end the exemption, or when the parent has exhausted the 12-month lifetime limit for this exemption.

A parent providing care for a disabled family member living in the home is not considered work eligible and is exempt from participation in RESET. Medical documentation must be provided to support the need for the parent to remain in the home to care for the disabled family member. When the medical need to remain in the home ceases or can no longer be

documented, then the parent becomes work eligible and must comply with RESET requirements.

An individual who is exempt may volunteer to participate in RESET. Exempt volunteers may participate in the RESET activity of their choice, provided they meet the eligibility criteria for those activities or programs. Exempt individuals who volunteer to participate in contracted programs must meet all of the requirements of those programs. Such requirements include, but are not limited to, attendance and participation. Exempt volunteers need not conduct an initial job search prior to beginning to participate and are not subject to sanction for noncompliance with the work requirements.

Determinations of exemption will be made using the criteria found in 55 Pa. Code §165.21.

☐ ***Good Cause***

Clients who are mandatory to participate in RESET may be granted good cause from participation in work or work activities. Good cause may be granted due to circumstances beyond a client's control. When determining good cause, the Department will consider all the facts and circumstances. Even after the CAO has made a preliminary determination of the lack of good cause, an individual may offer evidence of good cause to avoid sanction. The Department may grant good cause for up to six months at a time.

Determinations of good cause will be made using the criteria found in 55 Pa. Code §165.52.

NOTE: The time an individual spends in "Exemption" or "Good Cause" status counts towards the 60-month time limit.

☐ **Special Allowances for Supportive Services (SPALs) for Work and Work Activities**

Individuals who participate in work or work activities specified on their AMR may be eligible for supportive services provided by the Department.

Except for child care, payments for SPALs, when approved, will be made by the CAO for actual costs up to the Department's established maximums. The Department promotes the use of community and faith-based organizations when a recipient has the ability to obtain work supports through these types of organizations. Eligibility for child care is determined by the CAO and payments are made by Child Care Information Services (CCIS). In many areas of the state, clothing is provided as required through PA WORKWEAR.

Monitoring of SPALs issued to recipients in support of their RESET participation is necessary to assure that expenditures are verified, required, and used for their intended purpose. If it is determined that a SPAL was issued in error or if the payment was misused, an overpayment referral may be filed.

10. Education in the Work First Environment

Since the implementation of welfare reform in Pennsylvania, education in the form of literacy initiatives, pursuit of a high school diploma or GED, ESL, Adult Basic Education, post-secondary schooling, and vocational skill training has been a part of the continuum of work activities.

Employment always has been the primary goal of our TANF program. We continue to encourage individuals to begin developing a work history early in their welfare experience.

However, the role of education will continue to be emphasized for individuals who have not been successful in finding employment and are now seeking career advancement in order to move to self-sufficiency.

Some of our current refinements include:

- Counseling and case management provided by CAO and contractor staff. These activities focus on encouraging clients to pursue education that leads to employment in targeted industry clusters designated by the Commonwealth's workforce development partners. This assures clients will be educated in areas where there is a demand in the labor market.
- Contracted programs that currently include various courses of education. The Department will strive to maintain these and increase them when appropriate;
- Structured outreach efforts that began with post-secondary institutions and will be expanded to include community literacy programs;
- Programs and procedures that assist individuals in completing their educational activities; and
- Employment and training programs that will assist individuals enrolled in post-secondary education to stay in school and meet the challenges of parenthood as well as those associated with participation in education while working.

Pennsylvania will continue to integrate employment and training efforts designed specifically for welfare recipients into the larger workforce development system at every appropriate point.

11. Noncompliance with the RESET Program

A sanction is imposed on any nonexempt individual required to participate in RESET who willfully, without good cause:

- Fails to accept a bona fide offer of employment in which the individual is able to engage;
- Voluntarily terminates employment;
- Fails or refuses to participate in or continue to participate in an available work activity, including work activities specified on the AMR;
- Fails to seek employment;
- Fails to maintain employment;
- Fails to participate for an average of at least 20 hours per week in work or a work activity; or

- Fails to apply for work at the time and in the manner as the Department may prescribe.

If good cause is not established, the individual will receive an Advance Notice advising of the proposed sanction.

The sanctions for failure to comply with the work or work activity requirements are required by 62 P.S. §432.3.

☐ **Sanctions for Failure to Comply with RESET Requirements**

A mandatory RESET participant who willfully fails to cooperate with the work or work activity requirement, participate in RESET or accept a bona fide offer of employment, or who terminates employment, or fails to apply for work, without good cause, shall be disqualified from receiving cash assistance.

The period of the sanction, is:

First sanction	The noncompliant individual in the budget group will be sanctioned for a minimum of 30 days. The sanction will continue until the individual demonstrates and maintains compliance for at least one week and thereafter, or establishes good cause or an exemption. After 90 days of noncompliance, the entire budget group will become ineligible and will remain ineligible until the noncompliant sanctioned individual demonstrates and maintains compliance for at least one week and thereafter, or establishes good cause or an exemption.
Second sanction	The noncompliant individual in the budget group will be sanctioned for a minimum of 60 days. The sanction will continue until the individual demonstrates and maintains compliance for at least one week and thereafter, or establishes good cause or an exemption. After 60 days of noncompliance, the entire budget group will become ineligible and will remain ineligible until the noncompliant sanctioned individual demonstrates and maintains compliance for at least one week and thereafter, or establishes good cause or an exemption.

Third sanction	The entire budget group is permanently disqualified.

In lieu of the sanctions set forth above, if an employed individual voluntarily, without good cause, reduces his earnings by not fulfilling the minimum work requirement, the cash grant is reduced by the dollar value of the income that would have been earned if the individual would have fulfilled his minimum hourly work requirement, until the minimum hourly work requirement is met.

The Department has opted not to impose a sanction on Medical Assistance benefits for recipients who fail to comply with work and work activity requirements.

12. Supporting Employment with Child Care

The Department has provided information about subsidized child care benefits available under the "Child Care Works" program in the Child Care Development Block Grant State Plan submitted for the period October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014. Child care costs are paid through the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), except for child care costs of employed individuals who receive TANF, which are paid through commingled TANF funds. Support for child care costs for eligible TANF recipients participating in approved work activities provides access to a full range of child care opportunities.

To help ease the transition for individuals whose TANF benefits end but their need for child care continues, Pennsylvania has implemented Child Care Unification. Verification requirements are also less stringent for individuals who contact the Child Care Information Services (CCIS) in a timely manner to apply for Former TANF child care benefits.

During the period of November 1, 2006 through June 1, 2007, unification of subsidized child care services was implemented throughout the state. As a result, the CCIS agencies are responsible for the issuance of all subsidized child care statewide. The CAOs are still the eligibility agent for TANF recipients in need of child care, but refer these families to the CCIS agencies for child care enrollment and payment.

Unification of the subsidized child care program promotes a local focus on clients and families, streamlined and provided through a single office that can more effectively manage resources and provide services to a greater number of eligible families. Unification insures that all low-income families get the help of professionals trained to assist with their child care needs and receive information on the benefits of quality child care and early education. It also provides subsidy providers with a single point of contact – the CCIS. All child care providers must now sign a provider agreement which results in payments going directly to the provider.

The CCIS agencies also determine eligibility and issue child care payments for working persons who previously received TANF cash assistance or that have income at or below 235 percent of the FPIGs for their family size. Individuals must either have previously received TANF cash assistance or have income at or below 235 percent of the FPIG and be meeting the work requirement established by DHS.

In order to be potentially eligible for child care under the Former TANF program, the parent/caretaker must:

- Contact the CCIS within 183 days of the date his/her TANF benefits ended. If the CCIS is contacted on day 184 or later, the parent/caretaker is no longer eligible to receive Former TANF child care. Eligibility will then be assessed under the Low Income child care program.

- Be working and have a need for child care. The parent/caretaker must be working an average of at least 20 hours per week (this may include training, but at least 10 hours per week must be work) no later than the 184th day following the date TANF ended.

When TANF cash assistance ends and a need for child care exists, verification requirements are less strict at the CCIS if the parent/caretaker contacts the CCIS within 60 days of TANF benefits ending. If no changes have occurred for the parent/caretaker within the 60 days following TANF closing and the CCIS is contacted during that period, the parent/caretaker may self-certify required information. Additional verification is not required to receive Former TANF child care.

If the parent/caretaker contacts the CCIS within 60 days and changes have occurred since TANF closed, or contact with the CCIS is made beyond the 60 day period, the parent/caretaker must provide verification for all required information. Families who previously received TANF benefits may apply for and potentially be found eligible for Former TANF child care up to 183 days from the date TANF closed.

Consumer education materials and information about minimal health and safety standards are available to all TANF clients and participating providers. Information about child care options, as well as availability and location of care, continues to be available through the Department's contracted CCIS agencies. CCIS agencies offer a parent counseling system that educates participants on the importance of quality early education and child care services. The counseling system also educates parents/caretakers on how to secure high- quality child care in the neighborhood.

CCIS agencies provide resource and referral services to all TANF clients participating in the Department's employment and training programs. These resource and referral services educate parents/caretakers about:

- CCIS services

- Child care choices
- Impact of child care choice on care and early development and the school readiness of children
- Impact of child care choice on ability to retain employment

Parent counseling is also available at the employment and training site on an optional basis to any TANF client seeking the service and on a mandatory basis for TANF clients demonstrating poor attendance at the program or an inability to retain employment due to unstable child care arrangements. This initiative meets TANF purpose number two – end dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.

13. Coordination with Child Welfare

Pennsylvania recognizes the need to strengthen the existing line of communication between the local CAOs and the local County Children and Youth Agencies (CCYAs). A workgroup developed a set of inter-agency protocols to coordinate efforts to serve mutual clients. The process eliminates development of conflicting service plans and eliminates the possibility of conflicting program requirements. The protocols require that the activities outlined on the AMR, prepared in the CAOs, should be coordinated with the Family Service Plan that is prepared at the CCYA.

All 67 CAOs and CCYAs implemented county protocols to ensure a local service delivery system that enables families to reach self-sufficiency while providing a safe environment for the child. Additionally, prior to the imposition of a sanction for non-compliance with the work requirement, CAOs are required to contact CCYAs to determine if a family may have good cause for such non-compliance.

15. Transfers of TANF Block Grant Funds

Pennsylvania continues to provide supportive and emergency services through TANF or other State programs as follows:

- Pennsylvania allocates TANF Youth Development Funds (YDF) from the TANF Block Grant to the Department of Labor & Industry. These funds are used for youth workforce development programs that include the following activities:

    - After School Programs consisting of homework assistance, developing work skills, entrepreneurial activities, time management, career exploration, leadership training and mentoring programs.

    - In-school career awareness focusing on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) careers.

    - Out-of-school youth programs focusing on internships and work experience.

- Activities for youth who are co-enrolled in Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), Title I Youth. These activities meet the WIA Youth performances measures of: Placement in Employment or Education, Attainment of Degree of Certificate and Literacy and Numeracy Gains.

Eligibility for these programs is limited to TANF recipients or members of a household with income less than 235% of the federal poverty income guideline (FPIG) level. This initiative is funded with 100% federal funds and leveraged with WIA funds. This initiative meets TANF purpose number two – end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage.

- Pennsylvania reserves the option to transfer TANF funds to the Child Care and Social Services Block Grants.

18. Identifying Domestic Violence

Pennsylvania exercised the federal TANF option to certify that it will screen for and identify victims of domestic violence. Since 1997, the Department has collaborated with the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence (PCADV), its statewide contractor providing services to victims of this abuse, to develop a program to screen for and identify domestic violence victims among TANF applicants and recipients. This collaboration has taken place under the auspices of the Domestic Violence/TANF Task Force.

The Task Force developed a training program (including a video role play) that provides information on identifying and understanding victims of domestic violence as well as guidance on how a caseworker should use this information to perform his/her job. Victims of domestic violence may qualify for temporary waivers of TANF program requirements such as time limits on receipt of cash assistance, employment and training requirements and child support cooperation requirements.

To avoid asking each individual specific questions on domestic violence, the Task Force developed several forms of universal notification. Brochures and palm cards that explain domestic violence and contain the telephone numbers of local domestic violence agencies are available for distribution in the CAOs. These items may be dispensed by the caseworker or placed in areas of the CAO such as the women's restroom for discreet access. Two different domestic violence awareness posters are also available for posting in the CAOs. In addition, the Common Application Form includes a tear-out sheet explaining domestic violence, good cause and the possibility of being temporarily excused from certain program requirements.

The Department has also revised its regulations governing good cause for failing to cooperate with child support requirements based on a claim of domestic violence. Applicants/recipients

who are unable to safely provide documentation of good cause within the established time frames for providing verification may sign an affirmation of this fact and be granted good cause.

19. Link with Medical Assistance

TANF eliminated the automatic granting of Medical Assistance benefits to cash assistance recipients. However, it provided states the opportunity to maintain the link by ensuring that their TANF design is no less restrictive in certain financial and non-financial criteria. Since Pennsylvania's TANF Program does ensure this, TANF cash recipients continue to receive Medical Assistance benefits.

Pennsylvania implemented several operational changes to ensure that individuals transitioning from TANF receive all Medical Assistance benefits for which they are eligible. The Department instructed caseworkers to: 1) determine Medical Assistance eligibility when closing a cash case; 2) authorize Transitional Medical Assistance (TMA) as appropriate; 3) issue a notice of Medical Assistance eligibility when closing a cash case; and 4) determine Medical Assistance eligibility when rejecting a cash application.

Also, computer enhancements were developed to: 1) have the system automatically review individuals for Medical Assistance when rejecting or closing a cash case; and 2) automatically open cases for TMA based on specific closing codes. Due to new requirements under the Affordable Care Act, MA coverage under TMA is limited to 4 months. These enhancements are supported by supervisory reviews and management monitoring of every cash case closing when an immediate opening of Medical Assistance does not occur.

The Department worked with the Pennsylvania Insurance Department (PID) to maintain a joint application for the federally-funded Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and will continue to do so now that CHIP is administered by the Department.

COMPASS is an online application for Pennsylvanians to apply for health and human services benefits. COMPASS automatically routes an application to the appropriate agency. Individuals can apply, renew and check the status of their application through COMPASS. An individual who receives benefits can establish a "My COMPASS Account" which allows them to view their benefits and report changes.

Pennsylvania implemented an electronic referral process between CHIP and Medical Assistance, known as the "Health Care Handshake". This process ensures that a child's application for health care coverage submitted to CHIP and who qualifies for Medical Assistance is referred to the Department.

Pennsylvania engages in outreach efforts to support policy directives and initiatives. The Healthy Babies/Healthy Kids Hotline is available as an outreach resource. The hotline is also a referral and informational source for CHIP and Medical Assistance program.

Pennsylvania continues its commitment to provide families with the Medical Assistance coverage to which they are eligible.

20. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Outreach

Pennsylvania has joined with the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to provide funds, 50% from FNS and 50% from Pennsylvania, to 14 community- and faith-based organizations for SNAP outreach. This project is known as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation Project (SNAP PP).

The organizations complete and submit SNAP applications on behalf of clients to the County Assistance Office and provide information about the SNAP Program.

A focus of this program is to introduce potentially eligible applicants to the on-line COMPASS application process. Through this on-line tool, individuals who receive SNAP benefits can reapply on-line from the convenience of their homes, thereby making the SNAP that much more accessible.

Another outreach program, the Pennsylvania Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) also referred to as PA TRACKS, provides nutrition education to low-income individuals and families who are eligible to receive SNAP benefits. The program aims to foster positive behavioral changes related to nutrition and physical activity. There are 19 TRACKS partners that deliver SNAP-Ed throughout Pennsylvania.

B. SPECIAL PROVISIONS

1. Time-Out Initiative

The Department incorporated a segregated state-funded program in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2001-2002 budget, known as the Time-Out Initiative. This initiative provides incentives to families who are addressing barriers to self-sufficiency where an individual has been identified as a victim of domestic violence and kinship caregivers. By segregating state funds from federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds, individuals who otherwise qualify for TANF may receive cash assistance under the segregated state-funded program that does not count towards the 60-month lifetime limit (42 U.S.C.A. §609(a)(7)(B)(1)).

In accordance with 42 U.S.C.A. §609(a)(7)(B)(1) and subject to the availability of resources, the Department intends to provide funding included in the FY 2014-2015 budget for the Time-Out Initiative. Eligibility for participation in the Time-Out initiative is limited to those families who meet the income, resource, and non-financial eligibility factors associated with the TANF program.

Domestic Violence

Victims of domestic violence may be eligible for up to 12 months of Time-Out in a life time. These individuals may receive benefits in the Time-Out program for six months with an additional six months, if the need still exists. The limit on the number of months an individual may receive Time-Out applies regardless of whether the months are consecutive.

Kinship Caregiver

- A non-parental caretaker who has received 24 months or more of cash assistance for himself/herself and a related minor dependent child, or has care and control of a related minor dependent child as a result of court-ordered placement by Children and Youth Services; and
- Is not receiving cash assistance for children of his/her own; and
- Is meeting the minimum 20-hour weekly work requirement, is exempt or has good cause for not meeting work requirements. This initiative meets TANF purpose number one – provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives, and TANF purpose number two – end dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.

2. Extended TANF Cash Assistance

Pennsylvania's provision for receipt of TANF assistance beyond the 60-month federal time limit is known as Extended TANF. Regulations at 42 U.S.C.A. §608(a)(7)(C) and 45 CFR §264.1(c) give states the option to extend TANF beyond the 60-month limit to families that have a hardship as defined by the state or include an individual who has been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty (domestic violence). The number of families that may receive Extended TANF is limited to 20% of the average monthly number of families receiving TANF during the current or preceding fiscal year. Pennsylvania is exercising this option.

The Extended TANF program was implemented on October 28, 2002. TANF families who exhaust the 60-month time limit or who were granted Extended TANF during the contingency period are permitted to apply for Extended TANF cash assistance and meet eligibility requirements, as defined below. Among those who may qualify for Extended TANF are:

- Recipients who are exempt or have good cause for not meeting the work requirements;
- Recipients who are required and meeting the work requirements; and
- Recipients who are victims of domestic violence.

Families who exhaust the TANF time limit and have their cash assistance discontinued may apply for and receive Extended TANF at a future time, if they are otherwise eligible. Funding for Extended TANF is all Federal monies.

3. Transitional Cash Assistance

In accordance with 42 U.S.C.A. §609(a)(7)(B)(i) and subject to the availability of resources, the Department intends to provide funding included in the FY 2014-2015 budget for the Transitional Cash Assistance grant.

Benefits received for this temporary supplemental grant will not extend beyond a three-month period.

Effective March 28, 2009, certain families who are ineligible for continued assistance in the TANF, Extended TANF or Time-Out programs due to earned income may be eligible for a temporary supplemental grant, known as Transitional Cash Assistance (TCA).

The purpose of TCA is to support families as they transition from dependence on welfare to self-sufficiency. Eligibility for this supplemental grant is limited to needy families, as defined in this State Plan, who have a gross annual earned income that does not exceed 235% of the FPIGs.

Eligibility rules are as follows:

- Families receiving assistance must become ineligible for assistance due to excess earned income.
- Families must meet the federal Work Participation Rate at the time they no longer qualify for assistance.
- Families will receive $100 per month (two semi-monthly $50 issuances) for three consecutive months.
- Assistance received during this period does not count against the 60-month lifetime limit on TANF.

This program is funded with 100 percent State Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funds.

This grant meets TANF purpose number two, to end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage.

8. Community Service Option

Pennsylvania has opted out of the provision to require a parent or caretaker to participate in community service if that parent or caretaker has received assistance for two months, is not exempt from work participation, and is not engaged in work.

VII. OFFICE OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES AMENDMENT

A. Other State Programs and Services Designed to Meet the Purposes of TANF

1. General Relationship to TANF Purposes

TANF provides states the flexibility to develop and implement innovative approaches to address TANF purposes. Therefore, effective October 1, 1999, the Department, through the Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF), county children and youth agencies (CCYAs) and juvenile probation offices (JPOs) has operated a segregated TANF federally-funded program.

The segregated TANF Federally-funded program is reasonably related to the TANF goals of providing assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives, preventing and reducing the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies, and encouraging the formation and maintenance of two-parent families. These goals will be promoted through the provision of services described under sections 2 and 3 below. Services are also provided in any manner that Pennsylvania was authorized to use funds received under Title IV-A or Title IV-F of the Social Security Act, as such titles were in effect on September 30, 1995, including as specified in section 3 below.

2. Family Preservation, Reunification and Support Services Designed to Promote TANF Purposes

The services listed in this section are provided as non-assistance services to needy families. The services listed in this section are reasonably related to the goals of assisting needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or homes of relatives including children placed in the homes of relatives, encouraging the formation and maintenance of two-parent families and preventing and reducing the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies, i.e., TANF purposes 1, 3 and 4.

These services are intended to break the cycle of social, emotional and economic dependency by providing the necessary interventions, supports and services to families experiencing various forms of crises and dysfunction, e.g., substance disorder, lack of parenting skills, marital/relationship problems. The provision of services identified in this section will enable families and children to develop the skills and supports necessary to overcome their problems in functioning, thereby providing them with a stable foundation upon which additional competencies related to permanent and stable relationships and responsible parenting can be built.

Stable relationships and responsible parenting skills are essential for creating an environment in which two-parent families can continue to exist or come into existence.

The existence of stable relationships and responsible parenting skills is also essential to breaking the cycle of out-of-wedlock pregnancies.

The following family preservation, reunification and support services are provided or arranged for families and for children residing in their homes (and for children who are temporarily in foster care and who are expected to return to the home within the temporary absence period established by the State) by OCYF, CCYAs or JPOs, as determined necessary and appropriate. The services are provided as non-assistance services to assist needy families. For purposes of this section, "needy" is defined as having a household income of less than 400% of the Federal poverty level.

- Parent/Child Visitation
- Intensive Family Preservation Services
- Casework/Case Management Services
- Diagnostic and Assessment Services
- Family Support Services including Respite Care
- Family Centers – collaborative community efforts to provide a range of services to children and their families at a single location. Centers that provide child welfare TANF services described in the plan provide those services to eligible children to promote keeping families together and to maintain children in their own homes. Child welfare TANF funds are directed to specific children served by the family centers and are not used to support the center's administration.
- Counseling Services
- Parenting and Home Management Services
- Independent Living Services
- Preventive Services focused on promoting family stability and responsible behavior of individuals and reducing economic dependence
- Delinquency Prevention/Remediation Services
- Day Treatment and Protective Child Care Services
- Non-Medical Substance Disorder Services
- Other In-home Services
- Programs Promoting Responsible Fatherhood
- Adoption Services

3. *Services Provided to Dependent and Delinquent Children Who Have Been Placed into Residential Care*

As authorized in the approved Title IV-A State Plan in effect as of September 30, 1995, TANF funds may be used to pay for non-Title IV-E eligible emergency shelter services, not to exceed 30 consecutive days and in accordance with 55 Pa. Code §§3130.37 and 3140.22(c) and the purchases of services provided to children temporarily placed in residential care provided that the services are not part of the per diem and are billed services. Eligible services include:

- Child Protective Services/Child Abuse

- Child Care Services
- Day Treatment Services
- Child Protective Services-General
- Information and Referral Services
- Service Planning
- Counseling/Intervention Services
- Homemaker/Caretaker Services
- Life Skills Education

The cost for placement in a Juvenile Detention Facility can no longer be claimed under TANF.

FUNDING

Section 403(a)(1)(A) provides that each eligible State shall be entitled to receive for each of the fiscal years 1996 through 2010, a grant in an amount equal to the State family assistance grant as defined in section 403(a)(1)(B).

I. Payments to Agency Administering the TANF Program.

Please provide payment for the TANF Program to the same organization administering the TANF Program as of March 3, 1997.

II. State Payments for TANF Program

Payments for the TANF Program are to be made to the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's estimate for each quarter of the fiscal year by percentage is:

For FY 2015 and Future Years

1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter
25%	25%	25%	25%

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 provides 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 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 form 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. Veteran and covered person's employment placement services are measured the same as non-veterans with the exception of the negotiated performance targets.

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); Associacion 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.

In reviewing the future jobs available by Volume Growth, Percent Growth and Annual Openings on page 25 of the Economic Analysis section of this Strategic Plan, there are many jobs that require short-term OJT and moderate term OJT, which are the skills that the majority of the SCSEP participants served in the commonwealth possess. Recipients are provided with on the job training through their Community Service Training Assignments for several of these jobs as well as classroom training for other jobs. For example, the PA Department of Aging (PDA) has provided classroom training for SCSEP participants in past years to become Personal Care Aides and PDA plans on funding this training again during the term of this state plan. PDA's SCSEP Sub-grantees have also provided classroom training for participants to become Customer Service Representatives. There are many host agency training assignments such as Combined-Food Prep/Serving Workers, Janitors, and Office Clerks that can result in unsubsidized employment for SCSEP participants.

The education levels for SCSEP participants in the commonwealth as of June 30, 2015 were as follows: 4% - 8th grade and under; 13% - 9th-11th grade; 47% - High School Graduate; 19% - 1-3 years of college; 2% - Post Secondary Certificate; 4% - Associate's Degree; 8% - Bachelor's Degree; 1% - Post Graduate Work; 2% - Master's Degree. Since 64 percent of the SCSEP individuals served by the Department of Aging and nine National SCSEP sponsors in PY 14 had a high school diploma or less, it can be inferred that in general most of the jobs that the majority of participants possess the education level and skills to obtain require short-term OJT and moderate term OJT such as the jobs listed above. Each participant's specific skills and education level will be determined during the assessment and used to determine an Individual Employment Plan with a goal of unsubsidized employment.

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.

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. The interagency work group is an ad hoc group comprised of executive and program level staff from the Departments of Aging, Education, Human Services, Labor & Industry, Agriculture, Community and Economic Development, Military and Veterans Affairs, and Corrections, as well as the Governor's Office. The work group is coordinated by the Governor's Office and led by the Deputy Secretary of Workforce Development within the Department of Labor & Industry.

The State Workforce Development Board is another body that works to promote alignment and collaboration across programs. The Secretaries of Labor & Industry, Department of Community and Economic Development, Department of Human Services, PA Department of Education 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 Department of Corrections for discussions involving ex-offenders and re-entry programs, the Secretary of Aging when discussing older workers or the Secretary of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs for discussions involving veterans.

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))

The PDA has and will continue to reinforce to Area Agency on Aging (AAA) sub-grantees that upon intake into the SCSEP program, job developers must evaluate the needs of participants to determine if they have any unmet needs. Each year, during recertification and at least twice a year during reassessments, job developers are trained to be aware of any changing needs of the participants, as is common in this demographic. Building on the collective need of the SCSEP program participants, speakers from the local AAA are scheduled to present at quarterly, semi-annual or annual participant meetings on various Aging programs funded by the PDA and administered by the AAA that can help participants. Some of these programs and services are APPRISE, which provides information about Medicare services, protective services, transportation, prescription drug program, family caregiver support program, adult day care

services, etc. For PDA's non-AAA sub-grantee(s), the primary action that they need to coordinate with State activities under the other titles of the OAA is to establish a solid working relationship with any aging- or disability-related organizations, including the AAA. It is vital that all SCSEP sub-grantees but especially non-AAA sub-grantee(s) be cognizant when interacting with participants, remaining alert to critical issues and changes that occur within their lives so they can develop referral ideas and program opportunities that benefit participants.

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.

The PDA has provided information and presented about SCSEP to other state partner agencies that administer programs that serve older Pennsylvanians. The Departments of Revenue, Human Services and Transportation and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation provide funds to community and faith-based organizations to serve older Pennsylvanians. PDA met with the Department of Human Services Aging Medicaid Waiver staff in January 2016 to discuss how SCSEP could help Aging Waiver consumers who want to work. SCSEP sub-grantees have been made aware of free and reduced-fare public transportation programs for Pennsylvanians age 65 and older and a reduced-fare program for persons with disabilities under the age of 65. All of these transportation programs are administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. In March 2016, PDA staff presented on SCSEP at an Office of Vocational Rehabilitation one-day roundtable discussion on other State programs and services available to assist individuals with disabilities. For the next SCSEP training, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation will be presenting on their services and how they can assist SCSEP participants. PDA will also be inviting Department of Human Services Medical Assistance Program staff to present to our sub-grantees on how SCSEP participants can continue to remain in the SCSEP and receive medical assistance benefits. We also plan on including staff from the Department of Human Services to discuss the low-income heating assistance program to our sub-grantees at a future training.

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.

On March 29, 2016, the PDA informed its sub-grantees that it would entertain proposals to provide Direct Care Worker training to SCSEP participants and other older individuals in PY 15 and 16. Objective 2.5 of the 2012-16 PDA State Plan on Aging states the following: *Expand employment opportunities for older Pennsylvanians and job opportunities that support older Pennsylvanians.* In PY 13 and 14, the PDA provided the Westmoreland County Community College, which is a PDA sub-grantee, with non-SCSEP funds to provide Direct Care Worker training to SCSEP participants and other older individuals. The training consisted of 11 classes at 7 hours per class for a total of 77 hours. Copies of driver's licenses were gathered for documentation of age and all participants applied for and received state police and child abuse clearances. All participants also had a 2-step TB test performed. On the last day of class, all participants received a certificate of completion. There was a 90% job placement rate after the class concluded. Because of the success of this training, the PDA would like to replicate it with other sub-grantees. The PDA is also coordinating with the PA School Bus Association (PSBA) to train and hire SCSEP participants and non-SCSEP eligible individuals as drivers and aides. The Board Chairman and the Executive Director of the PSBA presented on this future partnership on March 29, 2016 to all PDA SCSEP sub-grantees as well as staff from NCBA, National Urban League, Experience Works, NCOA, and SSAI. Also on March 29, 2016 CVS Health presented to all PDA SCSEP sub-grantees as well as staff from the state of Delaware, NCBA, National Urban League, Experience Works, NCOA, and SSAI on job opportunities for SCSEP participants with CVS Health. CVS Health sends PDA a list of job opportunities each Monday and PDA sends the list to all SCSEP sub-grantees and national SCSEP sponsors operating in the commonwealth.

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))

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. Two of PDA's sub-grantees already work on a daily basis with the BSTs. PDA will pursue additional partnerships with BSTs through its strong relationship with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry. In PY 16, the PDA will implement the On-the-Job Experience (OJE) training option. Through OJEs, PDA will engage employers to hire participants. OJEs will provide incentives for employers to hire SCSEP participants.

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)

In PA, 12.6% of the population age 55 and older is below 125% of the poverty level (see Appendix XII for the number of individuals under 125 percent of the poverty level for each county). In Philadelphia County, 25.2% of the age 55 and older population is below 125% of the poverty level, which is by far the highest percentage in the state. The next five counties with the highest percentages are all rural and these are: Fayette County-17.8%; Potter-16.5%, Greene-16.3%, Bedford-16.1% and Jefferson-16%. In these counties and others in the commonwealth, many older low-income individuals have needs for food, shelter, clothing, transportation, education, socialization, medical, and more. The agencies meeting the community service needs of SCSEP participants are: the PA Department of Human Services' (DHS) County Assistance Offices which provide food stamps, medical assistance and cash assistance; Local Community Action Programs funded by the Department of Community and Economic Development and the DHS which provide assistance with paying utility bills and rent and food banks;

County Housing Authorities and local Homeless Shelters which provide assistance with housing; Goodwill and other local Dress for Success organizations which provide clothing; the PA Department of Education's local Adult Education providers that provide literacy, ESL and GED classes; and the local Area Agency on Aging which provides socialization services through senior centers as well as home delivered meals, advice with Medicare, and protective services and transportation. The PA Department of Revenue, through state lottery dollars, provides rent and property tax relief for low income older Pennsylvanians. The PDA has and will continue to work with these agencies at the state level and filter this information to local SCSEP sub-grantees to better serve SCSEP participants.

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 PDA plans on enhancing its relationship with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) and through L&I, the local Workforce Development Boards and the PA CareerLink® centers. This could result in more employment and training services for SCSEP participants such as working with the Business Service Teams at the PA CareerLink® centers to improve unsubsidized placements. The Department has met or exceeded each of its performance goals in PY 14 and historically; therefore there is no plan at this time to change program operators. PDA will provide technical assistance to those sub-grantees that fail to meet any performance goal. In past years, Joyce Welsh provided an entire day of training to SCSEP sub-grantees on how to meet SCSEP Performance Goals. PY 15 may not be reflective of PDA's actual performance because of the budget impasse and other internal issues with a few sub-grantees.

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)) –

The PDA will work with the PA Department of Labor & Industry to present at future PDA webinars or trainings on ways to assist SCSEP participants in their job search and obtaining unsubsidized jobs. One of the topics will be targeting High Priority Occupations as job goals in the initial IEPs. On May 18, 2016, PDA staff will be presenting to PA CareerLink® staff about SCSEP and older workers in general during a breakout session at the PA Partners Conference on the topic, Preparing for the Silver Tsunami: Serving Older Workers at CareerLinks. There will be two co-presenters. One will be from a local PA CareerLink® and one from a local WDB. PDA has trained and will continue to train SCSEP sub-grantees to follow-up with participants who exit for voluntary or durational limit reasons in the quarter after exit quarter to determine if they found unsubsidized employment. PDA will implement OJEs in PY 16 with the goal of improving participants' entry into unsubsidized employment.

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 authorized by Title V are to serve individuals age 55 and older who are unemployed and at or below 125% of the most recent federal poverty level. According to the most recent data from the PA Department of Labor & Industry's Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, Allegheny County and Philadelphia County have the highest number of unemployed individuals age 55 and older. Philadelphia County also has the highest percentage of individuals age 55 and older who are below the poverty level. The next five counties with the highest percentages of individuals age 55 and older who are below the poverty level are all rural (Fayette, Potter, Greene, Bedford and Jefferson). In addition, federal regulatory priorities of service govern what populations are served first and there is also a Most in Need performance goal that the Department must meet. Priority of Service is provided 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. Most in Need goals include the aforementioned priority factors as well as additional factors. Populations that are included in the Most in Need service goal and the priority of service factors are the populations that the PDA will strive to serve in PY 16 and beyond.

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.

The following lists the counties where the SCSEP project will take place in PY 2016 to include the number of SCSEP authorized positions and any change from PY 2015 to PY 2016: Adams 2; Allegheny 44 (-2); Armstrong 0; Beaver 3; Bedford 1; Berks 10 (+1); Blair 6; Bradford 4 (-1); Bucks 14 (+1); Butler 6 (+1); Cambria 7; Cameron 1; Carbon 2; Centre 3; Chester 7; Clarion 3; Clearfield 3; Clinton 1; Columbia 3; Crawford 4 (-1); Cumberland 8 (-1); Dauphin 6 ;Delaware 12 (+1); Elk 1; Erie 13 (+1); Fayette 8 (-1); Forest 0; Franklin 6; Fulton 1; Greene 1 (-1); Huntingdon 3; Indiana 5; Jefferson 3; Juniata 2; Lackawanna 7; Lancaster 16; Lawrence 4; Lebanon 3; Lehigh 10; Luzerne 14 (-1); Lycoming 5; McKean 0; Mercer 5 (+1); Mifflin 5; Monroe 10 (+2); Montgomery 24 (+4); Montour 2; Northampton 6; Northumberland 4 (-1); Perry 3; Philadelphia 101 (-2); Pike 7 (+1); Potter 3; Schuylkill 6 (-1); Snyder 2 (-1); Somerset 5 (-1); Sullivan 1; Susquehanna 2; Tioga 2 (+1); Union 3; Venango 1; Warren 0; Washington 7; Wayne 3; Westmoreland (-1); Wyoming 2 (+1); York 7

Describe current slot imbalances and proposed steps to correct inequities to achieve equitable distribution.

In comparing PY 16 authorized positions against the current enrollments from SCSEPED, there are 8 out of 67 counties in the commonwealth with slot imbalances greater than 5. These slot imbalances are in the following counties: Bucks, Chester, Dauphin, Luzerne, Montgomery, Philadelphia, Tioga, and Venango. In Luzerne County, they are overenrolled because this sub-grantee overenrolls heavily and they are a high performer. In the other counties with slot imbalances greater than 5, the PDA will work with the new sub-grantees in PY 16 to move participants from overenrolled PDA sub-grantees to under-enrolled national grantees and vice versa through grantee transfers, if approved by DOL. Through natural attrition and placing participants in unsubsidized jobs in overserved counties, the Department of

Aging will not refill the slots in overserved counties but instead will begin to fill slots in underserved counties where a sub-grantee serves multiple counties.

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.

In PY 16, the PDA will monitor authorized slots vs. actual enrollments on a quarterly basis for all sub-grantees to assure that slot imbalances greater than +5 do not occur. This will be done through SCSEPED and also from monitoring the sub-grantee Quarterly Progress Reports where we will compare current participants to authorized slots. Quarterly calls will be made with all SCSEP grantees operating in the commonwealth in PY 16, when there are slot imbalances greater than 5, to discuss corrective actions to remedy these imbalances. PDA did do this in PY 15 and it resulted in more equitable distribution in two counties for AARP Foundation. AARP Foundation 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.

The state's long-term strategy for achieving an equitable distribution of SCSEP positions within the state that equitably serves rural and urban areas.

Of the eight counties with slot imbalances greater than five, 6 are urban areas and 2 are rural areas. In these counties, PDA will work with the new sub-grantees in PY 16 to move participants from overenrolled PDA sub-grantees to under-enrolled national grantees and vice versa through grantee transfers, if approved by DOL. Through natural attrition and placing participants in unsubsidized jobs in overserved counties, the PDA will not refill the slots in overserved counties but instead will begin to fill slots in underserved counties where a sub-grantee serves multiple counties.

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)

In PY 16 and subsequent years, PDA will monitor on a quarterly basis the number of individuals afforded priority of service against prior year quarterly data to strive for continuous improvement. PY 15 Quarter 3 data indicates the following service levels for individuals afforded priority of service: Veterans-137 participants or 19% of total participants served; Persons 65 and older- 236 participants or 32% of total participants served; Persons with Disabilities-169 participants or 24% of total participants served; Persons with Limited English Proficiency-31 participants or 4% of total participants served; Persons with Low Literacy Skills-53 participants or 7% of total participants served; Persons residing in rural areas-155 participants or 22% of total participants served; Persons with Low Employment Prospects-600 participants or 84% of total participants served; Persons who Failed to Find Employment through WIOA Services-112 participants or 16% of total participants served; and Persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness-424 participants or 59% of total participants served. PDA will also work with its Census Data staff in PY 16 to determine if there are any specific census data sets for these priority factors for individuals age 55 and older or on a statewide total population. PDA can then gauge if it is serving these populations in proportion to the statewide percentages for each individual priority factor.

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 Job*Ready* to complete the assessment and Individual Employment Plan (IEP). Job*Ready* 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.

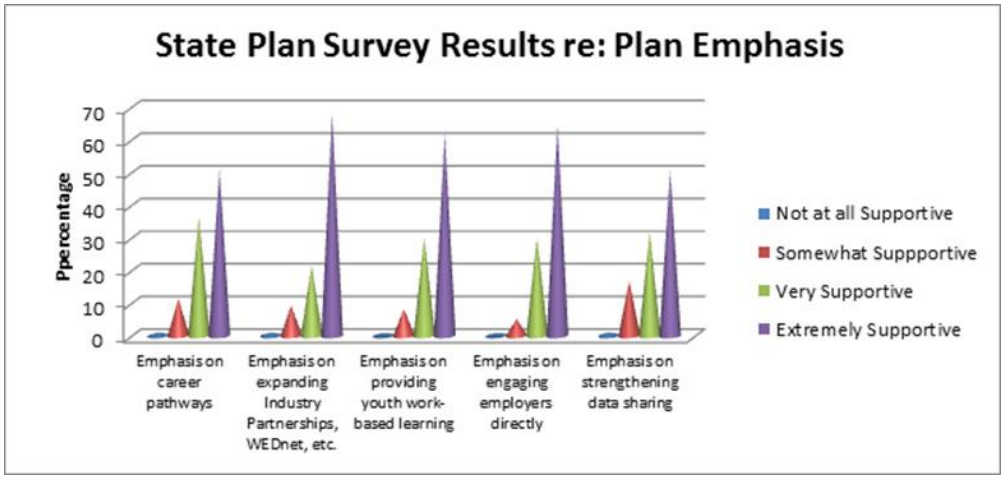
The commonwealth also established a WIOA Legislator Workgroup to keep the Pennsylvania General Assembly apprised of the goals and strategies of the State Plan and to allow lawmakers to provide input based on their experiences and conversations with constituents.

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.

The plan was posted for public comment on December 28, 2015. Local Workforce Development Boards and stakeholders were notified. Other agencies were also notified and were asked to share the State Plan with their respective stakeholders, to include economic development entities and educational institutions. Public comment was due on February 1, 2016. The commonwealth received comment from roughly 200 individuals and organizations. Comments were submitted by elected officials, local workforce development board members and staff, colleges, community colleges, private licensed schools and other training providers, service providers and clients, libraries, advocacy organizations, associations, and individuals. Every comment was reviewed and will be responded to in an attachment to the Final State Plan.

As a means of deriving additional public input, the commonwealth created an online survey which asked questions related to specific goals emphasized in the Plan. Nearly 100 persons used the survey to indicate their level of support for career pathways, incumbent worker training programs, provision of work-based learning opportunities for youth, employer

engagement and data sharing. Respondents also had the opportunity to share opinions on additional priorities for the Plan. A summary of the results, showing strong support for each of the five goals, follows:



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 LWDAs 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.

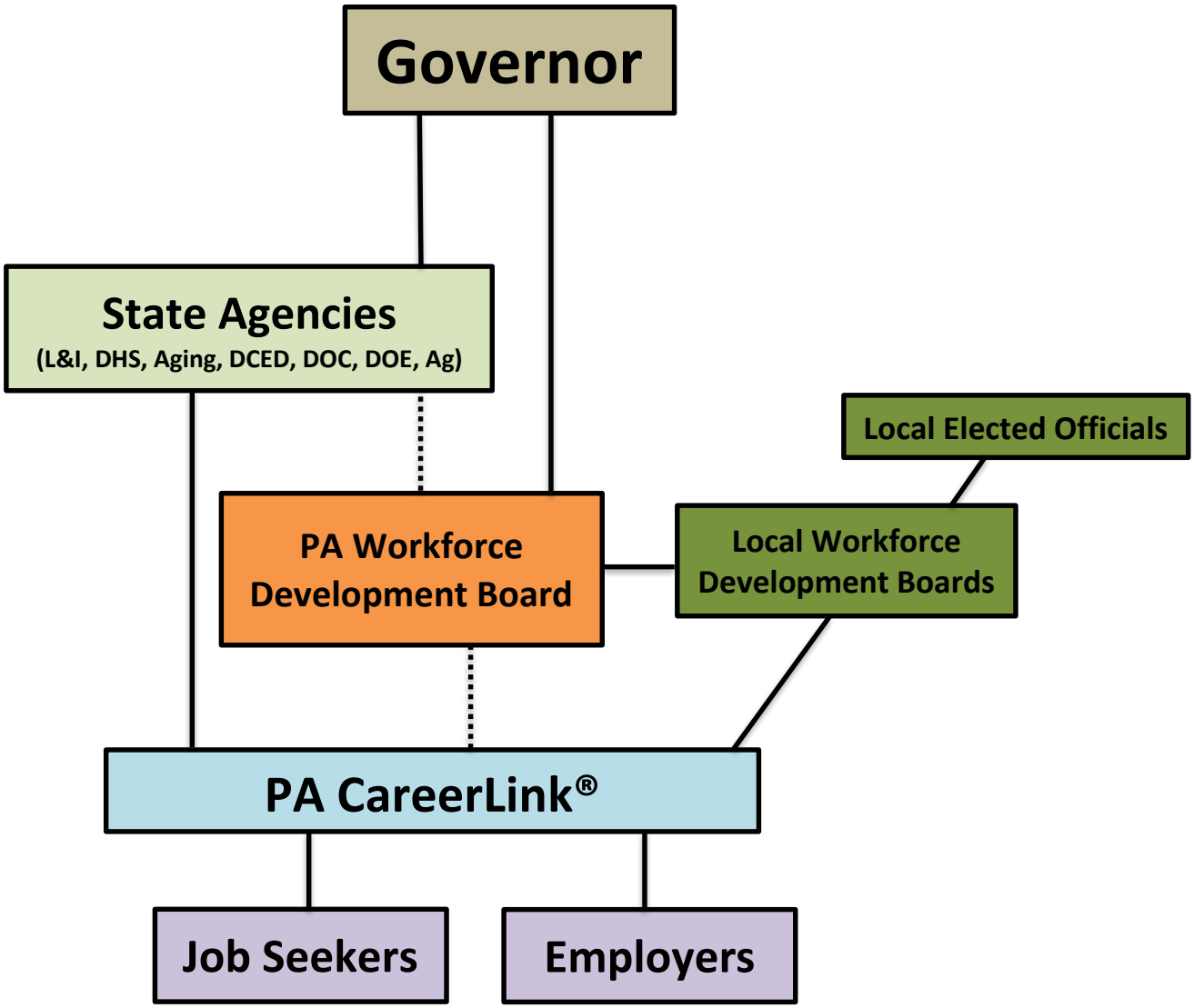
Section VI – Appendices

Appendix I – Career Pathway Definition

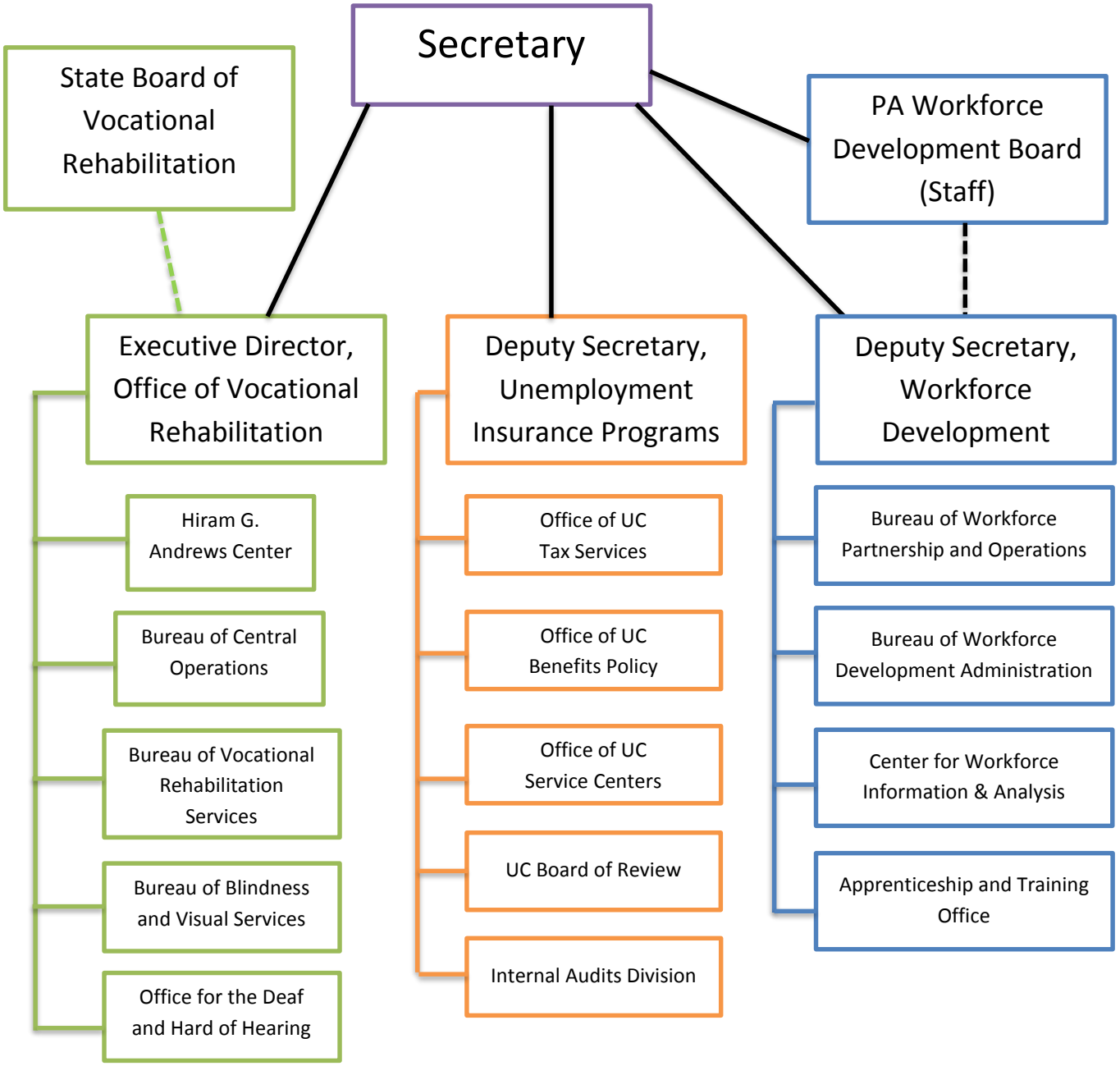
The term "career pathway'' means a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training and other services that:

(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.

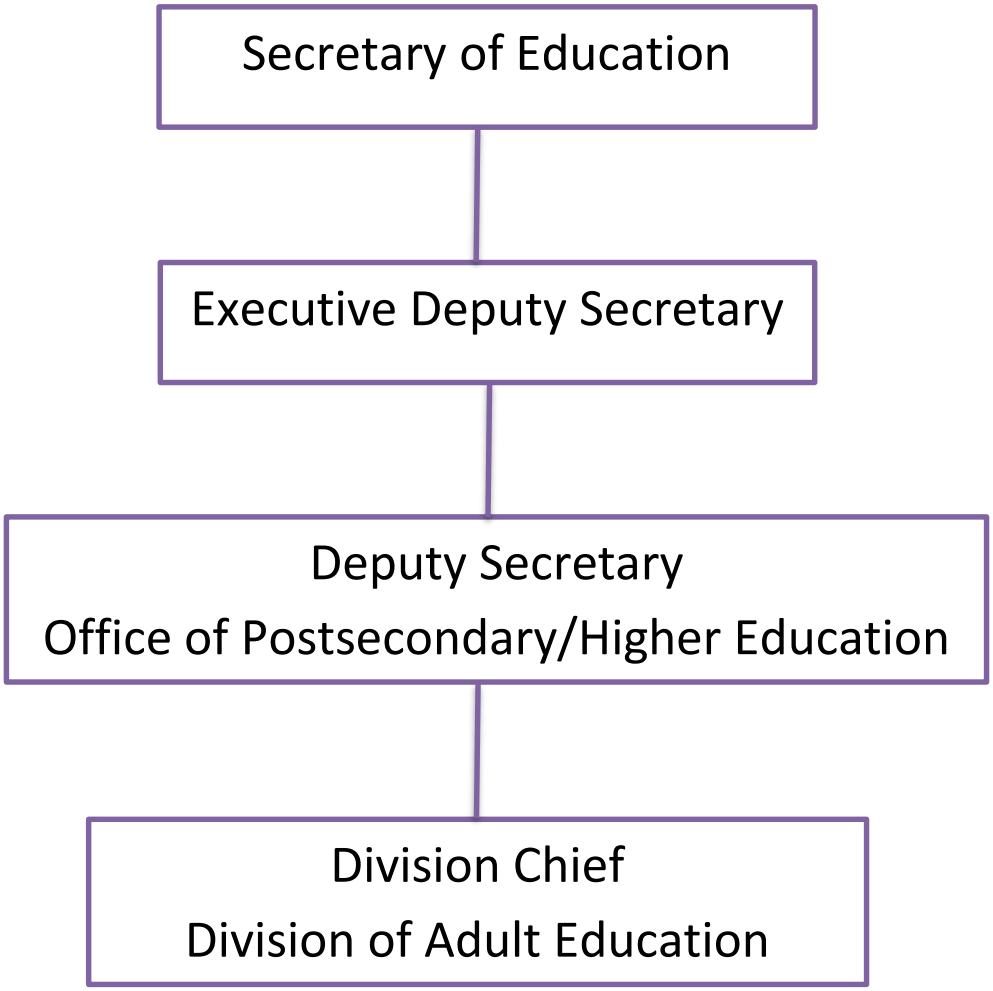
Appendix II – Pennsylvania Workforce Development System



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

LVER		Hire Date	Training Deadline
Raymond	Bates	9/27/2003	3/25/2005
Joanne	Bell	4/18/2009	10/15/2010
Rodger	Campbell	3/1/2004	8/28/2005
Randy A.	Carlson	11/3/2007	5/1/2009
Gregory	Crooks	9/4/2002	3/2/2004
Sarita	DeJesus	5/15/2010	11/11/2011
Patrick	Hoagland	6/26/2010	12/23/2011
Vincent	Jones	10/18/2010	4/15/2012
Thomas	Kucewicz	7/19/2003	1/14/2005
Peter	Marberger	5/17/2010	11/13/2011
Boyd (Hugh)	McCullough	9/24/2005	3/23/2007
Charles	Merenda	5/19/2008	11/15/2009
Douglas	Monroe	10/19/2015	4/16/2017
Charles	Montalbano	1/17/1988	7/15/1989
Mark	Sieminski	8/10/2015	2/5/2017
Alan (Herbert)	Smith	11/3/2007	5/1/2009
Gene (Carl)	Young	7/14/2007	1/9/2009

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. (2022)	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. (2022)	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. (2022)	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. (2022)	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

			Population 55 years and over:			
Geography	Total Population For Whom Poverty Status is Determined	Total Population 55 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	3,178	12.6%	22,137	87.4%
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 Building
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 Building
Wednesday, May 27, 2015
10:00am to 2:00pm

Youth Services
Department of Labor & Industry Building, 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.