

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Unified and Combined State Plan Requirements

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OVERVIEW

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

Options for Submitting a State Plan

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

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

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

- Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)

- Employment and Training Programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))
- Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))
- Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Programs (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (Programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et seq.)
- Unemployment Insurance Programs (Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (Programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))
- Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Community Services Block Grant (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.))¹
- Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program (Programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532))

How State Plan Requirements Are Organized.

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

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

¹ States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) and 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 that are included would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

Plan Requirements. The Departments are not seeking comments on these particular requirements).

When responding to Unified or Combined State Plan requirements, States must identify specific strategies for coordinating programs and services for target populations.² While discussion of and strategies for every target population is not expected, States must address as many as are applicable to their State's population and look beyond strategies for the general population.

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² Target populations include individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in WIOA Sec. 3, as well as veterans, unemployed workers, and youth.

Paperwork Reduction Act: The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) provides that an agency may not conduct, and no person is required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. Control numbers and the public reporting burden for the information collections within these instructions may be found in the PRA Burden Table at the end of this document. These estimates include time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Responding to this collection is required to obtain or retain the Federal grant benefit. In addition, responses to this information collection are public, and the agencies offer no assurances of confidentiality. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the [INSERT POC] and reference the related OMB Control Number(s). Note: Please do not return the completed plan to this address.

I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE

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

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

Indiana is submitting a Unified State Plan. Indiana is collaborating across all combined plan partners and much of that work is detailed below.

- Combined State Plan.** This plan includes the Adult Program, Dislocated Worker Program, Youth Program, Wagner-Peyser Act Program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program, and Vocational Rehabilitation Program as well as one or more of the optional Combined State Plan partner programs identified below. Indicate which Combined State Plan partner program(s) the State is electing to include in the plan.

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

- Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program³ (Programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532))

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³ The Reentry Employment Opportunities Program (REO), formerly the Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program (RExO), is referred to by its original name (RExO) in this document. This name change is a recent decision that was not incorporated into WIOA.

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

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

- (a) **Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis.** The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions, economic development strategies, and labor market in which the State's workforce system and programs will operate.

Indiana has seen steady employment gains in the 5 years following the recession and declining levels of unemployment. The average annual employment level for all industries was 2,890,690 annually in 2014; this is up 7% since 2009. Average weekly wages have risen to \$818 for all Industries. Employment gains remain strongest in Health Care and Social Assistance, as well as Manufacturing. In manufacturing and trade, Indiana is adding jobs faster than the national average.

Indiana's unemployment rate dropped from a 10-year peak of 10.3% in 2009, to 6.0% annually in 2014. The rate continues to fall in 2015. Indiana's unemployment rate has remained below the national average in recent months and throughout much of the 2014 program year. Over the last two and a half years, Indiana has seen growth in private sector employment of over 120,000. During the summer of 2014, Indiana also reached a new peak in private sector employment levels, not seen since early 2000.

Amidst this positive economic news, Indiana is beginning to face labor shortage issues not seen in recent years. In many cases, these are geographic issues, as populations' shift away from rural areas. There are also signs of misalignment between the educational attainment levels of the unemployed and current employer demand for evolving skills.

A thorough analysis of Indiana's economy and workforce can be found at:

http://www.hoosierdata.in.gov/docs/annual_econ_analysis/INDIANA%20ECONOMIC%20ANALYSIS%20REPORT%20Program%20Year%202014%20w%20Appendices.pdf.

(1) Economic and Workforce Analysis

- (A) *Economic Analysis.* The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions and trends in the State, including sub-state regions and any specific economic areas identified by the State. This includes:

- (i) Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.

- (ii) Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.
 - (iii) Employers' Employment Needs. With regard to the industry sectors and occupations identified in (A)(i) and (ii), provide an assessment of the employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.
- (B) *Workforce Analysis*. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3 of WIOA⁴. This population must include individuals with disabilities among other groups⁵ in the State and across regions identified by the State. This includes: —
- (i) Employment and Unemployment. Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data and trends in the State.
 - (ii) Labor Market Trends. Provide an analysis of key labor market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.
 - (iii) Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce. Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.
 - (iv) Describe apparent 'skill gaps'.
- (2) Workforce Development, Education and Training Activities Analysis. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the workforce development activities, including education and training in the State, to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, as identified in (a)(1)(B)(iii) above, and the employment needs of employers, as identified in (a)(1)(A)(iii) above. This must include an analysis of –
- (A) *The State's Workforce Development Activities*. Provide an analysis of the State's workforce development activities, including education and training activities of the core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and mandatory and optional one-stop delivery system partners.⁶

To understand the current state of Indiana's workforce development activities, it is important to understand the history of the Indiana Career Council (ICC) and the Regional Works Councils.

The ICC was created by a unanimous vote during the 2013 Indiana General Assembly. Led by Governor Mike Pence (as Chair) and the Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann (as Vice Chair), the ICC was created to: 1) provide coordination to align the various participants in the state's education, job skills development, and career training system, and 2) match the education and skills training provided by the state's education,

⁴ Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals.

⁵ Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth, and others that the State may identify.

⁶ Mandatory one-stop partners: Each local area must have one comprehensive one-stop center that provides access to physical services of the core programs and other required partners. In addition to the core programs, for individuals with multiple needs to access the services, the following partner programs are required to provide access through the one-stops: Career and Technical Education (Perkins), Community Services Block Grant, Indian and Native American Programs, HUD Employment and Training Programs, Job Corps, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs Program, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs, Unemployment Compensation Programs, and YouthBuild. TANF is now a required partner, unless the Governor takes special action to make TANF an optional one-stop partner.

job skills development, and career training system with the currently existing and future needs of the state's job market. As such, the ICC was charged with developing a Strategic Plan to improve the state's education, job skills development, and career training system.

Over 40 meetings and 500 man hours were invested in the creation of the Career Council's Strategic Plan, "[Align, Engage, Advance: A Strategic Plan to Transform Indiana's Workforce](#)," which was approved in June of 2014. The plan focused on three organizing pillars of transformation: system alignment, worker- and student-centric services, and demand-driven programs and investments. While the work of the Indiana Career Council was progressing, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) passed and opened the door to build upon the Career Council's strategic plan, and examine how the State's WorkOne system can most effectively and efficiently meet the needs of Hoosier youth, adults, and employers. The ICC is currently focused on implementation of the Strategic Plan via a Taskforce led by the Lieutenant Governor and amid activities of the State agencies, the Regional Works Councils and other key stakeholder groups.

The Regional Works Councils were created by a unanimous vote of the 2013 General Assembly at the request of Governor Mike Pence. The Works Councils further Governor Pence's ideals of technical training options which encourage all students to achieve with a personal "Plan A," providing opportunity for success whether they want to go to college, learn a trade, or start their career right out of high school. The legislatively mandated councils focused on career and technical education awareness, curricula enhancement and development, and greater collaboration between industry and education to meet skill needs across identified priority sectors and occupations. The Works Council members are appointed by the Governor and include employers, educators, workforce and economic development partners and nonprofit partners. The Works Councils work collaboratively in their Regions with the local Workforce Development Boards.

The ICC's Annual Report, submitted to the Indiana Legislative on November 1, 2015, provides a thorough analysis of the State's workforce development activities, including education and training activities. The report can be found at: <http://www.in.gov/icc/2394.htm>. Below are highlights of the collaborative efforts that have occurred over the previous year toward integrating students, educators, businesses, post-secondary institutions and training partners:

- Developed frameworks for sector strategies (http://in.gov/icc/files/Indiana_Plan_and_Launch_Sector_Partnership_Initiative.pdf) and career pathways systems (http://in.gov/icc/files/Indiana_Pathways_Definitions.pdf) to connect individuals to high-demand jobs in Indiana with additional implementation work to follow by the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), the Department of Education (DOE), and the Commission for Higher Education (CHE);
- Manufacturing Week activities in Region 4 (West Central Indiana), including industry tours and a manufacturing expo, which introduced more than 1,700 students and educators to career opportunities in the industry;
- The Indiana Regional Works Council Innovative Curriculum grants (<http://in.gov/irwc/2362.htm>) created new career and technical education programming for over 2,600 students, who to date have earned more than 3,600 dual credits hours and over 1,000 industry certifications in partnership with local businesses;
- Northwest Indiana's Region 1 hosted multiple business tours of various career sectors for hundreds of educators and counselors to introduce them to real work environments and hiring professionals. They also created a series of employee videos for specific jobs and industry sectors.

- Subaru Isuzu announced their joint program, AIM, with Vincennes and Purdue universities to create paid work and learn experiences to focus on manufacturing needs at their ever-expanding Lafayette facility;
- The Indiana Youth Institute, Indiana Chamber of Commerce, the Center for Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL), and the Regional Works Councils hosted several Postsecondary Pathways events around the state to engage educators, workforce professionals and local businesses to better understand work environments, desired skill sets and hiring/internship opportunities to share with students;
- New work-and-learn guides were created for employers to readily expand work-and-learn opportunities ([http://www.in.gov/icc/files/A Guide to Talent Attraction and Development for Hoosier Employers.pdf](http://www.in.gov/icc/files/A%20Guide%20to%20Talent%20Attraction%20and%20Development%20for%20Hoosier%20Employers.pdf));
- New grant programs and activities such as *Skill UP* (<http://in.gov/dwd/skillup.htm>), *Return & Complete* ([http://in.gov/icc/files/Return and Complete Guidance At a Glance 8 1 2015 \(2\).pdf](http://in.gov/icc/files/Return%20and%20Complete%20Guidance%20At%20a%20Glance%208%201%202015%20(2).pdf)), and *Career Ready* are aligning workforce efforts among various agencies and organizations across the state with a focus on regional leadership and local priorities; and
- Indiana was awarded a Talent Pipeline Policy Academy grant by the National Governors Association for the ongoing efforts in data collection and partnership engagement.

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

One of the biggest strengths for workforce development activities in Indiana is the creation and existence of the Indiana Career Council (www.in.gov/icc). The work of developing a Strategic Plan and implementing that Plan has catalyzed a number of public-private partnerships to align education and training to workforce needs. For example, the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), Department of Education (DOE), Commission for Higher Education (CHE) and Indiana Network of Knowledge (INK) continue to strengthen educational pathways for all Hoosiers and build quality work-and-learn programming alongside career counseling to enhance existing programs of study. Additional resources may be available to communities to build pathways systems that purposefully connect to priority industry sectors.

Additionally, the efforts of the Career Council and the myriad of partners working in conjunction with the Career Council are encouraging greater interaction among schools, students and businesses in hopes of facilitating career interest, guiding educational pathways, and meeting the workforce needs of Indiana's employers. Many partners have participated and thousands of students have been touched.

One of the biggest weaknesses for workforce development activities in Indiana is the lack of alignment of education and training across partners, particularly when it comes to serving those with barriers to employment. Many system partners and programs have similar goals and complementary services, yet often operate in silos. While Indiana has taken steps to align resources to maximize their impact, work is still needed to fundamentally transform the way in which workers and students engage with, and are served by the system.

(C) *State Workforce Development Capacity.* Provide an analysis of the capacity of State entities to provide the workforce development activities identified in (A), above.

Indiana's capacity to provide workforce development activities is strong. The Indiana Career Council (ICC) has been in existence for over two years and spent many hours assessing the state of Indiana's education and training system to come up with a Strategic Plan. The ICC is led by Governor Mike Pence and Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann and includes the President of the community college system, four business representatives, and the heads of the following five State agencies:

- The Department of Workforce Development (which has responsibility for the majority of the WIOA Core and Mandatory programs, such as WIOA Title I, Adult Basic Education, Wagner Peyser, Post-Secondary Career and Technical Education (Perkins), Job Corps, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs Program, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs, Unemployment Compensation Programs, and YouthBuild);
- The Family and Social Services Administration (which has responsibility for Vocational Rehabilitation, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program);
- The Indiana Economic Development Corporation;
- The Department of Education, and
- The Commission for Higher Education.

The partnerships built and reinforced through the work of the Career Council at the State level will assist the State Workforce Innovation Council (Indiana's State Workforce Board, referred to as the "SWIC") in implementing the WIOA State Plan. To further this effort, the SWIC and the ICC will have begun to have joint meetings and will continue this practice in 2016. This will ensure that the synergy started by the ICC will be built upon through the work of the SWIC.

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

As stated above, the Indiana Career Council was statutorily required to develop a strategic plan to align education and training activities across multiple state agencies and in line with business-driven needs for skilled workforce across youth and adults. Over 40 meetings, and 500 man hours were invested in the creation of the Plan, "[Align, Engage, Advance: A Strategic Plan to Transform Indiana's Workforce.](#)" The plan focused on three organizing pillars of transformation: system alignment, worker- and student-centric services, and demand-driven programs and investments. While the work of the Indiana Career Council was progressing, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) passed and opened the door to build upon the Career Council's strategic plan, and examine how the State's WorkOne system can most effectively and efficiently meet the needs of Hoosier youth, adults, and employers.

(1) Vision. Describe the State's strategic vision for its workforce development system.

Every Indiana business will find the educated and skilled workforce necessary to compete successfully in the global economy.

Every Indiana citizen will have access to the information, education and skills required for career success.

- (2) Goals. Describe the goals for achieving this vision based on the analysis in (a) above of the State's economic conditions, workforce, and workforce development activities. This should—
- (A) Include goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment⁷ and other populations.⁸
 - (B) Include goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

GOAL 1: SYSTEM ALIGNMENT -- Create a seamless one-stop delivery system where partners provide worker-centric and student-centric integrated services.

Partners within the talent development system are working with limited resources as well as limited information about the services being provided by one another. Agencies have similar goals and complementary services, yet programs often operate in silos. The system should align around solutions, rather than funding streams and programs. Greater focus must be given to a true systems approach which aligns resources to maximize their impact and fundamentally transform the way in which workers and students engage with, and are served by the system. Within such an approach, agencies and organizations work together, integrating resources and services, sharing goals, strategies, and successes, and ensuring that students and workers are provided with opportunities to improve their education, knowledge, and skill levels.

GOAL 2: CLIENT-CENTRIC APPROACH -- Create a *client-centered* approach, where system partners and programs coordinate in a way that each individual worker or student has a pathway to improving his or her education, knowledge, skills and, ultimately, his or her employment prospects, with a focus on in-demand careers.

The State's education, job skills development, and career training system must ensure that the talent development system focuses on the individual student's or worker's aspirations and needs and provides all students and workers with access to pathways for improving employment prospects. In many cases throughout the existing system, activities and services provided are *program-focused*, with the specific program being placed at the center of service delivery. In such a model, greater focus is given to meeting program requirements and less attention is paid to truly serving the individual. This has left the workers or students navigating a complex web of program requirements, often having to visit multiple program locations, multiple times, and providing the same information at each stop in order to receive the services needed. This paradigm must shift dramatically towards ensuring that system partners and program requirements are aligned with the worker or student at the center of service delivery. In this *client-centered* approach, system partners and programs coordinate in a way that each individual worker or student has a pathway to improving his or her education, knowledge, and skills and entering into a fulfilling and rewarding career, with partner and program resources designed to complement the individual's pathway.

GOAL 3: DEMAND DRIVEN PROGRAMS AND INVESTMENTS -- Adopt a data-driven, sector-based approach that directly aligns education and training with the needs of Indiana's business community.

⁷ Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals.

⁸ Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth and any other populations identified by the State.

The National Governors Association reports:

Sector strategies are among the few workforce interventions that statistical evidence shows to improve employment opportunities for workers and to increase their wages once on the job. Employers report increases in productivity, reductions in customer complaints, and declines in staff turnover, all of which reduce costs and improve the competitiveness of their companies.⁹

Due in part to the limited public resources available for education, training, and career development, it is important that the State ensure that the resources it makes available are closely aligned with the sectors that are key drivers of the state's existing and emerging economy. Further, partners within Indiana's education, job skills development, and career training system must enhance their ability to engage meaningfully with employers within these sectors, and ensure that programming addresses the emerging and existing education, knowledge, and skill needs of these sectors from entry level to advanced. Concurrently, the State and its partners need to ensure that there are effective and meaningful forums for employers in these sectors to collaborate with each other and to work with the system's partners.

- (3) **Performance Goals.** Using the table provided in Appendix 1, include the State's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA. (This Strategic Planning element only applies to core programs.)
- (4) **Assessment.** Describe how the State will assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce investment system in the State in relation to the strategic vision and goals stated above in sections (b)(1), (2), and (3) and how it will use the results of this assessment and other feedback to make continuous or quality improvements.

The State assesses the overall effectiveness of the workforce investment system in relation to the strategic vision and goals outlined above through the following mechanisms:

- state and local level fiscal and programmatic monitoring;
- surveys of stakeholders;
- data validation; and
- analysis of data.

DWD plans to issue a policy on system assessment and continuous quality improvements to ensure that the current actions are being coordinated in a way that allows partners to review relevant information and take action to improve the system.

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

⁹ National Governors Association, "State Sector Strategies Coming of Age: Implications for State Workforce Policy Makers." <http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/2013/1301NGASSSReport.pdf>

- (1) Describe the strategies the State will implement, including sector strategies and career pathways, as required by WIOA section 101(d)(3)(B), (D).
- (2) Describe the strategies the State will use to align the core programs, any Combined State Plan partner programs included in this Plan, mandatory and optional one-stop partner programs, and any other resources available to the State to achieve fully integrated customer services consistent with the strategic vision and goals described above. Also describe strategies to strengthen workforce development activities in regard to gaps identified in the State's workforce analysis.

GOAL 1: SYSTEM ALIGNMENT -- Create a seamless one-stop delivery system where partners provide worker-centric and student-centric integrated services.

Partners within the talent development system are working with limited resources as well as limited information about the services being provided by one another. Agencies have similar goals and complementary services, yet programs often operate in silos. The system should align around solutions, rather than funding streams and programs. Greater focus must be given to a true systems approach which aligns resources to maximize their impact and fundamentally transform the way in which workers and students engage with, and are served by the system. Within such an approach, agencies and organizations work together, integrating resources and services, sharing goals, strategies, and successes, and ensuring that students and workers are provided with opportunities to improve their education, knowledge, and skill levels.

- STRATEGY 1.1: Develop a common understanding among partners as to what the “one stop delivery system” is in Indiana.
- STRATEGY 1.2: Increase service integration among partner agencies within the one stop delivery system
- STRATEGY 1.3: Simplify the process for customers in order for services to be accessible when, where and how they are needed.
- STRATEGY 1.4: Ensure the culture of the One Stop system promotes knowledge transfer across partner programs, such that staff embraces the “no wrong door” philosophy and is capable of providing information on services across programs and making appropriate referrals.

GOAL 2: CLIENT-CENTRIC APPROACH -- Create a *client-centered* approach, where system partners and programs coordinate in a way that each individual worker or student has a pathway to improving his or her education, knowledge, skills and, ultimately, his or her employment prospects, with a focus on in-demand careers.

The State's education, job skills development, and career training system must ensure that the talent development system focuses on the individual student or worker's aspirations and needs and provides all students and workers with access to pathways for improving employment prospects. In many cases throughout the existing system, activities and services provided are *program-focused*, with the specific program being placed at the center of service delivery. In such a model, greater focus is given to meeting program requirements and less attention is paid to truly serving the individual. This has left the workers or students navigating a complex web of program requirements, often having to visit multiple program

locations, multiple times, and providing the same information at each stop in order to receive the services needed. This paradigm must shift dramatically towards ensuring that system partners and program requirements are aligned with the worker or student at the center of service delivery. In this *client-centered* approach, system partners and programs coordinate in a way that each individual worker or student has a pathway to improving his or her education, knowledge, and skills and entering into a fulfilling and rewarding career, with partner and program resources designed to complement the individual's pathway.

- STRATEGY 2.1: Create a career pathways system that provides opportunities for students and workers across the education and workforce systems to link to Indiana high wage, high demand careers.
- STRATEGY 2.2: Ensure that students and workers at all levels throughout Indiana are provided with meaningful career counseling and career preparation, including information on Indiana's high wage, high demand occupations.
- STRATEGY 2.3: Elevate the importance of work-and-learn models (ICC 4)
- STRATEGY 2.4: Ensure that those with barriers to employment have increased access to and opportunities for employment, education, training, and support services.

GOAL 3: DEMAND DRIVEN PROGRAMS AND INVESTMENTS -- Adopt a data-driven, sector-based approach that directly aligns education and training with the needs of Indiana's business community.

The National Governors Association reports:

Sector strategies are among the few workforce interventions that statistical evidence shows to improve employment opportunities for workers and to increase their wages once on the job. Employers report increases in productivity, reductions in customer complaints, and declines in staff turnover, all of which reduce costs and improve the competitiveness of their companies.¹⁰

Due in part to the limited public resources available for education, training, and career development, it is important that the State ensure that the resources it makes available are closely aligned with the sectors that are key drivers of the state's existing and emerging economy. Further, partners within Indiana's education, job skills development, and career training system must enhance their ability to engage meaningfully with employers within these sectors, and ensure that programming addresses the emerging and existing education, knowledge, and skill needs of these sectors from entry level to advanced. Concurrently, the State and its partners need to ensure that there are effective and meaningful forums for employers in these sectors to collaborate with each other and to work with the system's partners.

- STRATEGY 3.1: Identify Priority Now and Priority Future sectors and occupations in Indiana based on the criteria set out by the Indiana Career Council in a Resolution regarding priority sectors and occupations in Indiana passed at the June 15, 2015 meeting.

¹⁰ National Governors Association, "State Sector Strategies Coming of Age: Implications for State Workforce Policy Makers." <http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/2013/1301NGASSSReport.pdf>

- **STRATEGY 3.2:** Launch and/or expand sector partnerships in and across workforce development regions that complement the State’s priority industry sectors to provide a mechanism for Indiana’s education, job skills development, and career training system to collect information and respond to sector needs

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III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

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

(a) **State Strategy Implementation.** The Unified or Combined State Plan must include—

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

The Governor appoints the members of the State Workforce Innovation Council, (SWIC), and designates one of the business representatives to serve as the Chairperson. The SWIC gives the Chairperson authority through the bylaws to create or dissolve committees and taskforces in order to accomplish the state board functions of the Council as required under section 101(d) of WIOA. Committees are generally longstanding groups that conduct regularly occurring business for the Council and are long-term by design. Taskforces, however, are short-term and goal-oriented bodies that are appointed to achieve articulated outcomes by a specified date and have highly engaged membership to accomplish those outcomes. Both committees and taskforces are approved by the Council through resolutions that detail the objectives and timeframes, (if appropriate), of the group. They both comprise members of the Council in addition to identified stakeholders throughout the state and are all staffed by DWD representatives. The general Council meetings are scheduled to occur every other month to ensure that communication is consistent and decisions are made in a timely manner. Significant decisions are made with the approval of the majority of a Council quorum. Status updates on any current initiatives are given, as appropriate, to the full Council during these regular meetings and if action is required based on these updates, the Council is able to act accordingly. All meetings of the Council abide by the Open Door Law, and a time for public comment is provided as needed.

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

The below describes how the State will implement the strategies set out in II(c) above:

GOAL 1: SYSTEM ALIGNMENT -- Create a seamless one-stop delivery system where partners provide worker-centric and student-centric integrated services.

- **STRATEGY 1.1:** Develop a common understanding among partners as to what the “one stop delivery system” is in Indiana.

- Work with partners to develop a framework for Indiana for the one stop delivery system, with common definitions.
- Educate all stakeholders on the framework.
- STRATEGY 1.2: Increase service integration among partner agencies within the one stop delivery system
 - Build upon the work of the Career Council’s System Alignment taskforce in examining the structure and service delivery of Indiana’s workforce agencies, regions, and partners to increase coordination, efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability. This examination will stress the importance of creativity and innovation in thinking beyond bricks and mortar locations, while analyzing and making recommendations on:
 - the value of co-location with other core, mandatory or optional partners;
 - coordination of case management across partners; and
 - coordination of business services across partners.
 - Implement new case management systems across partners. DWD is in the process of implementing a new case management and labor exchange system. This system will also align with the states labor market information data, interactive website and tools for jobs seekers and career counselors. Additionally, VR is continuing development of a web-based case management system to improve the efficiency and enhance the mobile working environment of VR field staff. The system will ensure appropriate system integration and data-sharing to align resources and consumer information to improve the consumer’s experience in VR and increase the success of meeting his/her employment goal. During implementation of both systems, Indiana is assessing ways to leverage the systems for alignment across the entire one stop system.
 - Evaluate the employment and training services being provided to recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), identifying options for consolidating programs and services that would increase coordination, efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability
- STRATEGY 1.3: Simplify the process for customers in order for services to be accessible when, where and how they are needed.
 - Build upon the work of the Career Council’s System Alignment taskforce by analyzing and make recommendations on:
 - the ability to leverage technology for virtual one stop;
 - the ability for mobile One Stop services; and
 - common intake/single points of entry.
 - Create clear explanation of services and clear explanation of eligibility for programs
- STRATEGY 1.4: Ensure the culture of the One Stop system promotes knowledge transfer across partner programs, such that staff embraces the “no wrong door” philosophy and is capable of providing information on services across programs and making appropriate referrals.
 - Provide training to current staff on services across programs
 - Develop cross training materials that can be used in the future on new hires
 - In Region 11, DWD and VR are working on a Pilot to have a subject matter expert on WorkOne services in the VR office and to have a subject expert on VR services in the WorkOne office. Common referrals and communication channels are being established between the offices and staff training is being conducted so the entire VR or WorkOne office will be cross trained.

GOAL 2: CLIENT-CENTRIC APPROACH -- Create a *client-centered* approach, where system partners and programs coordinate in a way that each individual worker or student has a pathway to improving his or her education, knowledge, skills and, ultimately, his or her employment prospects, with a focus on in-demand careers.

- STRATEGY 2.1: Create a career pathways system that provides opportunities for students and workers across the education and workforce systems to link to Indiana high wage, high demand careers.
 - Key items regarding the development of a career pathways system framework have been completed by the Indiana Career Council, including development of a document that clearly defines elements of a career pathways system, and development of a process document for aligning various pathways programs into an integrated pathways system.
 - Through the EWIN project The National Center for College and Career Transitions (NC3T) is leading an effort known as the Indiana Pathways Innovation Network, or IN-PIN. The purpose of this initiative is to bring together employer-led organizations, school districts, adult education providers, colleges, and workforce system partners to develop and support educational pathway programs for youth and adults. IN-PIN helps identify and share promising practices and replicable strategies that can be used to implement and improve pathway programs of study. IN-PIN also will promote the structures and processes needed for these organizations to work together to form a career pathways system.
 - The Indiana Pathways Innovation Network (IN-PIN) will hold workshops to provide a framework for communities to build or strengthen pathways systems to support the statewide development of a pathways system.
 - A “State of the Workforce” is under development so counselors have the most up-to-date information on in-demand, high-wage occupations.
 - Over \$4.3 million in state funds and \$2.7 million in private match funds were awarded by the Indiana Regional Works Councils through the CTE Innovative Curriculum grants. Dual credits and/or workforce credentials were a component of the programs receiving awards.
 - DWD, through the Skill Up initiative, will provide up to \$11 million dollars in funding to industry-led regional partnerships for the implementation of a number of evidence-based strategies aimed at closing the skill and attainment gaps.
 - Ivy Tech community college, DWD and the Indiana Department of Education are working on an integrated approach for CTE pathways.
 - Indiana is receiving federal technical assistance on career pathways in adult education (Moving Pathways Forward), with plans for a local pilot.

- STRATEGY 2.2: Ensure that students and workers at all levels throughout Indiana are provided with meaningful career counseling and career preparation, including information on Indiana’s high wage, high demand occupations.
 - Adult career counseling standards that build off of the new k-12 career counseling standards are currently under development.
 - A “State of the Workforce” is under development so counselors have the most up-to-date information on in-demand, high-wage occupations.
 - Proposed changes to the Core 40 diploma include the addition of the Preparing for College and Careers and a College and Career Readiness sequence.

- Indiana Career Explorer is available to all Indiana residents to provide career interest information.
- “Postsecondary Pathways: Connecting Education to Careers for Student Success” events are being hosted by DWD and the Regional Works Councils, in partnership with the Indiana Youth Institute, the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, the Center for Excellence in Leadership of Learning at the University of Indianapolis and the Commission for Higher Education, as well as local and regional employers, to address the issues of postsecondary education and workforce development. These day-long, local professional development opportunities are designed to give educators, counselors and other youth-serving professionals the chance to learn directly from employers about available jobs in their region. Employers also inform attendees about the necessary steps for students to take to explore pathways to careers, such as apprenticeships, internships and credentials that take one to two years to earn.
- Jobs for America’s Graduates (JAG) will be expanded in Indiana. JAG is a state-based, national non-profit organization dedicated to preventing dropouts among youth who are most at-risk. JAG’s mission is to keep young people in school through graduation and provide work-based learning experiences that will lead to career advancement opportunities, or to enroll in a postsecondary institution that leads to a rewarding career. JAG students receive adult mentoring while in school and one year of follow-up counseling after graduation. Indiana’s program consistently graduates approximately 90 percent of participants and many students choose to continue their education after high school.
- Indiana received a technical assistance grant for its Jobs for America’s Graduates programs through the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau that will provide instruction and marketing materials related to financial capability education through December 2016.
- STRATEGY 2.3: Elevate the importance of work-and-learn models (ICC 4)
 - Key items regarding work-and-learn has been accomplished by the Indiana Career Council that will provide a framework for moving Indiana forward. One such items is the development and dissemination of *A Guide to Talent Attraction and Development for Indiana Employers: Leveraging Work-and-Learn Opportunities to Attract Qualified Hoosier Talent*.
 - Apply for and grant out funding which elevates the importance of work and learn in Indiana:
 - A Sector Partnership National Emergency Grant was awarded to the Indiana Department of Workforce Development by the US Department of Labor. Part of these funds may be used to provide employer incentives for work-based training.
 - WIA incentive funding was dedicated to work-and-learn, with grants being awarded in January, 2015, with a focus on youth and adult education work-and-learn opportunities.
 - Work-and-learn opportunities are one evidenced-based approach that can be funded by DWD’s Skill UP initiative.
 - Indiana intends to apply for NGA’s Center Work-based Learning Policy Academy
 - The Lieutenant Governor sponsored a State Fair Summer program, with this year being the pilot year.
 - Track work-and-learn: Conversations with Indiana Department of Education, Indiana INTERNnet, Independent Colleges of Indiana, and the Commission for Higher Education have begun to determine ways in which work-and-learn opportunities can be tracked across the state.

- Host work-and-learn events: Indiana, through the Indiana Career Council, the Indiana Works Councils and other partners, is hosting an event on 11/10/15 that will focus on successful programs across the state that are creating learning opportunities for students and educators, through a variety of methods, programs, and experiences.
- Collaborate with WIOA core programs to strategically enhance employer engagement and work-based learning opportunities for individuals with disabilities. This includes expanding VR employer engagement to develop appropriate disability-related information (e.g., disability awareness training, Section 504 overview materials for Indiana based federal contractors, business-to-business resources for beginning disability hiring initiatives, etc.) and resources for employers.
- STRATEGY 2.4: Ensure that those with barriers to employment have increased access to and opportunities for employment, education, training, and support services.
 - DWD recently established a priority of service policy that requires that each workforce development area enroll 50% or more of adult participants into one of the priority categories (i.e. recipients of public assistance, other low income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient).
 - As stated in strategies 1.2 and 1.3, the State will analyze the value of colocation, mobile One Stops and virtual services, including service accessibility at community based organizations.
 - Adult Education is actively reaching out to partner with local literacy organizations to co-enroll literacy level students
 - DWD is co-enrolling Adult Education students who have not yet achieved a High School Diploma or High School Equivalency in the WorkINdiana program (entry level occupational training) and work experiences.
 - Every region has Adult Education classes co-located in ITCC (statewide community college system). DWD will focus on increasing Adult Education sites whom are engaging in the Rapid Enrollment process with ITCC.
 - VR is developing a coordinated process with the Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services and State and local educational agencies in assisting individuals with disabilities, especially youth with disabilities who are considering subminimum wage employment or who are already employed, at a subminimum wage, to maximize opportunities to achieve competitive integrated employment through services provided by VR and the local educational agencies.
 - VR is expanding pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities and meeting the 15% spend requirement.

GOAL 3: DEMAND DRIVEN PROGRAMS AND INVESTMENTS -- Adopt a data-driven, sector-based approach that directly aligns education and training with the needs of Indiana’s business community.

- STRATEGY 3.1: Identify Priority Now and Priority Future sectors and occupations in Indiana based on the criteria set out by the Indiana Career Council in a Resolution regarding priority sectors and occupations in Indiana passed at the June 15, 2015 meeting.
 - Enhance the occupational projections program with a new emphasis on current demand and greater details on the skills and certifications employers are seeking. DWD desires to

provide more actionable information to our state's employers, job trainers, job seekers, and educators by projecting the trends in our employer workforce demand over time. Through the use of advanced data analytics and data sciences, DWD will enhance insights of employer workforce demand using data already collected by the state workforce agency, other state agencies, and external data sources (where applicable).

- STRATEGY 3.2: Launch and/or expand sector partnerships in and across workforce development regions that complement the State's priority industry sectors to provide a mechanism for Indiana's education, job skills development, and career training system to collect information and respond to sector needs (ICC 5.2)
 - Key items regarding the development of sector partnerships have been completed by the Indiana Career Council, including:
 - A regional sector partnership framework has been designed; and
 - The Indiana Sector Partnership Initiative was developed by EWIN, with input from key stakeholders and the Career Council's Pathways Taskforce.
 - Apply for and award grant funding for sector partnership activities:
 - Through the EWIN project The Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL) issued a grant opportunity to aid regional initiatives in the development of sector partnership strategies. This funding (up to \$20,000) may be used for planning and convening activities in support of regional Skill-Up initiatives.
 - A Sector Partnership National Emergency Grant was awarded to the Indiana Department of Workforce Development by the US Department of Labor. Part of these funds may be used for sector partnership planning. We are still in the planning phase for these funds.
 - The Indiana Department of Workforce Development is providing up to \$11 million to regional partnerships via Skill UP Indiana. The grant program focuses on the implementation of strategies aimed at ensuring Indiana citizens have the skills necessary to fill the one million jobs projected to be available between now and 2025. Implementation strategies may focus on:
 - Designing one or more sector-focused career pathway systems;
 - Developing and using a curriculum around the needed knowledge, skills, and abilities identified by a regional partnership;
 - Integrating cross-economic sector competency development of employability and technical skills;
 - Creating work-and-learn opportunities for youth and adult learners at multiple stages of a career pathway system; and
 - Implementing innovative programming that uses prior learning assessments and competency-based education models to meet employer needs.
 - Encourage broad definitions of "region," such as the skill up definition where the partnership is defined as being "in a region that encompasses a contiguous geographic area consisting of a minimum of 200,000 in population or encompass an existing economic growth region(s) as defined by the DWD."

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

The Department of Workforce Development and the Bureau of Rehabilitative Services will work in conjunction with the Indiana Career Council, the State Workforce Innovation Council, Workforce Development Boards and other partners and stakeholders to implement the strategies identified above. Goal 1 and the strategies and implementation activities for goal 1 address how Indiana will align activities across partner programs.

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

Goal 1 and the strategies and implementation activities for goal 1 address how Indiana will align activities across partner programs.

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

Goal 2 and the strategies and implementation activities under goal 2 address how Indiana will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality, customer-centered services.

- (D) *Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers.* Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, any Combined State Plan partner program included in this plan, mandatory and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

Goal 3 and the strategies and implementation activities under goal 3 address how Indiana will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs.

- (E) *Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions.* Describe how the State's Strategies will engage the State's education and training providers, including community colleges and area career and technical education schools, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system.

Through the work of the Indiana Career Council, Indiana's education and training providers, including Indiana's community college system and career and technical education schools are actively engaged to create a job driven system. With regard to the WIOA State Plan, Strategies 2.1 and 2.2 specifically address engagement of education and training providers. Providers in the K-12 and post-secondary arena are engaged in developing a career pathways system and are engaged in ensuring students are provided with meaningful career counseling and career preparation, including information on Indiana's high wage, high demand occupations.

The state is also working diligently with providers on the Eligible Trainer Provider List. More information on that work is in section IV.b.3 below.

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

Indiana is leveraging investments (in addition to WIOA funding) to enhance access to workforce development programs through various initiatives. Some examples are below:

WorkINDiana

WorkINDiana is a state-funded, short-term occupational training program for Adult Education (WIOA Title II) students that results in industry-recognized certifications. This program enables Adult Education students working toward their high school equivalency or improving their basic skills through federal WIOA funding to simultaneously earn an industry-recognized occupational certification. Students may select certification training from a list of state-approved and industry recognized certifications. To ensure success, WorkINDiana requires regional partnerships between One-stop centers and adult education centers, career and technical education centers, community colleges, and local economic development representatives. Together these partners determine which careers from the certification framework are most relevant to their regions and then implement the requisite training programs. Students must be co-enrolled in WIOA programs to ensure a full range of supports and financial services are made available. Since WorkINDiana's inception in August 2011, over 3000 students have enrolled in certification training, with 87% completing and 75% achieving a certification. There are more than 400 approved career certification programs located at 84 sites across the state with additional programs being added throughout the year.

In 2014, Indiana received Workforce Investment Act (WIA) incentive funding for their statewide performance in Program Year 2012. Indiana chose to grant this funding to ten of the twelve Workforce Investment Boards (WIB) for expansion of the WorkINDiana training program and inclusion of work experiences for participants in this training "bridge" program. The ten WIBs chose specific career clusters with demonstrated need in their economic growth region. These industries include, but are not limited to: Welding (ASW), Certified Nursing Assistant, Certified Production Technician, Pharmacy

Technician, Certified Billing and Coding, among others. Regional areas began implementation of the work experience component of the WIA Incentive Grant in January 2015. As of September 30, 2015, 21 participants have completed WorkINDiana training and been placed in short-term, industry related work experience. Work experience employers include large and small employers such as Walgreen's, Greene County Hospital, Stone City Iron Works, Boyd Welding & Machine, Inc., Landmark Family Dental, Indiana Periodontics and others. Several of the participants have been permanently hired by the work experience employer. Under the incentive grant, work experience wages are expected to align with entry level industry wages. Current wages for the participants who received a permanent placement range from \$11.00-\$19.00 per hour.

Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG)

JAG is a statewide drop-out prevention program that targets at-risk high school juniors and seniors as well as out of school youth who have already dropped out of high school. The program's goals are to provide skills assessment and remediation to ensure students receive a high school diploma or its equivalent; assist in the attainment of employability skills to pursue employment or post-secondary education; and to help ensure graduates remain employed after graduation or transition to post-secondary education or training. Indiana's JAG model provides tutoring assistance and adult mentoring. Participants receive individualized attention and identification of specific barriers to success, which may include academic problems, life skills, personal skills, and social or economic barriers. Students receive one year of follow-up service after graduation. Each senior completes the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), applies to two colleges and has the opportunity to take the American College Testing (ACT), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or some pre-postsecondary enrollment examination.

Last year 44% of the students in follow-up were enrolled in post-secondary education. The current 2014 graduates earned \$10M in outside scholarships. JAG Indiana was recognized by the national organization for having the highest amount of earned scholarships by its students. The State Career Development Conference was held March 14, 2014 at Ivy Tech Community College in Indianapolis. The event provided students the opportunity to visit the campus and compete in employability skills events. Twelve regional conferences were held prior to the statewide conference. Ninety-two schools participated in the regional conferences with the top 125 students attending the State conference. The State Career Development Conference featured competitive events designed to demonstrate employability skills learned through program competencies, employer and community connections. Thirty-six students received awards ranging from \$250 to \$3,000. During the 2013 session of the Indiana General Assembly, state funds were allocated for the first time for JAG. This enabled the program to essentially double in size. DWD is currently partnering with the Family and Social Services Administration to leverage TANF funding for JAG programs. Since its inception in 2006, JAG has served more than 13,000 Hoosier students. Over 5,200 students participated in JAG at 118 programs throughout the State during the 2014-15 school year.

Hoosier Initiative for Re-Entry (HIRE)

The HIRE program is an initiative to help ex-offenders become gainfully reemployed and reenter society. In conjunction with the Department of Correction (DOC), DWD leads program participants through the process of becoming successful job candidates by working with employers to determine the knowledge, skills, abilities, and aptitude needed to be a successful employee within their organization.

Participants are often chosen based on two main requirements: they must have displayed a positive track record during incarceration and must be identified as low or medium risk to re-offend. The staff works with DOC to determine which applicants would best suit a specific employer. Once applicants are screened, DWD delivers a curriculum focused on soft skills, workplace aptitude, and motivation. Upon release, participants receive additional targeted job training if needed. After release and job placement, DWD staff meets regularly with participants and employers to identify work related issues or needs and to discuss any program changes.

It costs Indiana \$20,000 per year to incarcerate one offender. Department figures show the state's cash return to the economy during the past year is more than \$8 million due to savings on incarceration costs and increases in state economic productivity. In addition to state funding for HIRE, DWD is currently partnering with the Family and Social Services Administration to leverage TANF funding for the HIRE program.

REA, WPRS and JFH

The Worker Profiling Reemployment Services (WPRS), Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment, and Jobs for Hoosiers (JFH) programs capture unemployed Hoosiers at the fourth week of their claim and include: UI eligibility review, claimant-centered labor market information, referral to a self-directed job search, and an orientation to the one-stop services. In addition, REA participants complete an Individual Reemployment Plan (IRP) and additional services such as job search workshops, job search assistance, employment counseling, and referrals to other employment services.

Adult Basic Education (ABE)

The Adult Basic Education program is charged with ensuring delivery of foundational skills development, academic and career counseling services, and career pathways to adults and out-of-school youth for the purpose of employment, reemployment, or enhanced employment. The ABE program consists of regional consortia throughout the state, constructed within the DWD economic growth regions. Each consortium is responsible for ensuring that all adult learners within its service area have access to both educational and career advising services. In Program Year 2015, \$20 million in state funding will supplement the almost \$10M in federal WIOA Title II funding to carry out these initiatives. In addition to these federal and state dollars, local and regional contributions will total over \$5 million, much from the local school systems and education-based organizations. All of this funding together will focus on delivering services to support the adult learner.

Skill UP

The 2015 Indiana General Assembly dedicated \$48 million for the biennium to DWD to expand and enhance Career and Technical Education programs that lead to jobs in Indiana's priority sectors. The vast majority of these funds will be used to allow communities to implement employer-led evidence-based strategies that align education and training programs; creating collaboration between employers, educational entities, community based organizations, workforce, and economic partners within the region. These "Skill UP" grants intend to catalyze pathway system development, each of which insists upon the inclusion of work and learn opportunities.

Indiana INTERNnet

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education received a \$500,000 allocation over the most recent biennium to provide additional support to Indiana INTERNnet, (a web-based tool matching employers to college interns) , and they are looking at ways to determine barriers to offering work-and-learn experiences as well as strategies to expand work-and-learn opportunities across the State of Indiana. <https://indianaintern.net/>

- (G) *Improving Access to Postsecondary Credentials.* Describe how the State’s strategies will improve access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials, including Registered Apprenticeship certificates. This includes credentials that are industry-recognized certificates, licenses or certifications, and that are portable and stackable.

The Indiana Career Council, through its Strategic Plan, has a goal that at least 60 percent of Indiana’s workforce will have the postsecondary knowledge, skills, and credentials demanded within Indiana’s economy by 2025. The strategies laid out in that plan and adopted in the WIOA State Plan support this goal, including strategies around career pathways, career counseling, work and learn, and sector partnerships.

- (H) *Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies.* Describe how the activities identified in (A) will be coordinated with economic development entities, strategies, and activities in the State.

At the state-level, the head of the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) has a seat on the Indiana Career Council (ICC). The State Workforce Board (SWIC) has joint meetings with the ICC to ensure strategies are coordinated. At the local level, economic development partners are members of and/or engaged in the work of the Works Councils and the Workforce Development Boards. A few specific examples where economic development entities are being engaged are:

- Local economic development representatives along with other partners assist with determining which industry recognized certificates should be trained/implemented in their Region for the WorkINDiana program. More information on WorkINDiana can be found in (F) above.
- State and local economic development officials assist DWD on Rapid Response services to ensure that all stakeholders are strategically involved in the process and that the training needs and skills required by employers are known.
- Through the Skill Up initiative, DWD is following the lead of IEDC’s Regional Cities Initiative in broadly defining “region” as a contiguous geographic area consisting of a minimum of 200,000 in population.

(b) **State Operating Systems and Policies** The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the State operating systems and policies that will support the implementation of the State strategy described in section II **Strategic Elements**. This includes—

- (1) The State operating systems that will support the implementation of the State’s strategies.

This must include a description of—

- (A) State operating systems that support coordinated implementation of State strategies (e.g., labor market information systems, data systems, communication systems, case-management systems, job banks, etc.).

(B) Data-collection and reporting processes used for all programs and activities, including those present in one-stop centers.

Indiana has initiated several projects with regard to its operating systems that will support implementation of the strategies described above.

The primary activity underway is to ensure a client-centric supply system exists to engage individuals, connect them to all available services and resources, and facilitate their re-employment in Hoosier jobs. A project to target procuring modern technology for implementing a common Case Management and Job Matching system across the State has been initiated. DWD and VR are in the process of building separate case management systems to meet their unique needs, but the agencies are working together to determine how the systems, once fully built, can interface. While DWD is in the beginning stages of working with a newly procured vendor, VR is almost 2 years into the process. VR's system is under a larger umbrella of the Case Management for Social Services within Indiana's Family Social Services Administration (FSSA). The purpose of the overarching FSSA system is to oversee and provide appropriate and timely services to all FSSA consumers being served in various programs. Additionally, the consolidated system shall enhance system integration, data integrity, and remove legacy systems. The VR portion of the project started February of 2014 and is presently gathering the current and future business state and processes. The VR portion requires improved efficiency to enhance the existing mobile and paperless work environment of VR field staff. Furthermore, VR will closely work with DWD to ensure appropriate system integration and data-sharing occurs to align resources, improve reporting processes and outcomes, and enhance the consumer's experience. The ultimate goal is to have the Core programs working seamlessly together.

Another critical goal of the State is to provide job seekers the specific skills they need to land a fulfilling Hoosier job, thus providing Indiana employers with the workforce that allows them to succeed and grow. To facilitate this, the agency is embarking on a project (called the Demand Driven Workforce System or DDWS) to build a data system to identify those skills job seekers need in order to fill current job openings as well as jobs that will become available 3, 5 and 10 years into the future. By knowing what employers need in terms of specific skills in their future employees, educational institutions can design curricula to ensure students obtain those skills thus helping close the "skills gap." Additionally, job seekers can select education and training paths that will give them the specific skills they need to land those future jobs

While traditional *time-lagged* data can be used to identify current and future job demand and the skills associated to those jobs, the data often provides generally broad education and skill requirements and can be slow to highlight new and emerging job categories. In select cases, that is sufficient. But in others, it is not. In these cases, DDWS will supplement this traditional approach to identifying skills and demand using:

- real-time data obtained from analyzing current job postings, posted resumes, and other relevant unstructured and structured data sources;
- advanced data analysis tools and techniques;
- data gleaned from direct employer engagement (i.e. in the form of employer surveys, meetings with employers, economic development initiatives, etc.); and
- data developed by external (industry-specific) modelling tools that include forward looking data.

Another project is the State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS), which has been active for over a year. This project is called the Indiana Network of Knowledge (INK). INK will bring together data from across many

State agencies in a single data repository. This data along with new technologies to store and analyze will provide insight into the state pipeline of future employees (the Supply). Using this data along with employer demand data from the DDWS will allow the State to identify potential future skill gaps. Educational and training institutions can use the data to provide the programs that teach those skills and abilities so that when students graduate they have a fulfilling Hoosier job awaiting them. INK will also help the State measure the effectiveness of its programs by being able to track participant progress after they leave the program. INK will allow analysis of program participants to determine if they are entering/completing additional education or entering/remaining in employment.

The State continues to support and enhance the Hoosiers by the Numbers website as the source for all workforce data. This site is Indiana's Labor Market Information website which includes many virtual tools with information for community leaders and individuals. The Indiana Business Research Center also assists in the hosting, developing, and secreting the Workforce Information Database (WID) as mandated by the Workforce Information Grant. This site offers data tools and downloads for all of the Bureau of Labor Statistics Employment and Wage statistics programs. This includes information on the incumbent workforce, unemployment trends, labor force estimates, and projections for future occupations in demand. The site is designed for career counselors, job seekers, economic developers and the general public. The Indiana Department of Workforce Development continued to populate the Workforce Information Database with state and local data that covers at least the most recent ten year period. The Workforce Information Database serves as the primary source for Indiana's website (Hoosiers by the Numbers) and is supplemented by the Stats Indiana database, maintained by our university partner, IBRC. The data covers counties, metropolitan statistical areas, economic growth regions and balance of state areas in addition to statewide estimates and aggregates.

Hoosiers by the Numbers had more than 75,000 active sessions and nearly 50,000 new users on the site according to the web analytics tracked by the agency. 35.5% of visitors to the site were returning. 11,925 of the page visit sessions were from mobile devices or tablets showing an increase of 49.06% above last year's total of 8,000. This is an indicator that the enhancements to create mobile friendly applications have been successful and popularity of use in these formats is on the rise. Furthermore, on average visitors viewed approximately 5.61 pages per session and were on the site for slightly under four minutes. The core of Hoosiers by the Numbers is strong navigation geared to people looking for their county or region or a specific piece of data on a workforce related topic. The site is powered by more than 7 billion records in the joint databases of the IBRC and DWD and is meant to serve as a leading informational site for business developers, researchers and the public alike.

A key driver behind many of the State IT initiatives is to ensure common data standards are developed to allow for more effective data analysis within specific regions as well as across the state. This data analysis will allow the State to constantly measure and improve, then measure and improve again. Data gathered will be used to shape future policy decisions.

- (2) The State policies that will support the implementation of the State's strategies (e.g., co-enrollment policies and universal intake processes).

Several state policies have been issued or updated in response to the transition to WIOA. The state's Priority of Service Policy requires that at least 50% of the clients served under Title I Adult are either receiving public assistance, low-income, or basic-skills deficient. This ensures that services are being prioritized for those with barriers to employment and that are most in need of services.

The state has also issued guidance on the delivery of Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker Services regarding participation and exit dates, requiring that the date of participation reflects the first DOL funded program. The common participation date encourages co-enrollment in programs from the earliest point of contact to best serve the individual with the broadest menu of services possible.

With the renewed emphasis that WIOA places on work experience-based job training, the state has issued a policy for On-The-Job Training (OJT) contracts that provides guidance to the regions in establishing these employer led experiences. The state has issued draft guidance for Incumbent Worker programs which provide a framework for the regions to provide these services. Indiana has decided to keep it in draft form for now, to allow the regions flexibility to innovate when implementing this new program.

Lastly, the state is looking at issuing policy guidance regarding pay-for-performance contracts for the delivery of training services.

(3) State Program and State Board Overview.

- (A) State Agency Organization. Describe the organization and delivery systems at the State and local levels for the programs covered in the plan, including the organizational structure. Include an organizational chart.

DWD is the state agency responsible for the administration and oversight of all of the WIOA programs under Title I, II, and III. The Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), through its Bureau of Rehabilitative Services, is the state agency responsible for the administration and oversight of WIOA programs under Title IV.

Both agencies work closely with the state workforce development board, referred to in Indiana as the State Workforce Innovation Council (SWIC). The SWIC advises the Governor on workforce priorities and initiatives while also overseeing workforce activities managed regionally by Workforce Development Boards (WBD's). A few of the many responsibilities the SWIC is charged with includes: developing opportunities for Hoosiers to gain employment and earn competitive wage, developing and implementing workforce solutions based on the input of representatives and local workforce development boards around the state, addressing Indiana's workforce needs through efficient workforce training and development programs. The SWIC also works with DWD and FSSA in developing and implementing the federally mandated state plan under WIOA.

As to the Workforce Development Boards, Indiana has a total of twelve (12) designated local areas with a WDB in each. WDBs are responsible for the oversight of funds and activities, delivering career assessment, job search, and education and training related services through WorkOne organizations identified and established by the board.

Workforce operations and activities are executed on a local level through WorkOne organizations established by the WBDs and managed by Executive Directors and Regional Operators that are appointed by the WDBs. Through Title III (Wagner Peyser, DWD provides state staff in these facilities for the sole purpose of providing employment services to participants. WorkOne operations are subject to the oversight of both the SWIC and the managing WDB.

- (B) State Board. Provide a description of the State Board, including---

- (i) *Membership Roster.* Provide a membership roster for the State Board, including members' organizational affiliations.

A list of current State Workforce Innovation Council (SWIC) members can be found online at <http://www.in.gov/dwd/2803.htm>. The board has a total of 43 seats, with the following representation:

- Governor
- 2 State Representatives
- 2 State Senator
- City CEO
- County CEO
- 22 Businesses (which is a majority)
- 8 representatives of workers (which is 20%)
- Commissioner of the Department of Workforce Development
- Director of Vocational Rehabilitation
- 4 Representatives from Education (including K-12, community colleges and higher education)

- (ii) *Board Activities.* Provide a description of the activities that will assist State Board members and staff in carrying out State Board functions effectively.

All newly appointed members will be given an orientation that includes the responsibilities of the board, an overview of all of the programs the board oversees, and the strategies that the state is implementing to achieve determined goals. Recently, in July, there were a number of new members that had been appointed so the majority of the meeting was dedicated to an orientation to WIOA and the direction of the State. At the end of this meeting, the board also passed two resolutions that instituted several taskforces. These taskforces have clearly defined objectives to achieve within a specific timeline which are outlined within the resolutions. The board has regular meetings every other month, and consistent communication among members and State staff through face-to-face meetings, emails, and phone calls. Every other SWIC board meeting is held jointly along with the Indiana Career Council to ensure open communication and alignment of strategies for their shared goals.

(4) Assessment of Programs and One-Stop Program Partners.

- (A) Assessment of Core Programs. Describe how the core programs will be assessed each year based on State performance accountability measures described in section 116(b) of WIOA. This State assessment must include the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs broken down by local area or provider.

The State assesses the core programs through the following mechanisms:

- state and local level fiscal and programmatic monitoring;
- surveys of stakeholders;
- data validation; and
- analysis of data.

The state also ensures that local areas meet performance accountability measures and will provide technical assistance when needed. DWD plans to issue a policy on system assessment to ensure that the current actions are being coordinated in a way that allows partners to review relevant information and take action to improve the system.

DWD also plans to evaluate pay for performance contracting as a way to assess quality, effectiveness and improvement of programs.

- (B) Assessment of One-Stop Program Partner Programs. Describe how other one-stop delivery system partner program services and Combined State Plan partner program included in the plan will be assessed each year.

Many of the one stop partner programs are under the responsibility of DWD (i.e., Post-Secondary Career and Technical Education (Perkins), Job Corps, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs Program, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs, Unemployment Compensation Programs, and YouthBuild). As DWD establishes policy for assessment of the core programs, the policy will cover the additional one stop programs. Currently, DWD is providing monitoring and technical assistance to these programs, but DWD will work on a policy to ensure quality and consistency of assessment.

- (C) Previous Assessment Results. Provide the results of an assessment of the effectiveness of the core programs and other one-stop partner programs and Combined State Plan partner program included in the plan during the preceding 2-year period. Describe how the State is adapting its strategies based on these assessments.

Under WIA, the State had a waiver of the requirement to conduct an assessment.

- (5) **Distribution of Funds for Core Programs**. Describe the methods and factors the State will use in distributing funds under the core programs in accordance with the provisions authorizing such distributions.

- (A) For Title I programs, provide a description of the written policies that establish the State's methods and factors used to distribute funds to local areas for—
(i) Youth activities in accordance with WIOA section 128(b)(2) or (b)(3),

The state follows section 128(b)(2)(A)(i) and TEG 29-14 to formula allocate funding for youth activities. The data used in computing allotments includes:

- The number of unemployed for Areas of Substantial Unemployment (ASUs) averages for 12-month period immediately preceding new program year as provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics;
- The number of excess unemployed individuals or the ASU excess (depending on which is higher), averages for the same 12-month period as used for the ASU unemployed data; and
- The number of economically disadvantaged youth (age 16-21, excluding college students in the workforce and military) from special tabulation data available from the American Community Survey (ACS).

The state applies the 90% hold harmless provision contained in WIOA, Section 128(b)(2)(A)(ii).

- (ii) Adult and training activities in accordance with WIOA section 133(b)(2) or (b)(3),

The state follows section 133(b)(2)(A)(i) and TEG 29-14 to formula allocate funding for adult activities. The data used in computing allotments includes:

- The number of unemployed for Areas of Substantial Unemployment (ASU's) averages for the 12-month period immediately preceding new program year, as provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics;
- The number of excess unemployed individuals or the ASU excess (depending on which is higher), averages for the same 12-month period as used for the ASU unemployed data; and
- The number of economically disadvantaged adults (age 22-72, excluding college students in the workforce and military) from special tabulations of data available from the American Community Survey (ACS).

The state applies the 90% hold harmless provision contained in WIOA, section 133(b)(2)(A)(ii).

- (iii) Dislocated worker employment and training activities in accordance with WIOA section 133(b)(2) and based on data and weights assigned.

The state follows section 133(b)(2)(A)(i) and TEGL 29-14 to formula allocate funding for Dislocated Worker activities. The following data is used in computing these allotments:

- Insured Unemployment Data for the preceding Calendar Year (30% weight);
- Unemployed Concentration Data for the preceding Program Year (30% weight);
- Plant Closing and Mass Layoff Data for the preceding Calendar Year (15% weight);
- Declining Industries Data for the preceding Calendar Year (10% weight);
- Farmer/Rancher Economic Hardship Data for the preceding Calendar Year (2% weight);
- Long-term Unemployment Data for the preceding Calendar Year (13% weight).

The state applies the 90% hold harmless provision contained in WIOA, section 132(b)(2)(B)(iii).

(B) For Title II:

- (i) Describe how the eligible agency will award multi-year grants or contracts on a competitive basis to eligible providers in the State, including how eligible agencies will establish that eligible providers are organizations of demonstrated effectiveness.

DWD ensures direct access to apply for grants or contracts to all eligible providers in Indiana. All applicants eligible under Section 231 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act will submit applications to DWD. They will not be required to apply through another agency or agencies in a multi-tiered process. The application processes will be designed so that direct application to DWD is clearly evident, customary, and nonnegotiable. Direct application will be the norm regardless of whether an applicant, if awarded funds, would be considered a grantee or a contractor.

- (ii) Describe how the eligible agency will ensure direct and equitable access to all eligible providers to apply and compete for funds and how the eligible agency will ensure that it is using the same grant or contract announcement and application procedure for all eligible providers.

DWD ensures equitable access to apply for grants or contracts to all eligible providers in Indiana. The processes used for announcing the availability of federal funds under Section 231 is designed in such a way that no distinction is made in the type of eligible provider. The application process used to award funds for comprehensive adult education providers is the same for all eligible applicants.

Notice of Availability

All notices announcing the availability of federal funds will specify that all eligible providers have the right and are required to apply directly to the funding source. The same grant or contract announcement process and application process will be required for all categories of eligible providers under Section 231. A variety of methods of public notice will be used, including:

- Notice will be posted on the department's web site,
- Announcements will be emailed, to the extent possible, to potential applicants, and
- For grant continuation years, notices will be emailed and communicated to current eligible grantees only.

Understanding the expanded eligible provider definition under WIOA, DWD will increase efforts to market the funding opportunity of AEFLA to a wider audience. These efforts have/will continue to include alerting statewide and local Community Based Organizations and others of the funding opportunity as well as may include targeted town hall meetings to discuss funding and expectations.

(C) Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation

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

Indiana's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is a combined agency and does not have a separate designated state agency for individuals who are blind.

(6) Program Data

- (A) Data Alignment and Integration. Describe the plans of the lead State agencies with responsibility for the administration of the core programs, along with the State Board, to align and integrate available workforce and education data systems for the core programs, unemployment insurance programs, and education through postsecondary education, and to the extent possible, the Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan. The description of the State's plan for integrating data systems should include the State's goals for achieving integration and any progress to date.
- (i) Describe the State's plans to make the management information systems for the core programs interoperable to maximize the efficient exchange of common data elements to support assessment and evaluation.
 - (ii) Describe the State's plans to integrate data systems to facilitate streamlined intake and service delivery to track participation across all programs included in this plan.
 - (iii) 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.

- (iv) Describe the State's plans to develop and produce the reports required under section 116, performance accountability system. (WIOA section 116(d)(2)).

DWD, VR and the State TANF and SNAP agency (the Division of Family Resources (DFR)) have had preliminary discussions to establish a vision around more detailed integration including common intake and service delivery. Because both DWD and VR are in the process of building new case management systems, these conversations are still in the early phases. As DWD also is collaborating with DFR on employment and training services for SNAP And TANF clients, DWD is interested in align data systems with DFR for a more coordinated approach. As future business processes begin to take shape, the complementary discussions to develop plans to achieve the required interoperability between the technology systems will be initiated.

The State Board will assist in this process through taskforces that are currently in existence and ones that will be created as needed. Currently, the WIOA Implementation taskforce is working on WIOA implementation issues. If a taskforce on aligning and integrating data systems becomes necessary, the State Board can form such taskforce

Indiana DWD's Research Division is currently responsible for submission of the federal reports for WIA performance accountability. This work will continue with the new case management and labor exchange systems, and the evolving measures from WIOA. This work is also supported currently by the Workforce Data Quality Initiative grant from USDOL/ETA. Indiana is working on performance accountability and reporting of dashboards with its longitudinal data system and workforce data warehouse. Current plans involve improved reporting and dashboards to be implemented with the new systems and with support from current agency subject matter experts.

Planning Note: States should be aware that Section 116(i)(1) requires the core programs, local boards, and chief elected officials to establish and operate a fiscal and management accountability information system based on guidelines established by the Secretaries of Labor and Education. Separately, the Departments of Labor and Education anticipate working with States to inform future guidance and possible information collection(s) on these accountability systems. States should begin laying the groundwork for these fiscal and management accountability requirements, recognizing that adjustments to meet the elements above may provide opportunity or have impact on such a fiscal and management accountability system.

- (B) Assessment of Participants' Post-Program Success. Describe how lead State agencies will use the workforce development system to assess the progress of participants who are exiting from core programs in entering, persisting in, and completing postsecondary education, or entering or remaining in employment. States may choose to set additional indicators of performance.

As stated previously, the INK data warehouse will provide a valuable resource of data that has been integrated across many state agencies. This longitudinal data repository will be well-suited to track those past and present core program participant's progress in continuing education or in obtaining and remaining in employment. In addition, reports and dashboards will be developed to track key measures and to use this insight to drive policy decisions. The implementation of new technology for some of the workforce foundational systems, Case Management and Job Matching, will serve to provide even cleaner more standardized data to ensure effective analysis.

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

Indiana's workforce warehouse and longitudinal data systems currently integrate and match UI wage records for employment outcomes and performance accountability reporting. This same system (IWIS) has been used for additional labor market information analysis and in informing the labor market information website, tools, and ad hoc research questions.

- (D) Privacy Safeguards. Describe the privacy safeguards incorporated in the State's workforce development system, including safeguards required by section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and other applicable Federal laws.

The State is aware that a key element of success to utilizing data across agencies for either improved customer service or improved measurement and tracking of outcomes is ensuring the integrity of all data and ensuring confidential data is treated as such. This is accomplished with various technical safeguards and ensuring personnel handling this data are properly trained in all relevant regulations and the fundamentals of handling personal and confidential data. Technical safeguards may include:

- Approved processes that limit access to the data to only those personnel who require access to carry out their daily job functions;
- Network security, monitoring, firewalls, etc. to prevent unauthorized access to data from entities outside of State government;
- Encryption technology; and
- Secure data transport mechanisms.

All State personnel undergo annual training on the proper handling of confidential data. This training is updated to reflect the most current statutes and interpretations. Those specifically involved in reporting are trained on the various de-identification and aggregation rules that apply.

- (7) **Priority of Service for Veterans.** Describe how the State will implement and monitor the priority of service provisions for veterans in accordance with the requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act, codified at section 4215 of 38 U.S.C., which applies to all employment and training programs funded in whole or in part by the Department of Labor. States should also describe the referral process for veterans determined to have a significant barrier to employment to receive services from the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist.

Pursuant to Federal law, veteran and eligible spouse customers should be identified upon entry at a WorkOne and allowed to move to the front of the waiting line. To assist with identifying veterans and eligible spouses, Priority of Service signs have been developed and are posted in all WorkOne offices. Signs are framed and displayed in a manner where the public, especially veteran and eligible spouse customers, can easily see them. In accordance with the priority of service sign, eligible veterans and eligible spouses should notify staff upon entry into the facility. Typically, this will be near the entry point. Customers with visual impairments must be asked if they are a veteran or eligible spouse.

Under normal operating circumstances, all WorkOne customers are greeted by the welcome team and moved on to the appropriate staff for assistance. The majority of veterans should be served by Wagner-Peyser or WIOA staff rather than the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) Veterans' staff. This allows JVSG Veterans' staff efforts to focus on veteran customers with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) in accordance with VPL 03-14 and 03-14, change 1. The six significant barriers to employment, as identified by the Department of Labor are:

- A special disabled or disabled veteran, as those terms are defined in 38 U.S.C § 4211(1) and (3); Special disabled and disabled veterans are those: who are entitled to compensation (or who but for the receipt of military retired pay would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; or, were discharged or released from active duty because of a service connected disability;
- Homeless, as defined in Section 103(a) of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302(a));
- A recently-separated service member, as defined in 38 U.S.C §4211(6), who has been unemployed for 27 or more weeks in the previous 12 months, i.e. the term of unemployment over the previous 12 months remains 27 weeks; however, the requirement of 27 *consecutive* weeks is eliminated;
- An offender, as defined by WIOA Section 3 (38) who is currently incarcerated or who has been released from incarceration;
- Lacking a high school diploma or equivalent certificate; or
- Low-income individual, as defined by WIOA Section 3 (36).

The following additional populations, as identified by the Secretary of Labor, also meet the criteria to receive services from a DVOP specialist:

- A Veteran between the ages of 18-24;
- A Veteran Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation Chapter 31 Veteran;
- A Transitioning Service Member in need of intensive services;
- Wounded, ill, or injured Service Members receiving treatment at military facilities, or Warrior Transition Unit; and
- The Spouses and family care-givers of such wounded, ill, or injured service members.

Welcome team staff should identify those veterans with SBE's and direct those veterans to the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program specialist for assistance, intensive services and case management. In the event that a DVOP is not available, the veteran or spouse should be referred to the appropriate Wagner-Peyser or WIOA staff and not held up until a DVOP is available.

As to monitoring, DWD (at times in conjunction with DOL/VETS) will periodically conduct program reviews and on-site validation visits. These reviews will focus on activities to evaluate processes aimed at achieving the State's program goals and objectives, expenditure of grant funds on allowable activities, integration and coordination with other resources and service providers in the local area, and overall progress in achieving negotiated performance outcomes.

(8) Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System. Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery

system partners), will comply with section 188 of WIOA (if applicable) and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) with regard to the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. This also must include a description of compliance through providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. Describe the State's one-stop center certification policy, particularly the accessibility criteria. (This Operational Planning element applies to core programs.)

DWD will develop marketing materials made available through a broad range of media, (i.e., online, print, and social media), to promote universal access and equal opportunity for adults and youth with disabilities. The marketing materials will include positive images of people with disabilities and the types of available services, assistance, and accommodations provided in the WorkOne offices. Additionally, DWD will continue to enhance the *Job Seekers with Disabilities* website, <http://www.in.gov/dwd/2416.htm>, to include resources for both job seekers and employers. DWD will also strengthen existing partnerships with groups such as the Governor's Council for People with Disabilities, Family and Social Services Administration, Division of Mental Health and Addiction, Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services (including Blind and Deaf Services, Developmental Disability Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, Independent Living Centers, and Project SEARCH), Division of Family Resources, and the Office of Medicaid Policy and Planning by defining the process for referred or shared customers and improving the delivery of available services. Collaboration with these partners will also help to support October's National Disability Awareness Month and March's Disability Awareness Month through joint marketing materials and awareness efforts.

DWD will conduct training for One-stop office staff, (including youth staff), to better understand the different types of disabilities, how to handle issues of disclosure and disability identification with sensitivity at program intake, and how to determine the most effective mix of services and referrals to make when a disability is identified. These trainings will be presented by subject matter experts and include such topics as: federal, state, and local disability policies; identifying barriers/hidden disabilities; disability awareness and etiquette; website accessibility; providing reasonable accommodations; assistive technology accommodations and resources; Section 503 for federal contractors; and simulation training. VR, Mental Health Centers, and the Department of Correction will also be invited to attend these events and asked to present on relevant topics. Disability Resource Coordinators sustained through Indiana's Disability Employment Initiative (IN-DEI) grant will be utilized as subject matter experts in the field and also assist with training staff on serving individuals with disabilities. Best practices will be identified by these coordinators and shared with the WDBs for implementation when appropriate.

Within the One-stop offices, staff will be trained to follow established procedures to ensure inclusion and compliance. Starting with intake, customers should be asked if any assistance is needed and if they have a disability, once they are assured that their response is voluntary and will be kept confidential. Customer orientations should include a discussion of Equal Opportunity (EO) and the right to file a complaint. Following orientation, services should be reviewed with the client by determining the client's eligibility and need of services in an integrated setting. For example, not all customers should be automatically referred to VR; only those that appear to be eligible and in need of VR services. Ongoing training will need to occur to educate staff on the services, funding, and the resources available to determine when it is appropriate to refer to partner agencies and possibly blend funding. Agency partners will seek to coordinate efforts and leverage funding between partner agencies to meet the

employment and training needs of the customer. Memorandums of Understanding may be developed or reviewed, as necessary, to outline the responsibilities of each partner.

WDBs, through the IN-DEI grant, may continue to operate as Employment Networks (EN) and either offer benefits counseling in-house or work with their local Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) representative to provide benefits counseling to Social Security beneficiaries receiving SSI/SSDI. WDBs not currently operating as an EN will receive information and training about the benefits of the Ticket to Work Program and how to become an active EN.

Staff will also be trained to use multiple resources and tools to ensure accessibility to services. One such resource that staff will be encouraged to use is the Guidepost for Success, which is a set of key educational and intervention strategies for youth, including those with disabilities. Additionally, One-stop assessments, Individual Education Program (IEPs), and Academic and Career Planning (ACPs) tools will continue to be utilized to identify career paths, barriers to employment, training or service needs, and employability skills. These assessments will also assist with identifying hidden disabilities and the potential need for accommodations.

DWD will implement policies to support accessibility to services throughout the state. Development of a Reasonable Accommodation Policy will be explored that requires the WDBs to formally track when a reasonable accommodation is requested and whether it is approved or denied. This policy may include, but will not be limited to: the process for handling and tracking reasonable accommodation requests; examples of reasonable accommodations (i.e., frequent breaks, ensuring a quiet testing environment, reading the test aloud); providing training and information regarding One-stop procedures; and a process for notifying the state regarding the approval/denial of the request(s). The state will track both informal and formal complaints received in the One-stop offices through the State's Quarterly Customer Service Record Log, located at <http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/SF46001.xls>. This will help the state identify any patterns for alleged discrimination of individuals with disabilities. Along these same lines, when DWD or a One-stop office removes a job order that prohibits individuals with disabilities from applying, the employer's contact information will be logged on the Quarterly Customer Service Record Log for tracking purposes. In addition to the Reasonable Accommodation Policy, the state will explore certification criteria that promote inclusion and accessibility when developing the One Stop Certification Policy.

Lastly, the One-stop offices, (with oversight from the state), will continue implementation of equal opportunity and universal strategies to ideally including the nine elements of the Methods of Administration. This is a document provided to the USDOL Civil Rights Center every two years and outlines efforts taken for the following: designation of an Equal Opportunity Officer; notice and communication; assurances; universal access; compliance with section 504; data and information collection, analysis, and maintenance; monitoring for compliance and continuous improvement; complaint processing procedures; and corrective actions or sanctions.

IV. COORDINATION WITH COMBINED STATE PLAN PROGRAMS. If the State is submitting a Combined State Plan, describe the methods used for joint planning and coordination of the core programs and the other programs and activities covered by the Combined State Plan.

OMB Control Number 1205-0NEW

V. COMMON ASSURANCES (for all core programs)

The State Plan must include assurances that:	
1.	The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts;
2.	The State has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of State Boards and local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes;
3.	The lead State agencies with responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified or Combined State Plan, and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served by such programs;
4.	<p>(a) The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administering the core programs and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public;</p> <p>(b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board;</p>
6.	The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments made for adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs to carry out workforce investment activities under chapters 2 and 3 of subtitle B;
7.	The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, as applicable;
8.	The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program;
9.	The State will pay an appropriate share (as defined by the State board) of the costs of carrying out section 116, from funds made available through each of the core programs;
10.	The State has a one-stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all one-stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA);

11.	Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate; and
12.	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.

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VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

(OMB Control Number: 1205-0NEW)

The State must address all program-specific requirements in this section for the WIOA core programs regardless of whether the State submits either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

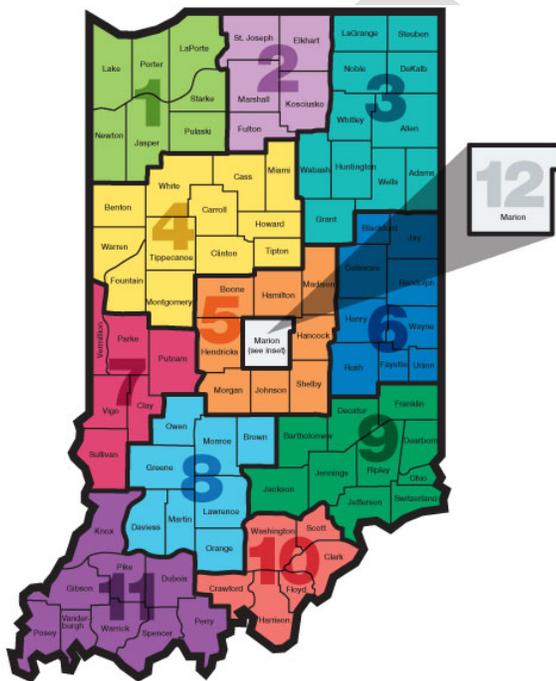
Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities under Title I-B. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following with respect to activities carried out under subtitle B—

(a) General Requirements

(1) *Regions and Local Workforce Development Areas.*

(A) Identify the regions and the local workforce development areas designated in the State.

All local areas that were designated under WIA were re-designated under WIOA per DWD Policy WIOA T1-(107) P1 Local Workforce Development Board Certification. Regional planning areas have not yet been formally designated, although discussions have begun to have areas 5 and 12 plan regionally in due to commuting patterns, educational attainment, new job creation, net migration, proximity of vocational and academic institutions, current infrastructure, and Indiana legislative districts.



(B) Describe the process used for designating local areas, including procedures for determining whether the local area met the criteria for “performed successfully” and “sustained fiscal integrity” in accordance with 106(b)(2) and (3) of WIOA. Describe the process used for identifying regions and planning regions under

section 106(a) of WIOA. This must include a description of how the State consulted with the local boards and chief elected officials in identifying the regions.

All 12 of the existing local areas met the criteria for performing successfully and maintaining fiscal integrity, as outlined in WIOA section 106(b)(2) and (3), and this was verified through data reporting and monitoring efforts. As to identifying regional planning areas, discussions have begun across at least two local areas (5 and 12). Additionally, interstate planning is underway with Region 9 and Ohio. DWD will issue a policy on regional planning that adheres to the requirements detailed in section 106(a) of WIOA.

- (C) Provide the appeals process referred to in section 106(b)(5) of WIOA relating to designation of local areas.

All local areas were redesignated, thus an appeal process was not needed. DWD will be incorporating an appeal process into the policy for subsequent designation.

- (D) Provide the appeals process referred to in section 121(h)(2)(E) of WIOA relating to determinations for infrastructure funding.

The lead agencies of the core programs are working with the local workforce development boards on an infrastructure funding policy. When such policy is finalized, it will detail an appeal process that complies with WIOA.

(2) Statewide Activities.

- (A) Provide State policies or guidance for the statewide workforce development system and for use of State funds for workforce investment activities.

DWD policies can be found at <http://www.in.gov/dwd/2482.htm> . Interim WIOA guidance can be found at <http://www.in.gov/dwd/2767.htm>.

- (B) Describe how the State intends to use Governor's set aside funding. Describe how the State will utilize Rapid Response funds to respond to layoffs and plant closings and coordinate services to quickly aid companies and their affected workers. States also should describe any layoff aversion strategies they have implemented to address at risk companies and workers

Use of the Governor's Discretionary funds will help the State of Indiana: 1) meet employer demands for a pool of highly skilled workers; 2) greatly increase the number of adult low to mid-range incumbent workers and dislocated workers who will receive occupational skill training; 3) increase the competitiveness of business and industry; and 3) Provide flexible funds for incumbent worker training initiatives designed to avert layoffs during the economic downturn.

DWD is responsible for overseeing Rapid Response services in Indiana. DWD works closely with local economic development officials, Regional Workforce Boards, and the Indiana Economic Development Corporation to ensure that all stakeholders are strategically involved in the process and that the training needs and skills required by employers are known. Currently, notices of layoffs and impending closures are submitted to the DWD. These notices may be a tip from a local office, a news report, or a WARN notice. Rapid Response activities are activated once a layoff is confirmed. Services that can be provided include; on site utilization of technology solutions which provide career cross walks, on-site orientations for unemployment insurance and employment services, assessments, labor management committees,

and job search workshops. Labor market information and skills assessments are also available to those seeking information on new careers, trends, and average wages for the area. On the Job Training opportunities are also strongly encouraged to return the dislocated workers to meaningful employment. Rapid Response activities are coordinated through state staff, WIA partner staff and local elected officials. The agency also utilizes a network of Business Consultants, partially funded through Rapid Response funds, to gather intelligence on current business trends, local economic conditions and any opportunity for layoff aversion available.

- (C) In addition, describe the State policies and procedures to provide Rapid Responses in cases of natural disasters including coordination with FEMA and other entities.

The state has an active emergency plan in place and has mobilized a host of state and federal resources in the event of a FEMA natural disaster. The state and DWD evaluate and provide the resources necessary to meet the current need.

- (D) Describe how the State provides early intervention (e.g., Rapid Response) to worker groups on whose behalf a Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) petition has been filed. (Section 134(a)(2)(A).) This description must include how the State disseminates benefit information to provide trade-affected workers in the groups identified in the TAA petitions with an accurate understanding of the provision of TAA benefits and services in such a way that they are transparent to the trade-affected dislocated worker applying for them (Trade Act Sec. 221(a)(2)(A) and Sec. 225; Governor-Secretary Agreement). Describe how the State will use funds that have been reserved for Rapid Response to provide services for every worker group that files a TAA petition.

The state utilizes Rapid Response events for entities and worker groups that have identified the need through the filing of a TAA petition. When available, the state provides onsite, and at other off site locations, rapid response information sessions. These sessions include the dissemination of TAA information including; procedures for filing, benefits, and other necessary information. The state utilizes Rapid Response funds to deliver this information to all groups regardless of their affiliation.

(b) Adult and Dislocated Worker Program Requirements

- (1) *Alternative Training Models.* If the State is utilizing alternative training models (e.g. on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, transitional jobs, and customized training) as part of its training strategy and these strategies are not already discussed in other sections of the plan, describe the State's strategies for how these models ensure high quality training for both the participant and the employer.

The Indiana Career Council continues to engage partners in the development of strategies, frameworks, and models to best implement work-and-learn experiences. In tandem with the ICC, one of the State's strategies (2.3) then, is to elevate the importance of work-and-learn models. By partnering with many employers to mitigate employer challenges and to determine best practices, the State is able to generate employer support for broader participation statewide. Also, participants are able to establish connections directly with potential employers by using this evidence-based approach to career readiness. The State has additionally provided guidance for the field through policies, such as an On-the-Job Training policy and an Incumbent Worker policy.

- (2) *Registered Apprenticeship.* Describe how the State will incorporate Registered Apprenticeship into its strategy and services.

The state is actively involved in developing a full strategy for the implementation of registered apprenticeships throughout the state. The state will be working with the US DOL Office of Apprenticeship in Indiana to coordinate information, expansion and eligibility of apprenticeships in Indiana.

(3) *Training Provider Eligibility Procedure.* Provide the procedure for determining training provider eligibility, including Registered Apprenticeship programs (WIOA Section 122).

DWD continues to work with the State Workforce Board (SWIC) on the Eligible Provider Training List (ETPL). Once DWD finalizes the procedures, processes and IT system, DWD will issue an updated policy.

(c) Youth Program Requirements. With respect to youth workforce investment activities authorized in section 129 of WIOA,—

(1) Identify the State-developed criteria to be used by local boards in awarding grants for youth workforce investment activities and describe how the local boards will take into consideration the ability of the providers to meet performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance for the youth program as described in section 116(b)(2)(A)(ii) of WIOA in awarding such grants.¹¹

Workforce Development Boards are allowed to create their own RFP with language specific to their regional area. This process is not (entirely) consistent across all EGR's nor managed by DWD. Some similarities exist:

- Description of WIA/WIOA Youth program and elements/services
- Description of the Jobs for America's Graduates program and the number of active sites in the region
- Statement of Work (narrative) often includes:
 - Experience of staff and organizational structure
 - Service strategy and objectives that often include recruitment effort, proposed number of youth enrollments and planned exits, eligibility determination process, assessment tools, provision of youth services/elements, incorporation of WIOA services into JAG curriculum, innovative design or programs, technology used for service delivery, employer services and outreach and key partnerships
 - Performance Objectives and Deliverables
- Detailed budget
- References, Assurances and Certifications
- Timeline and steps for submission

(2) Describe how the State will use funds to carry out Youth Program elements described in WIOA section 129(c)(2).¹²

The purpose of WIOA youth services is to assist low-income young people, (ages 14-21 if in-school youth; ages 16-24 if out-of-school youth), who face significant barriers to education and/or employment by

¹¹ Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(V)

¹² Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(I)

providing resources and support to overcome those barriers and successfully transition to self-sufficient adulthood. This will be accomplished by assessing a participant's skills, interests, needs and goals, creating customized service plans in collaboration with the participant, and expanding the participant's connection to the local economy, educational opportunities and community services. This process is coordinated around 14 Youth Program Elements, which must be made available to every participant. The 14 youth program elements are:

- Tutoring, study skills training, and dropout prevention strategies:
 - Indiana utilizes the Jobs for America's Graduates program as its dropout prevention strategy.
 - Local programs utilize their own strategies for individual tutoring or study skills training as appropriate and necessary.
- Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services as appropriate:
 - Indiana also utilizes the Jobs for America's Graduates out-of-school program model in some local areas for dropout recovery services.
 - Additionally, all local areas partner with their adult education providers for dropout recovery/high school equivalency classes for youth participants.
 - Finally, the Indiana Department of Education oversees the alternative education programs in local school corporations. In-school youth participants have access to these programs when appropriate.
- Paid and unpaid work experiences including summer employment and other opportunities throughout the year, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, on-the-job training opportunities:
 - Indiana's local areas offer numerous and robust work experiences (including summer employment, job shadowing, internships and on-the-job training) at local employers. These work experiences range in length, but are typically short term and can last up to twelve weeks. Many work experiences include a "boot camp" or training prior to the start as well as milestone trainings regarding the jobsite, industry or individuals onsite performance.
 - Indiana is making strides at increasing the pre-apprenticeship referrals and program placements for the local areas. This includes partnerships with Indiana Plan and the State's Office of Apprenticeships.
- Occupational skills training:
 - Indiana offers multiple access points for participants to seek occupational skills training that will result in an industry recognized credential. These could include a specific training program selected by the youth based on their career interest and aptitude results and/or the state's WorkINdiana short-term credential program.
 - Additionally, the state also includes apprenticeship programs, JobCorps and YouthBuild in this program element.
- Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities:
 - Local areas offer this program element, as appropriate, for youth who are enrolled in a post-secondary education opportunity (including those in credential programs)

and may need a short-term work experience or employability skills training, such as those found in the Jobs for America's Graduates program models. This also includes "boot-camp" programs offered prior to short-term work experience, on-the job training or internship.

- Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors:
 - Local areas offer this program element, as appropriate, through local partnerships with colleges and other leadership training programs or contractors.
 - All Jobs for America's Graduates participants participate in leadership development through the application of the Career Association. This includes teambuilding and service learning activities.
- Supportive services:
 - Local areas offer this program element, as appropriate, through the use of clothing assistance, transportation assistance, child and dependent care assistance, referrals to medical services, assistance with training materials such as books and equipment and incentives for completion of participant goals. The provider can vary in each local area but could include Speedway gas cards for transportation assistance or a gift card to Kohl's or Wal-Mart for clothing assistance.
- Adult mentoring:
 - Local areas offer this program element, as appropriate, through the connections with partner organizations like the Boys and Girls Club, Starfish Initiative, local post-secondary college and university students or other organizations that specialize in mentoring teens and young adults.
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling:
 - Often, this program element is provided by the onsite youth case manager, especially for career and education counseling.
 - However, if a youth has a specific need for counseling, local areas refer participants to drug and alcohol, mental health and other organizations when appropriate.
 - Resource mapping has been completed for all economic growth regions by an outside contractor that includes referral and partner agencies for such services.
- Financial literacy education:
 - Local areas have developed partnerships with individual organizations to provide some financial literacy training to participants. These include, but are not limited to, Primerica, Allison.com, FDIC Youth Guide to Financial Literacy, and Old National Bank.
 - Indiana received a technical assistance grant for its Jobs for America's Graduates programs through the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau that will provide instruction and marketing materials related to financial capability education through December 2016.
- Entrepreneurial skills training:
 - Local areas are still developing curriculum and partnerships to provide this program element. However, some local areas have identified the Small Business

- Administration, the Chamber of Commerce, Young Entrepreneur's Academy, and Junior Achievement as potential sources of curriculum, guest speakers and mentors.
- Several local service providers have developed curriculum for this program element that focuses on the awareness and understanding of entrepreneurship and the steps to create a detailed business plan.
 - Services that provide labor market and employment information:
 - Indiana operates a statewide career interest and aptitude website, Indiana Career Explorer, which provides youth participants access to labor market information related to many career pathways and in-demand occupations that align with their interests.
 - Indiana also operates Hoosiers by the Numbers, which provides Indiana specific workforce data that can be broken down by regional and local area. This website also houses census data.
 - Indiana operates INReality, an online tool that allows users to select a lifestyle that matches their career interests, or select a lifestyle and then find careers and salary information to help them afford that lifestyle. This website offers information for 35 major communities across the state.
 - Local areas have the ability to provide additional information and resources for this program element as appropriate.
 - Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training:
 - The Jobs for America's Graduates program model integrates curriculum and activities such as scholarship, application and financial aid assistance, entrance exam preparation, and other independent living skills that would ensure success in the youth's post-secondary experience.
 - Local areas employ other tactics that are regionally specific. They include, but are not limited to, college fairs and visits, Financial Aid application nights, or college bridge programs.
 - Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation:
 - Indiana requires follow-up services for all participants to occur at least once every 90 days after exit. Jobs for America's Graduates participants are contacted once a month after exit.
 - The types and duration of services provided may vary based on the needs of the individual, but may include leadership development and supportive services; regular contact with a youth's employer including assistance in addressing work-related problems; assistance in securing better paying jobs, career pathway development, and further education or training; work related peer support groups; adult mentoring; or services necessary to ensure success in post-secondary training.

(3) Provide the language contained in the State policy for “requires additional assistance to complete and educational program, or to secure and hold employment” criterion specified in WIOA sections 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VIII) and 129(a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII).

The Notice of Proposed Rule Making allows States and/or local areas to define the “requires additional assistance ...” criterion that is part of the Out of School Youth and In School Youth eligibility. It clarifies that if this 174 criterion is not defined at the State level and a local area uses this criterion in their Out of School Youth or In School Youth eligibility, the local area must define this criterion in their local plan. Examples of local definitions are below.

- Region 1 Definition Example:
 - Identified substance abuse
 - Poor work history such as never worked, held 2 or more jobs within last year, or employment retention generally 3 months or less
 - Frequently moves from one place to another, has had 2 or more addresses in the past 6-months
 - Has one or more legal issues such as arrests or complaints without convictions
 - Has ongoing physical or mental health issues that have not been determined a disability
- Region 3 Definition Example:
 - Lacks work experience
 - Cannot create/complete a budget
 - Is the child of an incarcerated parent
 - A youth who exhibits poor work readiness skills and/or has been terminated from previous employment
- Region 4 Definition Example:
 - Is at risk of dropping out of High School due to grades/credits/attendance/not passing proficiency exam or has had an Out of School suspension or expulsion from school (ISY)
 - Has a court/agency referral mandating school attendance (ISY)
 - Is attending an alternative school / education program or has been enrolled in an alternative school within the past 12 months (ISY)
 - Is or was a Ward of the State
 - Has been referred to or treated by an agency for substance abuse/ psychological problems
 - A victim of domestic abuse or violence
 - Has a currently incarcerated parent(s)
 - Has neither the work experience nor the credential required for an occupation in demand for which training is necessary and will be provided (OSY)
 - Has been fired from a job within the 6 months prior to application (OSY)
 - Has never held a full-time job (30+ hours per week) for more than 13 consecutive weeks (OSY)
- Region 11 Definition Example:

- Currently residing in a household in which one or both legal parents are not currently residing
- Does not have at least one parent who holds a post-secondary degree
- Has received (or is currently receiving) treatment for substance abuse, or currently residing in the household with a parent or legal guardian who has a documented history of substance abuse
- Lives (currently resides) in a domestic violence household
- Has a parent who is considered an offender
- Currently participating in special education services or has participated in special education while in school
- Receiving SNAP or TANF
- Living in the household of the custodial parent and not receiving regular child support

(4) Provide the State's definition of "alternative education".

- Alternative education types include but are not limited to: alternative classrooms, school within-a-school programming, separate alternative schools, and second or last-chance schools for disruptive students.
- Alternative Education programs are designed to meet the needs of highly at-risk students who are not succeeding in the traditional setting. In alternative education programs, students are provided with a variety of options that can lead to graduation and are supported by services for themselves and their immediate families that are essential to success. While each program is unique, they share characteristics identified in the research as common to successful alternative schools.
 - Maximum teacher/student ratio of 1:15
 - Small student base
 - Clearly stated mission and discipline code
 - Caring faculty with continual staff development
 - School staff having high expectations for student achievement
 - Learning program specific to the student's expectations and learning style
 - Flexible school schedule with community involvement and support
 - Total commitment to have each student be a success
- To qualify as an eligible student, a student must meet at least one of the following criteria:
 - Student intends to withdraw or has withdrawn before graduation.
 - Student has failed to comply academically and would benefit from instruction offered in a different manner from the traditional school.
 - Student is a parent or expectant parent.
 - Student is employed and employment is necessary for support.
 - Student is a disruptive student.

(5) Include the State definition, as defined in law, for not attending school and attending school as specified in WIOA Section 129(a)(1)(B)(i) and Section 129(a)(1)(C)(i). If State law does not define “not attending school” or “attending school,” indicate that is the case.

Indiana’s definitions are as follows:

- Not attending school; high school dropout: The individual is no longer attending any school and has not received a secondary school diploma or its equivalent.
- Not attending school; high school graduate: The individual is not attending any school and has received either a secondary school diploma or its equivalent.
- Enrollment in adult education, Job Corps or YouthBuild is “not attending school.”
 - Indiana’s Compulsory School Attendance age, per Indiana Code 20-33-2-6, begins the fall school term for the school year in which the student becomes seven (7) years of age, and continues until the date on which the student: (1) graduates, (2) becomes 18 years of age, or (3) becomes 16 years of age but is less 18 years of age and the requirements concerning an exit interview are met enabling the student to withdraw from school before graduation.
- Indiana also defines a School Year as “at least one hundred eighty (180) student instructional days.” See Indiana Code 20-30-2-3. While there may be extenuating circumstances that a school district may request a waiver of these 180 days, which could include weather related cancellations, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development would consider 180 student instructional days as the “school year.”
- For the purposes of out-of-school youth eligibility calculations, a “school calendar quarter” would be defined as 45 student instructional days. Weekends, holidays or cancelled days in which school was closed would not count towards the 45 student instructional days. Some school corporations may define these 45 days as a “semester,” but calculations for accuracy of total instructional days should still be verified by the case manager at the time of application and enrollment.

(6) If utilizing the portion of the basic skills deficient definition contained in WIOA Section 3(5)(B), include the specific State definition.

The State’s definition is as follows:

- The youth has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below 8.9 grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; **or**
- The youth 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. This is defined as:
 - Lacks a high school diploma or equivalency and is not enrolled in secondary education; **or**
 - Scores 8.9 or below on the TABE; **or**
 - Is enrolled in Title II adult education (including enrolled for ESL); **or**
 - Has poor English language skills (and would be appropriate for ESL even if the individual isn’t enrolled at the time of WIOA entry into participation); **or**

- Is WorkINDiana eligible (Title II participants are eligible for WorkINDiana up to a year after exit); **or**
- The case manager makes detailed observations of deficient functioning and records those detailed observations as justification in a case note.
- For in-school youth only:
 - Behind in credits to graduate on time with peer cohort; **or**
 - GPA 2.5 or below; **or**
 - Have taken and did not pass the End of Course Assessment (ECA) in English 10 or Algebra I.

(d) Single-area State requirements. In States where there is only one local workforce investment area, the governor serves as both the State and local chief elected official. In such cases, the State must submit any information required in the local plan (WIOA section 106(d)(2)). States with a single workforce area must also include:

- (1) Any comments from the public comment period that represent disagreement with the Plan. (WIOA section 108(d)(3).)
- (2) The entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds, as determined by the governor, if different from that for the State. (WIOA section 108(b)(15).)
- (3) The type and availability of WIOA title I Youth activities, including an identification of successful providers of such activities. (WIOA section 108(b)(9).)

This section does not apply as Indiana is not a single-area state.

(e) Waiver Requests (optional). States wanting to request waivers as part of their title I-B Operational Plan must include a waiver plan that includes the following information for each waiver requested:

- (1) Identifies the statutory or regulatory requirements for which a waiver is requested and the goals that the State or local area, as appropriate, intends to achieve as a result of the waiver and how those goals relate to the Unified or Combined State Plan;
- (2) Describes the actions that the State or local area, as appropriate, has undertaken to remove State or local statutory or regulatory barriers;
- (3) Describes the goals of the waiver and the expected programmatic outcomes if the request is granted;
- (4) Describes how the waiver will align with the Department's policy priorities, such as:
 - (A) supporting employer engagement;
 - (B) connecting education and training strategies;
 - (C) supporting work-based learning;
 - (D) improving job and career results, and
 - (E) other guidance issued by the Department.
- (5) Describes the individuals affected by the waiver, including how the waiver will impact services for disadvantaged populations or individuals with multiple barriers to employment; and
- (6) Describes the processes used to:
 - (A) Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver;
 - (B) Provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver;
 - (C) Provide any local board affected by the waiver an opportunity to comment on the request;

- (D) Ensure meaningful public comment, including comment by business and organized labor, on the waiver.
 - (E) Collect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State’s WIOA Annual Report.
- (7) The Secretary may require that States provide the most recent data available about the outcomes of the existing waiver in cases where the State seeks renewal of a previously approved waiver.

This section does not apply as Indiana is not requesting a waiver.

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:	
1.	The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of career and training services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients or basic skills deficient;
2.	The State has implemented a policy to ensure local areas have a process in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program’s Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist;
3.	The State established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members;
4.	The State established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2);
5.	Where an alternative entity takes the place of a State Board, the State has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under WIOA section 101(e) and the legal requirements for membership;
6.	The State established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the State Workforce Development Board help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the State consults with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the State in determining the distributions;
7.	The State will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7);
8.	The State distributes adult and youth funds received under WIOA equitably throughout the State, and no local area suffers significant shifts in funding from year-to-year during the period covered by this plan;

9.	If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I;
10.	Priority of Service for covered persons is provided for each of the Title I programs; and
11.	The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report.
12.	The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance under section WIOA 184(a)(3);

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WAGNER-PEYSER ACT PROGRAM (Employment Services)

(a) Employment Service Professional Staff Development

- (1) Describe how the State will utilize professional development activities for Employment Service staff to ensure staff is able to provide high quality services to both jobseekers and employers.

The DWD training team will work with an advisory council to establish core training initiatives and curricula for our WorkOne staff. The advisory council will comprise local representatives from the field, DWD staff, and partner agency staff. The training opportunities will incorporate key issues, such as WIOA program integration, applying a customer-centered approach, career pathways, engaging employers, leveraging data, and additional needs identified through surveys.

DWD will provide training to the One-Stop system by making use of various media types to accommodate different learning styles. These will include, but not be limited to: in-person training events, webinars, self-paced instruction, and video recordings available online. Many training opportunities will also include step-by-step instruction guides with visual images incorporated into the guides. Additionally, with most of the training offerings being posted online, it will offer broader access to many partners within the One-Stop system.

- (2) 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 Department of Workforce Development will procure or conduct training, creating the curriculum when necessary, in response to identified needs. Trainings on UI eligibility will incorporate self-paced tutorials and digital reference material, and will be self-paced and program specific when appropriate. This training would be done across partner agencies to ensure that staff are cross-trained in programs that they administer as well as programs administered in the partner agencies. Joint trainings with partner agencies will also be leveraged, when possible, to keep communication open and encourage easier referrals across systems for a better client experience.

- (b) Explain how the State will provide information and meaningful assistance to individuals requesting assistance in filing a claim for unemployment compensation through one-stop centers, as required by WIOA as a career service.

The State will provide assistance as follows:

- Over the shoulder. The office will continue to have individuals to assist in completing the application process along with direct links to tutorials to guide an individual through the process.
- UI presence. Local offices will continue to have a presence although it will be in more of a support role than a direct assistance role.
- WEB CHAT. Customer terminals with a link to where a customer can speak via 'chat room' to someone who can check into their particular issue and provide helpful information.

- Dedicated phone lines to the Call Center will be available in the lobbies for claimants to get in direct touch with a customer service rep who can walk through the claimant's issue with them and either provide answers, assistance or refer for additional service.

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

All Indiana Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claimants:

- Are profiled as they file their initial claim to determine the level of assistance likely needed in order to return to meaningful work
- Must report to a WorkOne Center
- Must be able, available, and actively seeking full time work for each week UI is claimed.
- Each claimant's efforts to secure full time work must include the submission of at least one job application and a search for two additional positions during each week in which the claimant files a weekly claim for UI benefits.
- A claimant must apply for suitable work and must accept any offer of suitable work made to the claimant. Suitable work is variable based on the claimants work experience, training, and duration of the claimant's unemployment.

Claimants are made aware of these UI eligibility requirements and the consequences for failing to meet the requirements through Indiana's Uplink system, which is Indiana's unemployment benefits automated UI registration and claim filing system.

WPRS, REA, and JFH programs, (described further below), capture unemployed Hoosiers at the fourth week of their claim and include: UI eligibility review, claimant-centered labor market information, referral to a self-directed job search, and an orientation to the one-stop services. In addition, REA participants will be required to complete an Individual Reemployment Plan (IRP) and additional services such as job search workshops, job search assistance, employment counseling, and referrals to other employment services.

Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment Program (REA) will receive all of the mandatory REA program requirements and additional reemployment services during the four (4) additional weeks of intensive services provided following orientation day activities.

Jobs for Hoosiers (JFH) is a fast-track REA program which provide information on the vast reemployment services available through the WorkOne centers statewide.

Worker Profiling Reemployment Services (WPRS) are provided the same information and opportunity for WorkOne services as the full REA group. WPRS claimants must participate with all REA service requirements through completion of orientation day activities.

(d) Describe how the State will use W-P funds to support UI claimants, and the communication between W-P and UI, as appropriate including the following:

- (1) Coordination of and provision of labor exchange services for UI claimants as required by the Wagner-Peyser Act;

LMI is available via Indiana Career Connect. "Orientation of Services" will expand to show individuals where additional and more pertinent information may be acquired via the DWD website Hoosiers by the Numbers.

- (2) Registration of UI claimants with the State's employment service if required by State law;

Information is transferred from Uplink (Indiana's online UI benefit filing system) to Indiana's labor exchange system, Indiana Career Connect. UI claimants are required to register for work through Indiana Career Connect.

- (3) Administration of the work test work test for the State unemployment compensation system, including making eligibility assessments (for referral to UI adjudication, if needed), and providing job finding and placement services for UI claimants; and

The Uplink system identifies potential eligibility issues by the claimant's responses to questions during the application for benefits process. The claimant view of Uplink will become more interactive capturing more detailed information regarding potential issues. The RES programs will ensure that a complete application is in Indiana Career Connect as well as will provide introduction to workshops to enhance the job seekers ability to create an efficient, thorough and systematic work search plan. Review of the claimants work search efforts by WP staff will determine whether or not a realistic effort to find suitable employment is being followed by the claimant. Staff will provide guidance through WP and WIOA case managers to assist claimants to pursue employment goals.

- (4) Provision of referrals to and application assistance for training and education programs and resources.

UI claimants will be strongly encouraged to utilize all WorkOne services. During the RES program's assessment and interview process, determining goals along with the ability to achieve those goals will be discussed in order to determine if training would be necessary or beneficial in achieving the work search goals of the claimant. A determination of program eligibility will be made by the case manager if training appears to be advisable to achieve the desire employment outcome.

As stated above, joint staff training with agency and non-agency partners on how system programs are integrated will provide the greatest information and resources for our customers seeking employment. Assessment tools will be used by customers to understand current competencies and what competencies are needed to move into the labor force of choice. In this way, customers will be able to make informed decisions with the use of staff assisted case management tools and services.

(e) Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP). Each State agency must develop an AOP every four years as part of the Unified or Combined State Plan required under sections 102 or 103 of WIOA. The AOP must include—

(1) *Assessment of Need.*

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

(2) *Outreach Activities.*

- (A) Describe the State agency's proposed outreach activities including strategies on how to contact farmworkers who are not being reached by the normal intake activities conducted by the employment service offices.
- (B) The plan for the proposed outreach activities must include:
 - (i) The goals for the number of farmworkers who will be contacted each program year by W-P staff.
 - (ii) The number of farmworkers who will be contacted each program year by other agencies under cooperative arrangements. These numerical goals must be based on the number of farmworkers estimated to be in the State in the coming year, taking into account the varying concentration of farmworkers during the seasons in each geographic area, the range of services needed in each area and the number of W-P and/or cooperating agency staff who will conduct outreach.¹³
 - (iii) The State's plans to conduct outreach to as many farm workers as possible.
 - (iv) The number of outreach workers dedicated to outreach to farmworkers by service areas.

(3) *The State's strategy for:*

- (A) Coordinating outreach efforts with WIOA Title 1 section 167 grantees as well as with public and private community service agencies and MSFW groups.
- (B) Explaining to farmworkers the services available at the local one-stop centers.
- (C) Marketing the employment service complaint system to farmworkers and other farmworker advocacy groups.
- (D) Providing farm workers with a basic summary of farmworker rights, including their rights with respect to the terms and conditions of employment.
- (E) Urging those farm workers who have been reached through the State's outreach efforts to go to the local one-stop center to obtain the full range of employment and training services.

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

(5) *Other Requirements.*

- (A) State Monitor Advocate. The plan must contain a statement that indicates that the State Monitor Advocate has been afforded the opportunity to review and approve the AOP.
- (B) Review and Public Comment. The plan must provide information indicating that WIOA Section 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantees, other appropriate

¹³ The numerical goals that must be included in the agricultural outreach plan are in reference only to the proposed outreach activities and are not negotiated performance targets.

- farmworker groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations, have been given an opportunity to comment on the State AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.
- (C) Assessment of progress. The plan must include an explanation of what was achieved based on the previous AOP, what was not achieved and an explanation as to why the State believes the goals were not achieved, and how the State intends to remedy the gaps of achievement in the coming year.

The State Monitor Advocate (SMA) works with Career Services to provide technical assistance to staff of the WorkOne system. This includes training in referral of migrant and seasonal farm workers (MSFW) to agricultural and non-agricultural job orders and coordination with *Proteus*® to conduct both outreach services as well as the designated National Farm Worker Jobs Program (NFJP)/ 167 WIA Grantee to improve services to MSFW.

Indiana is not a significant MSFW state and has no designated MSFW-specific local offices. Nevertheless, labor exchange services continue to be provided to MSFW in the same qualitative and quantitative proportion as that provided to other applicants. DWD provides MSFW with information about, and access to, applicant services available through our WorkOne centers. To ensure MSFW have access to services at Indiana's WorkOne centers and WorkOne Express sites, the State Monitor Advocate seeks ways to increase the ability for all those involved in MSFW service delivery to be able to dialogue in order to understand and improve on their particular roles and functions. The State Monitor Advocate meets with service providers at the local level to identify priority issues and to develop a continuous consensus building process to determine the appropriate technical assistance necessary for improving service delivery for the MSFW customer.

The State Monitor Advocate continues to carry out on-site MSFW compliance reviews of selected local WorkOne centers. Desk audits using the S1497 Report, Indicators of Compliance, are the method by which the SMA monitors statewide service to MSFW. DWD continues to collect data on services provided to MSFW and strives to meet and improve the required performance standards. From an initial cooperative agreement, DWD and the National Farm Worker Jobs Program / 167 WIA Grantee have expanded their partnership to include out-stationing of NFJP staff at four (4) WorkOne centers in South Bend, Kokomo, Columbus, and Vincennes. This agreement to share office space in our WorkOne centers with NFJP staff has improved access to employment and training services for farm workers and has provided the agency with staff who are bilingual and who have experience in working with farm workers. In addition, the staff from the National Farm Worker Jobs Program / 167 WIA Grantee has forged strong partnerships with the local WorkOne staff to ensure one-stop services are accessible to MSFW.

Although the Wagner-Peyser grant does not contain funds targeted for MSFW activities, Department of Labor Regulation 653.1 mandates that DWD accomplish outreach to this group. DWD continues to meet its outreach responsibilities to MSFW with its financial support of *Proteus* via an ongoing grant. The grant DWD has with *Proteus* allows for a more efficient use of MSFW resources by minimizing duplication of effort, since *Proteus* also functions as the NFJP grantee. *Proteus* staff provides participants

with current information regarding the distribution of the MSFW population in Indiana and informs MSFW of the employment and training services DWD has to offer them. Proteus staff consists of permanent and multilingual outreach workers. Outreach staff are located in those areas of the State in which migrant workers are most heavily concentrated (Kokomo – West Central, Vincennes – South, and South Bend – North). Proteus staff continues to seek out and locate small pockets of workers in isolated areas of the State in order to increase the ability of MSFW to access core, intensive, and training services in WorkOne centers and WorkOne Express sites.

DWD continues to provide agricultural employers assistance with their labor needs. When local workers are not available, DWD provides technical assistance to growers to aid them in accessing the interstate agricultural recruitment system. Our local office staff continues to provide farm labor contractors assistance in preparing application for certification with the U.S. Department of Labor.

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WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:	
1.	The Wagner-Peyser Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time. (sec 121(e)(3));
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;
3.	If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and
4.	State agency merit-based public employees provide Wagner-Peyser Act-funded labor exchange activities in accordance with Department of Labor regulations.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAMS

The State Plan must include a description of the following as it pertains to Adult Education and Literacy programs under title II, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

- (a) **Aligning of Content Standards.** Describe how the eligible agency will, by July 1, 2016, align its content standards for adult education with State-adopted challenging academic content standards, as adopted under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)).

Indiana has adopted the TASC test for the Indiana High School Equivalency Assessment, which is aligned with the national College and Career Readiness standards and the Indiana K-12 standards.

- (b) **Local Activities.** Describe how the State will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA, fund each eligible provider to establish or operate programs that provide 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.

In the grant continuation for PY16, DWD will incorporate all of the considerations found in section 231(e) of WIOA except considerations 1(A) and 4, which reference the local plans to be created by the Workforce Development Boards. These considerations, along with all others from this section, will be addressed in the subsequent grant competition to take place per timelines being developed by the OCTAE.

Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Section 203 of WIOA)

Adult Education and Literacy Services

Adult education and literacy services at a minimum will target native speakers of American English who function below a high school equivalency in one or more basic academic skills, who demonstrate a need for remediation to test into credit-bearing college level coursework, or who lack the employability skills needed to transition into work. Other adults eligible for these services include non-native speakers of American English who have successfully acquired a level of proficiency in English, either through federally-funded English literacy programs or other ways, to be able to function adequately in adult education and literacy classes with native speakers

Family Literacy Activities

Adult Education program applicants will be required to describe in their funding proposals the activities that are planned to support this specific purpose of the act and meet the needs of undereducated parents in their area. Specifically, applicants will be asked to discuss (1) outreach efforts for attracting parents with low literacy skills to the program; (2) program design accommodations particularly focused on the needs of parents (i.e., child care, class times and locations, curriculum content, and materials); and (3) linkages established with schools and community partners to facilitate the integration of services for families.

At the State Level, DWD is reaching out to providers of early childhood education and home visiting programs to share information and discuss potential partnerships or collaborations to address family literacy from a Two-Generation Approach.

English Language Acquisition Activities

Indiana's English language acquisition programs are designed for non-native speakers of American English whose communicative competence in the language is nonexistent or significantly limited. Furthermore, these programs are to target adults who intend to remain in the United States. English will be the primary medium of instruction, even when all students in a class speak a common language. The goal is not to produce students with perfect pronunciation or fluent English grammar, but rather to produce students whose ability to communicate in English is proficient enough to function adequately in other educational settings, on the job, in the family, and/or in society. All English literacy programs funded by DWD must integrate into instruction elements of American culture, workplace skills, and the four discrete language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In addition, content may include citizenship, mathematics, parenting, and study skills.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education

In order to prepare the English Language Learner population for unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and integrate them into the workforce system, DWD will support extending the existing English Literacy and Civics education with employability skills and integrating digital literacy skills. Through the already established technical assistance and monitoring processes, the providers of Adult Education and English Literacy/Civics will be supported in their efforts to increase coordination with local WorkOne Centers to support English Language Learners in their transition into postsecondary education/training and/or employment.

In PY14, DWD is participating in the ESL Pro technical assistance, focused on ELLs and Career Pathways. Plans include:

- Disseminating resources in this and subsequent program years;
- Utilizing a train the trainer model to support the non-ELA staff in:
 - Understanding the barriers ELLs face in entering Career Pathways and
 - Learning strategies for assisting ELLs when enrolling in/transitioning through programming

Workforce Preparation Activities or Integrated Education and Training

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.

In addition to basic academic skills, the adult education providers in Indiana will facilitate acquiring the skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, or employment. The targeted activities include at the minimum strong collaboration with one-stop agencies, increased collaboration with post-secondary institutions, integrating technology, employability skills, and financial literacy in classes and lessons.

Many regions have already started implementing adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation. This is done through the WorkINdiana Program which allows the students to

earn a high school equivalency diploma and an industry recognized certification. The WorkINDiana program offers more than 30 certifications in Advanced Manufacturing, Business Administration and Support, Health Care, Hospitality, Information Technology, or Transportation and Logistics. In addition, DWD recommends all AE sites use the best practice of all students completing the Indiana Career Explorer assessments within the first 12 hours of class.

This program year, DWD has set a target of increasing enrollments of each provider by 15%; increasing transitions to post-secondary training and/or education by 15%; and increasing transitions to employment by 15%.

In January of 2016, DWD will require all AE programs to use an Integrated Career Awareness (ICA) Curriculum in all classrooms for no less than 6-months. Implementation and evaluation plans of this project are in development. The goal is to increase the comfort level of AE instructors with integrating education and training, while evaluating various ICA curriculums to determine which curriculum results in the best outcomes for various types of students.

DWD is coordinating efforts between the K-12, postsecondary, One Stop and Adult Education systems to establish consistent employability skills that are also recognized and supported by Indiana employers. DWD is also exploring the potential of system wide career advisor training, which will focus on all WIOA Core Partners as well as others mentioned above, such as K-12.

Workplace adult education and literacy activities;

Workforce preparation activities will continue to be one of the focal points within adult education in PY15-16. In addition to basic academic skills, the adult education providers in Indiana will facilitate acquiring the skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, or employment. The targeted activities include at the minimum strong collaboration with one-stop agencies, increased collaboration with post-secondary institutions, integrating technology, employability skills, and financial literacy in classes and lessons.

Many regions in Indiana have already started implementing adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation. This is done through the WorkINDiana Program which allows the students to earn high school equivalency diploma and earn an industry recognized certification. The WorkINDiana programs offers more than 30 certifications in Advanced Manufacturing, Business Administration and Support, Health Care, Hospitality, Information Technology, or Transportation and Logistics.

In addition, many AE providers are working with the Workforce Business Services team to identify employers interested in providing workplace classes. DWD is encouraging all AE sites to adopt this practice to scale this type of partnership across the state.

Special Rule. In awarding grants and contracts under Section 231, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy

activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

(c) Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individuals. Describe how the State will establish and operate programs under section 225 of WIOA for corrections education and education of other institutionalized individuals, including how it will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II subtitle C, any of the following academic programs for:

- Adult education and literacy activities;
- Special education, as determined by the eligible agency;
- Secondary school credit;
- Integrated education and training;
- Career pathways;
- Concurrent enrollment;
- Peer tutoring; and
- Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

Types of Programs

The Indiana Department of Correction (DOC) offers the WorkINdiana program, is working on developing career readiness classes and partners with the HIRE program to support the transition of offenders to employment at release.

Priority

For programs serving criminal offenders in a correctional institution, priority must be given to serving individuals who are likely to leave these institutions within five years of participation in the program. Eligible providers intending to offer classes for incarcerated adults must consult with facility staff about expected release dates of potential students to assess eligibility and to determine class locations and priority of students served.

Further Information

DWD will spend at least one percent but not more than 20 percent of its federal allocation for local activities on corrections education or education for other institutionalized individuals, as required by the Act.

Policies, procedures, and activities for carrying out educational programs for criminal offenders and other institutionalized individuals are similar to those discussed in section (b) above.

Correctional education funded by DWD has largely been provided by the Indiana Department of Correction. Other providers have served individuals at county jails and individuals in and/or from various types of institutions other than correctional facilities through the adult education programs.

Traditionally, outreach programs also have offered services to inmates and other institutionalized adults. It is expected that these target populations will continue to be served through comprehensive programs but with more attention given to the funding constraints and to individuals who are likely to leave the facilities within five years.

Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services

In the past program year, DWD has collaborated with DOC to strengthen the transition of both juvenile and adult offenders to Adult Education and Out of School Youth programming. Through ongoing collaboration, DOC has including a list of all Adult Education, JAG in-school and out-of-school programs in SIMS, the DOC case management system, so that transition coordinators can identify programs and offer continued support to reduce recidivism. DOC also works with the DWD HIRE program, which supports transitioning offenders back into the community and employment after release.

(d) **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.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education funding will be awarded based on applications received during the WIOA grant competition. Applications will be evaluated on the degree to which described programming will 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 current or proposed partnerships in place to integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program. Applicants will also be required to address how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities.

Current Adult Education providers already serve adult English language learners, including professionals with degrees and credentials from their native countries, with programming designed to develop competence in English, as well as employability, citizenship, and parenting knowledge and skills.

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

Professional Development

DWD will continue to use funds to operate high quality professional development programs aimed at improving the instruction provided to adult learners. In PY15 DWD will post a Request for Proposals

(RFP) Competition for professional development training design and delivery with services starting in April of 2016. The scope of work for this RFP will include:

- Intensive needs evaluation at local and regional levels
- Delivering Indiana's Adult Numeracy Instruction training
- Locating/developing and delivering evidence based reading instruction training for instructional staff
- Locating/developing and delivery training train-the-trainer content for program administrators on Adult Learning Theory, Andragogy, Adult Learning Plans, & Teacher Induction/Onboarding
- Refining and delivering Indiana's College and Career Readiness Standards Implementation training
- Refining and delivering Indiana's ESL-4-ESL training focused on brain-based and problem-based learning for ELLs
- Refining the current model for Adult Education staff credentialing, and competencies, in partnership with local postsecondary institutions

All content developed and delivered through this RFP will include tracks specifically addressing the learning needs of volunteers within the IN AE system.

In PY16 and beyond, DWD will utilize regional Adult Education Coordinators (AECs) to assist in developing professional development plans for local programs, in coordinating with the professional development vendor to communicate these needs, in connecting local programs with statewide initiatives that fit program professional development plans, and in designing local interventions to support local implementation of statewide activities or to address needs not met through statewide professional development.

Other professional development priorities include training on data reporting via our InTERS data management system, using data for improved classroom instruction, retention and other program improvement practices, training on Indiana Career Explorer, Indiana's statewide tool for career exploration, and implementation of the *Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom (ICA) Curriculum Guide* through online training delivered via LINCS and World Education. We will continue to follow up with local programs on implementation of the ICA curriculum in classrooms through PY16 and beyond as needed. We will also continue to run cohorts of staff through LINCS online courses which match any staff development needs identified through professional development evaluations and surveys. These online courses are combined with additional implementation activities, webinars, and online discussion forums to support application of the content covered. DWD uses Blackboard to facilitate these additional activities.

Annual events such as our Summer Institute and Director Meeting will continue to be used to for the dissemination of information about models and promising practices. Likewise DWD will continue to use Blackboard to host best practice discussion forums for local program staff. For more information, please visit www.amplifyae.org/event-archive for a historical listing of all professional development events.

Technical Assistance

DWD has Adult Education Coordinators (AECs) who are responsible for providing members of each consortium with technical assistance on a variety of topics. AECs work with local program leadership to

build strong links between program and data monitoring, local and statewide professional development, and the delivery of technical assistance. AEC's also act as a liaison between the DWD Adult Education Team, the local One Stop Centers, local Vocational Rehabilitation services and the local Adult Education providers, ensuring consistent communication of policies, procedures and quality assurance.

Partnerships with Core Partners

The Adult Education WIOA Workgroup that was created in January of 2015, which included representation from all Core Partners continued to meet and focus on alignment issues around current processes/policies and WIOA. The other 14 WIOA Workgroups concluded within the first quarter of 2015. The Adult Education WIOA Workgroup held its last meeting in September. All members agreed to come back together if the need arises.

Regional AE Consortia have historically included members of the local workforce system. This past year, emphasis has been placed on ensuring local regional consortia include regional members of Vocational Rehabilitation and workforce youth team members. Regional presentations and cross trainings have also occurred between the Core Partners. Some regions are hosting WIOA meetings, which include representation from all Core Partners.

At the State Level, emphasis continues to be on strengthen and role modeling the partnership between AE and Youth Services, with continued joint meetings. This past year, the Workforce Youth Team visited each region's youth staff. Adult Education was represented at these meetings to assist facilitating discussions on how youth and AE providers can create strong local partnerships. It is noteworthy that in many regions a strong local partnership already occurs. Also at the State Level, AE is participating in monthly joint meetings between all Core Partners.

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

DWD will carry out the following State Leadership Activities:

- **The support of State or regional networks of literacy resource centers.** In the current model Literacy programs can request funding from the AE Consortia. Some regions partner with local literacy groups by reciprocal referrals, co-enrollments and/or using literacy volunteers as part of the AE programming.
- **The development and implementation of technology applications, translation technology, or distance education, including professional development to support the use of instructional technology.** DWD continues to encourage a transition to online testing, promotes a hybrid delivery mode for distance education and allows the use of local funds for the other activities listed here.
- **Developing content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways.** Currently, DWD is using the following models/tools as examples of integrated education and training and career pathways:
 - Employability skills framework;

- Indiana Career Explorer (ICE) and Indiana Career Connect (ICC) for career assessments (AE programs and many Local One Stops require participants to complete the 3 ICE assessment which assess career interests, career skills and career values).
- As of January 2016, all AE programs will be required to incorporate an Integrated Career Awareness (ICA) curriculum.
- Many ESL program sites are exploring a new online curriculum that integrates career awareness into the classroom. As this is the first year of implementation, data is not yet available.
- One local region is assisting students in building a career focused portfolio that houses all important and relevant documents, such as their HSE, career assessment and college readiness testing results, resume, cover letters and college and career research.

In addition, DWD continues to explore best practice research on this topic as well as reach out to entities that have evidenced based approaches in delivering integrated education and training. More specifically, Indiana was chosen as recipient of the Moving Pathways Forward federal Technical Assistance. For this TA project, DWD is in conversations with a partner who is well established in integrating education and training and interested in serving the adult education population.

- **The development and implementation of a system to assist in the transition from adult education to postsecondary education, including linkages with postsecondary educational institutions or institutions of higher education.** In all 12 regions Adult Education classes are occurring on site of Ivy Tech Community College (ITCC) locations. A best practice that we are trying to replicate across the state is the ITCC rapid enrollment (this includes, placement testing, academic counseling, ability to complete financial aid application and schedule classes in one sitting) at AE sites for those students who are enrolling in credit bearing courses. Accuplacer, college readiness testing, can also be administered at AE sites.
- **Activities to promote workplace adult education and literacy activities.** Some of the AE sites have been approached by employers to provide AE classes for their employees. DWD encourages all sties to respond quickly and positively when asked for assistance by employers. We do not yet statewide representation of this practice. However, there are worksite classes occurring in some regions across the state. In upcoming program years, DWD will offer professional development around how programs can expand work with employers to support increasing worksite AE classes.
- **Developing and piloting of strategies for improving teacher quality and retention.** DWD is partnering with Ball State University’s Adult Education Department on teacher competencies; credentialing and plans for teach induction training. DWD believes partnering with a university will allow the AE Field to grow as a profession both informed by and informing research and best practice.
- **The development and implementation of programs and services to meet the needs of adult learners with learning disabilities or English language learners, which may include new and promising assessment tools and strategies that are based on scientifically valid research, where appropriate, and identify the needs and capture the gains of such students at the lowest achievement levels.** Currently, DWD is using the following models/practices/tools as examples of programs and services to meet the needs of English language learners:
 - Burlington English being used by many sites for ELLs and low level learners;

- AE sites partner with local literacy groups to co-enroll low level learners;
- Testing and learning accommodations are offered;
- Offer course leveling: low level learners are separated to get more targeted instruction

Indiana was chosen as recipient of the ESLPro federal Technical Assistance. For this TA project, DWD will:

- Disseminating resources in this and subsequent program years;
- Utilizing a train the trainer model to support the non-ELA staff in:
 - Understanding the barriers ELLs face in entering Career Pathways and
 - Learning strategies for assisting ELLs when enrolling in/transitioning through programming

Currently, DWD is using the following models/practices/tools as examples of programs and services to meet the needs of adult learners with learning disabilities:

- Many regions have a specific referral form to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) when disabilities are identified
- VR representative attending all consortia meetings to understand AE
- VR and AE reciprocal training occurred at state and regional level

- **Outreach to instructors, students, and employers.**

- Employers: Regional operators that serve on AE consortia represent regional employers. In January of 2016, AECs will take on coordinating one Regional Works Council, which is another regional voice for employers.
- Teachers: DWD has a listserv specifically for instructors. Instructors can attend or watch the recorded statewide monthly webinars that address updates and important information for Indiana Adult Education as well as local, regional and national resources. Professional Development opportunities are also discussed on the monthly webinars. When appropriate the AECs may also reach out directly to instructors. Instructors also receive the bi-monthly WorkINDiana newsletter and are encouraged to submit topics for articles and student success stories.
- Students: DWD is exploring a path to communicate directly to students. This may include getting feedback on the best way to market AE services across the state.

- **Other activities of statewide significance that promote the purpose of this title.** DWD is engaging Community Based Organizations, who serve similar populations to better leverage resources. To date: DWD has made presentations to several Department of Child Services teams, Community Action programs, Immigrant Welcome and Support Centers, providers of Home Visiting and Early Childhood Education programs. At the State Level, DWD is reaching out to other State Agencies, such as Indiana State Department of Health, Indiana Department of Child Services and local providers of home visiting and early childhood education services to share information and discuss potential partnerships or collaborations to address family literacy from a Two-Generation Approach.

(f) Assessing Quality. Describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II and take actions to improve such quality, including providing the activities described in section 223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA.

Monitoring and evaluation of adult education is completed in multiple ways. Using information from the grant continuation submissions and a specific risk-based monitoring process designed by DWD Adult Education, the programs that need technical assistance are identified. Program, Fiscal, Performance, and Data Management are weighed to determine a program's risk score. Once these programs are identified, they are asked for information in order to conduct an initial (Desk) review. Using information from the initial review and the risk assessment, the Adult Education team determines whether a program is in need of an onsite review. The onsite review is more thorough and can lead to the implementation of a corrective action plan.

In addition, program/performance data is monitored by AECs and discussed at Consortia meetings. DWD Adult Education Division reviews data annually as part of the annual reporting process. Annual reviews allow for a statewide approach to determine which regions need additional TA and to identify professional development needs. DWD is in the planning stages of reviewing the current monitoring process, outlined above, to ensure alignment with the larger Workforce Development System including youth programming, WIOA and the Uniform Guidance. The goal of the revised monitoring process will be to use data to hold providers accountable, inform professional development and TA delivered to providers.

DWD is also exploring ways in to incorporate Continuous Quality Improvement into State and Local processes. For more information on how DWD will address other items in section 223 (a)(1)(B), see above Professional Development section.

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAMS CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES

States must provide written and signed certifications that:	
1.	The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;
2.	The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;
3.	The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;
4.	All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;
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;
6.	The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;
7.	The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and
8.	The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program;
The State Plan must include assurances that:	
1.	The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding supplement and not supplant provisions);
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;
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; and
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.

1. [SF424B - Assurances – Non-Construction Programs](http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)
2. [Grants.gov - Certification Regarding Lobbying](http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)

3. [SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities \(required, only if applicable\)](http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan ¹⁴ must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA:

- (a) Input of State Rehabilitation Council. All agencies, except for those that are independent consumer-controlled commissions, must describe the following:
- (1) input provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, including input and recommendations on the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, recommendations from the Council's report, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other Council reports that may have been developed as part of the Council's functions;
 - (2) the Designated State unit's response to the Council's input and recommendations; and
 - (3) the designated State unit's explanations for rejecting any of the Council's input or recommendations.

BENEFITS COUNSELING

VR should continue to support benefits counseling as this is a key concern for families. It was recommended that benefits counseling resources and knowledge be shared across WIOA core partners. This could be achieved through collaboration with the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) Grants, through education and training of WIOA partners, and be exploring the availability of benefits counseling in the local Work One centers.

VR Response: VR plans to continue to support benefits counseling through the funding of the Benefits Information Network (BIN), and agrees that counseling on the impact of working on benefits and available federal and state work incentives is critical in helping consumers to make informed choices about working and in working toward self-sufficiency. VR will include discussion on the importance of benefits counseling in conversations with WIOA partners.

COLLABORATION WITH DWD AND WIOA PARTNERS

Greater collaboration with WIOA partners including Department of Workforce Development (DWD) is also needed to coordinator services for mutual consumers; ensure each partner has appropriate information about referral processes and a basic understanding of eligibility requirements and available services. VR was encouraged by the commission to continue with the pilot project to develop a subject matter expert in local VR and Work One locations. Increased education with DWD and other WIOA partners is needed to improve awareness and knowledge of how to best serve individuals with disabilities and ensure services are individualized as appropriate.

VR Response: The pilot project that developed subject matter experts in local VR and One Stop offices will continue. VR will continue to take the opportunity to educate WIOA partners about VR services in ongoing communication with these partners.

¹⁴ Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(iii) of WIOA

TRANSITION

Further education to schools regarding services available through WIOA partners is also necessary, including services available to youth through DWD. It is important to ensure that in addition to special education professionals, school guidance counselors and transition coordinators also receive the necessary information. Cross-training will be useful to also ensure that WIOA partners understand the services and supports provided through local education agencies. Discussion with schools is also needed to identify students who may not be receiving special education, but would benefit from VR services or services through DWD or other WIOA partners.

The Commission also suggested that further exploration is necessary on the provision of work experience services to students, including those working toward a High School diploma. Financial literacy and self-disclosure are also important issues for individuals with disabilities and VR is encouraged to ensure resources are in place to meet these needs.

Additional suggestions regarding services to youth with disabilities included looking at best practices from a School-to-work pilot project utilizing career coaches in schools and providing work experiences prior to a student's exit from school.

VR Response: VR continues to facilitate a Statewide Transition Workgroup and will address these recommendations with the group. VR has implemented modifications to the VR employment service model and Discovery services. One of the changes is increased access to work experiences by all VR consumers, including youth.

VR STAFF QUALIFICATIONS AND RETENTION

Finally, the commission focused much of their input on the opportunities for hiring and retaining qualified VR staff in light of changes to the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD). Both VR Leadership and the Commission recognize that there is a severe lack of candidates in Indiana with a Master's degree in Rehabilitation and/or a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) licensure. The commission voiced support for modifying the hiring criteria for VR Counselors in Indiana to align with the revised CSPD requirements outlined in WIOA, including the ability to hire qualified candidate who do not have an appropriate Master's degree, but have a Bachelor's degree in an appropriate area and the necessary skills and experience in working with individuals with disabilities. The commission, like VR Leadership, believes this strategy will assist with broadening the pool of qualified candidates and potentially improve job retention. The commission continues to express their concern that the starting salary of a VR Counselor in Indiana is a barrier to obtaining and retaining qualified staff. The commission also suggested a pay differential for VR Counselors who do have a Master's degree and/or are a CRC.

VR Response: VR appreciates the support of the outlined changes in CSPD's personnel standard as reflected in more detail in Section (i).

OTHER

The Commission addressed the need for better collaboration with additional partners such as Department of Corrections (DOC) on better serving mutual consumers and ensuring consumers can rapidly engage in services. Education and awareness of VR is needed with appropriate DOC partners.

Marketing of the VR program continues to be important, including highlighting of success stories, improved signage at VR offices, and improvements to the state VR website. The commission also noted the importance of providing recognition to VR field staff that are engaging in innovative practices.

VR Response: The Business Community and Engagement Director will continue to build relationships with appropriate partners, including DOC, as well as further explore effective marketing strategies. (Please refer to section (c) below for more information.) VR recently developed a Twitter and Facebook page as part of a social media campaign. VR agrees that sharing and highlighting success stories are important. VR will continue to explore ways to provide such information to constituents and businesses. With respect to staff recognition, VR agrees and welcomes appropriate strategies. The VR Commission will add this to the agenda for January 2016 meeting.

- (b) Request for Waiver of Statewideness. When requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement, the designated State unit must identify the types of services to be provided by the program on a non-statewide basis. The waiver request must also include written assurances that:
- (1) a local public agency will provide the non-Federal share of costs associated with the services to be provided in accordance with the waiver request;
 - (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.

This section is non-applicable in Indiana.

- (c) Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Development System. Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system with respect to:
- (1) Federal, State, and local agencies and programs;
 - (2) State programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998;
 - (3) Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the Department of Agriculture;
 - (4) Noneducational agencies serving out-of-school youth; and
 - (5) State use contracting programs.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) seeks interagency cooperation with a number of agencies and entities that are not partners required through the statewide workforce development system.

Within VR, the area of Community and Business Engagement was added over one year ago to address the necessity of getting a consistent message of VR and the services it can provide to eligible applicants. Various partners who are in contact with current and potential consumers include schools, employers, other state agencies, and national partners. Since new leadership came to VR in late 2014, the emphasis continued to be “getting back to the basics” and educating existing partners about VR and what the program can do to assist individuals with disabilities find, retain and maintain employment. While the message is basic, the method of distribution to the potential consumers of our services will be state of the art and with innovation in mind. Today’s youth are well versed with cutting edge technology such as social media and VR has developed two social media initiatives on Twitter and most recently with Facebook to benefit them in finding their way to a healthier and self-sufficient and more productive lives. The #Work4LifeIN campaign was a Twitter campaign to increase the awareness for youth on the benefits

of working. Photos were taken of working age youth with signs stating, "I work for _____" and the individuals were asked to fill in what they worked for, or what gave them the motivation for going to work. It was a very successful campaign and followers on Twitter have reached 600 "Followers" during the campaign and the number continues to grow. Authorization to use Facebook has just recently come through and the Business and Community Engagement team looks to continue to expand its reach through this social media platform. Such platforms continue to provide a vehicle to educate Hoosiers and entities about VR and other resources and related information.

Written cooperative agreements with appropriate entities are identified below.

The below provides information related to Federal, State, and local agencies and programs:

Centers for Independent Living (CIL) and Independent Living Programs: The Independent Living Program is located with the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (VR). BRS (and in particular the VR program) makes a concerted effort to maintain an open working relationship with the CILs that are located in Indiana and the Statewide Independent Living Council. Counselors and other staff make referrals to CILs for wrap-around services. The CIL staff refers individuals to VR and other programs within VR. VR makes it a priority to support the network of CILs in Indiana by providing additional funding with the use of SSA/VR program income to support center operations in the provision of services to assist individuals with disabilities with increased independence and a better quality of life.

Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services (BDDS): BDDS is a bureau under the Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services (the Designated State Agency) and provides services for individuals with developmental disabilities that enable them to live as independently as possible in their communities and houses the relevant Medicaid waivers. BDDS and VR offices are co-located in the State of Indiana, which enables partnership and continued collaboration. VR works very closely with BDDS (and case managers) in order provide appropriate employment services to individuals with developmental disabilities. VR provides supported employment for up to 24 months, which benefits this population. In addition, VR works closely with BDDS staff and case managers to ensure a seamless transition from supported employment to extended services. At time of job placement, VR Counselors submit transfer documentation to ensure extended services are in place prior to VR case closure as appropriate. BDDS and VR continue to develop and improve existing processes in assisting individuals with disabilities who are considering subminimum wage employment or who are already employed, at a subminimum wage, to maximize opportunities to achieve competitive integrated employment through services provided by VR. VR continues to look for new and innovative ways to partner with BDDS initiatives across the state in order to improve employment outcomes for those with the most significant disabilities.

Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA): DMHA is a division within Family Social Services Agency, which enables VR to partner with DMHA on employment initiatives. VR staff work closely at a local level with the DMHA funded Community Mental Health Centers (CMHC). Through a contract, the Indiana Institute of Disability and Community provides training and consultation to all employment services providers, including mental health centers and VR staff regarding employment for people with disabilities, including a focus on mental health. There are approximately 25 CMHCs across the State that are community rehabilitation providers. DMHA continues to promote employment for persons with mental illness by including employment and career planning as measures in consumer services reviews. VR Leadership meets quarterly with the Mental Health Employment Council to discuss new initiatives and identify how initiatives, such as the recent Employment Service Model Revisions, impact CMHC's and consumers with mental illness. CMHC employment staff also serve on the Employment Service workgroup.

Social Security Administration (SSA): VR collaborates with SSA on Ticket-To-Work. VR continues to support the Indiana's Benefits Information Network (BIN) to ensure that beneficiaries receive appropriate benefits planning and education on utilizing work incentives to work toward self-sufficiency.

Veterans Administration (VA): Employment can play a major role in the recovery of wounded and injured service members. To support these brave men and women in their return to civilian life, VR works with various local, state and federal entities concerning statewide veterans' services. VR has a collaborative working agreement that will assist veterans in receiving seamless information and referral services from both the state and federal VR service agencies. The Memorandum of Agreement with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services was developed to afford service-connected veterans with disabilities opportunities to seek employment, career advancement, job mobility, family economic well-being, and greater financial security. VR Counselors in each respective agency are expected to work together to maximize the services they provide on behalf of veterans with disabilities and other eligible persons. Joint activities may include staff in-service trainings focused on 'best-practices', routine reviews by VRCs of both agencies on service provision processes and employment outcomes and troubleshooting to streamline services focusing on continuous improvement. Business & Community Engagement Staff served as workgroup members of the Paul Newman Foundation and Easter Seals Crossroads Military and Veterans Hiring Initiative. This community collaboration model evaluated, informed, organized, and advocated community solutions for military, veterans and their families. The goal is to ultimately reduce the unemployment rate among Indianapolis area Central Indiana Veterans. Because of the relationships that were developed within the workgroup, continued collaboration when meeting employers continues. Frito Lay, WGS and various other veteran events are well attended with Business & Community Engagement and Veterans Administration partners. Statewide outreach and networking initiatives including:

- Veteran Job Fairs and partnerships with local Veterans Organizations such as the Veterans of Foreign War (VFW), American Legion, Wounded Warrior Project, American Vets (AMVETS) and United Service Organization (USO).
- Partnership with Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Specialists (DVOPs) and Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVERs) who are based in the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) WorkOnes, and are dedicated to helping Veterans and eligible spouses receive all the services they need.
- Collaborative relationship and cross-referral source with the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs (DAV). Their newly created Indiana DAV Women Veterans' Coordinator is actively working to share information and provide feedback with VR to ensure disabled women veterans are obtaining the unique services and resources they require.
- Membership in the Indiana Joining Community Forces (JCF) Partners organization. This collaborative organization is focusing efforts of local providers with a common goal to strengthen the local military community. They are uniquely positioned to find and consolidate the best local resources providing better and faster assistance to service members, military families, and veterans when they need it.
- Collaborative partnership with Operation: Job Ready Vets (OJRV) organization (formerly the Crane Learning and Employment Center for Disabled Veterans). OJRV is a non-profit organization dedicated to preparing service members, veterans, military spouses and caregivers for successful

employment by connecting them with employers that seek top quality, well-trained employees. They assist veterans of all eras and ability levels with their employment and career goals

Client Assistance Program (CAP): VR and the Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services (IPAS)/Client Assistance Program (CAP) work together by discussing pertinent issues, identifying training needs, and collaborating on training opportunities. CAP is represented on the VR Commission. CAP Representatives have also presented to VR Supervisors to education about the wide array of services offered through IPAS.

Department of Corrections: Business & Community Engagement efforts reached correctional facilities across the State. Relationships with leadership at the Logansport Juvenile Correctional Facility and at the Branchville Correctional facility were developed and presentations were given on the VR program. The Branchville Correctional facility currently has an ongoing visit by a VR counselor. Director Kylee Hope also participates on a Department of Education taskforce that has a The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Re-Entry Planning project grant that focuses on the re-entry for youth. The VR Director presented at the Annual Criminal Justice Association conference. The conference had attendees from all types of law enforcement organizations and community stakeholders. Outreach to correctional facilities and re-entry programs and stakeholders will continue. The Director of Business & Community Outreach attended the Indianapolis area Conference on Re-entry in order to continue outreach efforts.

VR finalized their Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Demonstration Grant after the grant's activities were proven to be self-sustaining with its Resource Facilitation goals. VR supported DOC in applying for the grant and they were successfully awarded. The grant provides screening and services to inmates preparing to be released for TBI-related issues and providing them early Resource Facilitation services in order for them to be better prepared for work opportunities once they are released from prison. VR still maintains an active membership with DOC staff on the Indiana TBI Leadership Board. VR staff provided DOC with technical grant oversight assistance during the grant's transition from VR to DOC.

Division of Family Resources (DFR): DFR is a division within Indiana's Family Social Services Administration. Recently, VR has specifically worked with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program and contractor to provide information about VR in order to assist with adult applicants and the employment and training program. The partnership is to assist the contractor to understand VR and its eligibility requirements in order to provide appropriate referrals and assist the "shared consumer" in achieving his/her employment outcome. Additionally, the DFR continues to expand partnerships at the local DFR offices, by inviting mobile VR Counselors to use their space to serve appropriate consumers.

Department of Agriculture: Consumers utilize the Breaking New Ground program located at Purdue University. This program assists farmers with disabilities as well as providing outreach to rural communities. In addition to a strengthened relationship with AgrAbility, another connection with the Arthritis in Agriculture program was further developed.

Small Business Administration (SBA): As consumers explore small business ventures, VR utilizes the resources available through local SBA facilities. SBA has specialized staff that frequently work with VR consumers on developing business plans. Consumers also participate in classes through SBA. There is a renewed and strengthened relationship with SCORE, the nation's largest network of free, expert business mentors. Discussions have begun on increasing and strengthening the resources available for VR

counselors when it comes to providing support to consumers who would like to begin a small business or become self-employed.

Project SEARCH: Indiana has implemented this national training and employment model for youth and young adults with significant disabilities that is resulting in quality employment outcomes. Key collaborative partners for Project SEARCH include students and their families, VR, local educational agencies, identified businesses and the selected community rehabilitation provider.

Other: VR maintains a collaborative working relationship with several advocacy and consumer support groups and organizations with a presence in Indiana. These include: IN-APSE, the Indiana Association of Persons in Supported Employment, which is dedicated to supporting individuals with disabilities across Indiana in gaining and maintaining employment; the National Employment Team (The NET) which includes a national network of the 80 public Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) programs supports a united or “one company” approach to working with business customers. The NET vision is to create a coordinated approach to serving business customers through a national VR team that specialized in employer development, business consulting and corporate relations; the Indiana Resource Center for Families with Special Needs (INSOURCE); the Indiana Association of Rehabilitation Facilities in Indiana (INARF); the Indiana Council of Community Mental Health Centers, Employment Committee; and the Arc of Indiana, Indiana Council of Special Education Administrators. Input from many of these groups is appropriately sought prior to any major changes in VR policies and procedures.

In order to address underserved and unserved populations, VR has initiated interagency cooperation with the following programs: Indiana Civil Rights Commission, the Native American Affairs Commission, the American Indian Center of Indiana, the Latino Institute, Commission on the Social Status of Black Males, Indiana Black Expo, the Haitian American Association, and the Burmese American Association.

The below provides information related to State programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998:

Assistive Technology Act Project: VR has an outstanding association with Easter Seals Crossroads Assistive Technology Center to ensure that the INDATA Project (Indiana Assistive Technology Act) federal goals are in compliance. The INDATA Project is one of 56 similar, federally-funded projects designed to increase access to and awareness of assistive technology.

INDATA’s core services include: information and referral, funding assistance, public awareness and education, device demonstration, device loan, reutilized computers, and equipment reutilization. The INDATA Project is an *international* benchmark of success. The INDATA Project helped morph the Easter Seals Crossroads AT Center into more than just what the federal act requires. Now the AT Center has its own recording studio and broadcasts 24/7 podcasts around the world. They are known for their expertise and ability to train their staff in order to prepare each member for their national RESNA certification as an AT Provider. In addition, the INDATA Project staff provides VR Counselors and Division staff ongoing assistive technology training and every month they offer ‘AT First Fridays’ webinars that are live-streamed to VR and Division staff. Furthermore, consumers and VR staff can access the equipment loan library to test various types of equipment or borrow equipment to be used when repairs are necessary to previously purchased items. INDATA Project also partners with Centers for Independent Living, Area Agencies on Aging and Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP) programs insuring the greatest networking reach for persons with disabilities to understand what services are

available and how they can best be utilized to assist our consumers in employment and independent living.

The below provides information related to non-education agencies serving out-of-school youth: Children's Bureau and the Villages are service providers through the Department of Child Services. They provide services to foster youth and children. The Indiana Youth Institute promotes the healthy development of Indiana children and youth by serving the people, institutions and communities that impact their well-being. We have a continued relationship with all these entities.

The below provides information related to State use contracting programs:

State Use Program: While there are no cooperative agreements with the State Use program, the Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services has assigned a designee to represent DDRS/VR on the Indiana State Use Board. The Committee for the Purchase of Products and Services of Persons with Severe Disabilities (IC 16-32-2-7), also known as the State Use is fully functional and has a full complement of members. The Committee continues to meet quarterly to review services, products, and employment data while monitoring new initiatives by providers. DDRS has one committee member and provides staff for the recording minutes and acts as the executive secretary to the committee. Indiana Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (INARF) manages the program and acts in a liaison capacity to facilitate contracts with provider agencies and the Indiana department of Administration. INARF has recently completed a "rebranding" of the State Use Committee to enhance marketability and expand product into municipal and local government. The program will be known as ABILITY INDIANA solutions. DDRS/BRS continues to be involved and partner when appropriate.

(d) Coordination with Education Officials. Describe:

- (1) 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.
- (2) Information on the formal interagency agreement with the State educational agency with respect to:
 - (A) consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including VR services;
 - (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.

Indiana VR and key partners are working to build an infrastructure for purposeful collaboration for the purposes of transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of VR services, including pre-employment transition services. Ongoing Indiana initiatives and WIOA requirements are aligned for

VR to coordinate with Education officials and other key partners (e.g., Department of Workforce Development) to identify best practices for providing successful transition services to students.

While serving transition-aged students has been a focus for VR, new administration and the impact of WIOA has assisted in renewing and prioritizing this as an important VR initiative. Due to identified misconceptions of VR and its services to students, significant efforts in the last two years have occurred in “re-educating” students, families, educators, and advocacy agencies on VR and the services it may provide to students. This education also includes targeted training and technical assistance to VR staff, both from a philosophical perspective and knowledge perspective. VR has held webinars and face-to-face trainings on transition-related topics, such as: special education overview, Transition IEPs, 504 Plans, special education eligibility, transition services, etc. Some of the philosophical shift is related to understanding the importance of purposeful and proactive transition services to students prior to exiting high school and working with local educational agencies in strengthening and embracing the joint responsibility between schools and VR. In an effort to ensure consistency of messages statewide, a “VR 101” was developed for schools and transition-related stakeholders; this presentation has been delivered at transition conferences, transition resource fairs, and to VR staff across the state.

In addition, VR values the need of designating staff to this effort and has designated a full time Statewide Transition Director and Statewide Transition Coordinator to provide leadership in the plans, policies, and procedures for developing and implementing best practices and facilitating the transition of students with disabilities to appropriate VR services. The designated staff will provide outreach and education to constituents, technical assistance to VR staff, research and implement pre-employment transition services and other transition services, and promote purposeful collaboration with schools and stakeholders.

VR in collaboration with the Indiana Department of Education (DOE) established a Statewide Transition Alliance to identify and address the barriers that continue to impact students, and develop and implement strategies and services to make the transition successful for students and youth with disabilities. The Transition Alliance will establish a work plan with the basis of the work plan created using the Transition to Careers Subcommittee Chapter recommendations (one of the four created by the full Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities (ACICIEID)). The Statewide Transition Alliance includes representation from a wide range of key partners and stakeholders, including the following: VR, DOE, local educational agencies’ school personnel and administrators, Indiana Council of Administrators of Special Education, the Bureau of Developmental Disability Services (BDDS), the Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA), the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), Department of Corrections, Center for Deaf & Hard of Hearing Education, Center for Education & Career Innovation, Community Mental Health Centers, First Steps, Indiana Association of People Supporting Employment First (INAPSE), Indiana Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (INARF), Indiana Institute of Disability and Community (IIDC), parent representation, the Arc of Indiana, INSOURCE, and other family advocacy groups.

VR works closely with the Indiana Institute of Disability and Community (IIDC) and Indiana University on several transition-related priorities. IIDC promotes partnerships between Indiana schools and various state agencies and other support organizations. IIDC’s focus is on career development, secondary education, and transition to adult life. As part of the need to establish an infrastructure and ensure sustainability of transition services, including pre-employment transition services, VR works with the existing Transition Cadres in Indiana. Established in 2011 and dedicated to improving secondary transition outcomes for students, a network of Transition Cadres throughout Indiana (funded by the Department of Education) is working collaborative, both regionally and statewide. The efforts are

focused on implementing promising practices and creating innovative strategies, tools, and resources for teachers and other transition professionals. VR has provided training on VR and its services to the Cadres and is attending the regularly scheduled cadre meetings to continue the joint collaboration. For more information please see: <http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/pages/cadre-leaders>. Through IIDC and a study entitled *Effects of Embedded Employment Resources on the Employment Outcomes of Transition-age Youth*, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living, (Grant #H133A130028), VR is working with IIDC through the five-year research project examining the effectiveness of a team approach to providing students with disabilities (those who have an IEP) with employment coaching and resources *prior* to leaving high school. These sites are referred to as the “Indiana School-to-Work Collaborative.” At the five designated sites across the state, career coaches are working with students and families, their Transition IEP teams, and a VR Counselor to ensure students have internship opportunities before they leave school. The collaborative site features the following benefits for participating students: collaboration of schools, VR, and community rehabilitation providers; single point of contact to be a liaison between VR and school personnel; personal student profile; immersed internship; student empowerment training; benefits planning; and family training. The outcomes of this research will provide data, information, and best practices that will continue to shape transition services, including pre-employment transition services for Indiana. For more information, please see: <http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/pages/indiana-school-to-work-collaborative>.

In coordination with IIDC, VR has developed VR-specific products for educators and students. Three VR fact sheets, entitled “Working with Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation” are now part of the Indiana State Individualized Education Program (IEP) system. The fact sheets provide automated resources for students, teachers, and families about VR at students’ Transition IEP meetings. Another important informational and educational tool that was created to improve outreach and education about VR is the “Working with Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation” Video. This video provides a quick 5 minute overview of VR in an entertaining manner in hopes to provide a unique mode of educating transition-aged students and families. (Video may be viewed at www.vrs.in.gov.)

VR is currently assigning a VR Counselor to each school to increase outreach and education with parents and teachers about VR services. The assigned VR counselor will facilitate the timely referral of students that could benefit from VR services. The goal for each student is for a VR application to be completed, and, for eligible consumers, to have an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) in place, before exiting high school. The IPE will include pre-employment transition services when appropriate for transition students. The VR counselor will collaborate with the school staff to enable for a seamless transition to life after high school. Additionally VR is piloting having 3 dedicated VR Counselors for several Marion Co high schools to focus strictly on transition students having a caseload that is 100% transition. After evaluating the effectiveness of this pilot VR will consider expansion into other area offices.

Transition services are a cooperative effort. VR counselors are invited to assist with the planning related to transition services. The local school corporation takes the lead while the individual is a student, and when the student exits the school program, VR becomes the lead agency, when appropriate. The VR counselor is then the responsible party for the provision of transition services to eligible students. The interagency agreement states that: [t]he roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services are:

1. The student’s IEP will define the services and responsible payer for each of the services. (34 CFR §300.301 (a)) If VR is responsible for payment of a service, this will be defined on the

Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Services will be provided in accordance with the student's IEP, the requirements of 511 IAC Article 7, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Rules at 460 IAC 14-1 and policies.

2. Each agency will maximize coordination in the use of public funds.

The written agreement also states that outreach should occur as early as possible during the transition process and must include, at a minimum, a description of the purpose of the VR program, eligibility requirements, application process and the scope of services that may be provided to eligible individuals.

VR counselors and/or area supervisors are involved in local transition councils if they exist in the community. Councils are made up of local stakeholders who are involved in the transition from school to work and adult life. Councils could include students/family, school personnel, service providers, etc. In addition, VR is responsible for providing written information to students and their families regarding adult services. This written information is available in both English and Spanish.

The interagency agreement between VR and DOE will be reviewed and continue to evolve as appropriate.

Presently, VR is reviewing its current practices and is developing a plan to ensure appropriate services are provided to transition-aged students. Currently, the schools and VR confer at least one time per year to review upcoming transition-aged students. VR Counselors are invited to IEP meetings and make it a priority to attend when schedules permit. However, due to the student and VR Counselor ratio; VR recognizes the need to identify other options for students. Under WIOA, the definition to services to groups and pre-employment transition services (with serving potentially eligible students) allows for flexibility and creativity in developing quality services for students. One new opportunity is reflected by the work of VR and Indiana's Resource Center for Families with Special Needs (commonly referred to as INSOURCE). INSOURCE is Indiana's federally-funded parent-to-parent training center for IDEA. DDRS/VR believes it is important to work with INSOURCE to build capacity to offer education and information to families and their children from school-based programs to adult services, including employment opportunities. This connection will allow parents, schools, and students to be more informed with accurate information about the services and supports through VR and can assist in making appropriate referrals.

(e) 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.

VR purchases an array of services from a variety of vendors and community rehabilitation providers. Community Rehabilitation Providers specifically provide discovery, employment services, vocational evaluation, job shadow, placement, and supported employment services. VR promotes consumer choice in the provision of services. There are a total of 89 agencies with Provider Agreements for providing employment services in Indiana. Purchased employment services follow a new Employment Service Model that is based on an outcome-based payment model with hourly rates for Discovery activities and Supported Employment services, as well as other specialized services that do not fit into the model. (Information regarding the new Employment Services Model may be found at www.vrs.in.gov.) The 89 providers include Community Rehabilitation Programs and Community Mental Health Centers.

- (f) 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.

Indiana receives approximately \$475,000/year of Title VI B funds to provide supported employment (SE) services. VR has made a commitment to serve people with the most significant disabilities and also utilizes Title I dollars to serve this population. VR spent approximately \$9 million on SE services, and served approximately 2700 consumers with most significant disabilities (MSD) in FFY15.

For consumers with developmental disabilities who qualify for services under the Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services (BDDS), VR works collaboratively with BDDS to provide SE and seamless transition to extended services. BDDS defines extended services as ongoing employment support services which enable an individual to maintain integrated competitive employment in a community setting. Individuals must be employed in a community-based, competitive job that pays at or above minimum wage in order to access this service.

The initial job placement, training, stabilization may be provided through Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Extended Services provide the additional work related supports needed by the individual to continue to be as independent as possible in community employment. If an employed individual has obtained community based competitive employment and stabilization without Vocational Rehabilitation's services, the participant is still eligible to receive Extended Services, as long as the participant meets appropriate program qualifications. Ongoing employment support services are identified in the participants' Individualized Support Plan and must be related to the participants' limitations in functional areas (i.e. self-care, understanding and use of language, learning, mobility, self-direction, capacity for independent living, economic self-sufficiency), as are necessary to maintain employment.

Extended Services are provided in integrated community settings where persons without disabilities are also employed. Extended Services do not include sheltered work or other similar types of vocational services furnished in specialized facilities or volunteer endeavors.

Reimbursable Activities

- Ensuring that natural supports at the work site are secured through interaction with supervisors and staff. A tangible outcome of this activity would be a decrease in the number of hours of Extended Services an individual accessed over time.
- Training for the participant, and/or the participant's employer, supervisor or coworkers, to increase the participant's inclusion at the worksite.
- Regular observation or supervision of the participant to reinforce and stabilize the job placement.
- Job-specific or job-related safety training.
- Job-specific or job-related self-advocacy skills training.
- Reinforcement of work-related personal care and social skills.
- Training on use of public transportation and/or acquisition of appropriate transportation.
- Facilitating, but not funding, driver's education training.
- Coaching and training on job-related tasks such as computer skills or other job-specific tasks.

BDDS may provide long-term employment support services through Medicaid Waiver. VR counselors initiate transfer to extended services at the time of job placement. This ensures that BDDS eligible consumers move directly into extended services after case closure without a gap in services.

In July 2015, VR implemented a new employment service model that increases access to VR-funded supported employment services to ensure that individuals with the most significant disabilities who require Supported Employment service receive the supports they need to achieve stabilization on the job prior to transferring to extended services as appropriate. This procedural change has helped to ensure more accountability from both VR and employment service providers in determining that individuals are stable in their jobs prior to VR closure and transfer to extended services. However, more evaluation and training is necessary to ensure that consumers in supported employment receive sufficient ongoing supports from VR prior to transitioning to extended services.

- (g) 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:
- (1) VR services; and
 - (2) transition services, including pre-employment transition services, for students and youth with disabilities.

The Business & Community Engagement team was developed with the purpose of raising awareness of the Vocational Rehabilitation program for both individuals with disabilities who may benefit from VR and businesses that benefit from hiring individuals with disabilities.

The Director of Business & Community Engagement focused time on identifying executive level opportunities to educate about the VR Program. It is often stated that the number one reason for businesses developing diversity hiring initiatives is because of executive level support. Within the state, agencies were introduced to the VR program. A sample of state agencies receiving educational outreach is as follows: Department of Workforce Development, Indiana Civil Rights Commission, Department of Child Services and their service providers, the Native American Affairs Commission, Commission on the Social Status of Black Males, Department of Correction, Department of Education, Department of Veterans Affairs, Division of Aging, Commission on Higher Education. The thought behind developing strong education about the VR program within state agencies is to begin laying the groundwork for potential work experiences that may eventually occur at these agencies. It is the hope that the State of Indiana, as an employer, will begin to explore ways to increase the number of persons with disabilities being hired. As the Indiana State Personnel explores this as an option, agencies are already being educated on the VR program and services. One recent example of a successful connection is with the Lieutenant Governor's office. The Lieutenant Governor is in charge of the coordination of the Indiana State Fair. This year, the office reached out to DWD and VR with an interest in hiring persons with disabilities, specifically youth to work the Indiana State Fair.

VR continues to work with employers to support their needs. The Business & Community Engagement team often calls upon and meets with human resources representatives of businesses who are hiring and explain that the Business & Community Engagement team is the employer's resource for disability hiring. Most recently, a panel presentation on "How to Engage People with Disabilities" was given at the AmeriCorps 2015 Fall Conference. The collaboration with the Indianapolis Mayor's Advisory Council on

Disability has been extraordinary. The Council has given disability awareness trainings to internal new staff and at Business Leadership Network events. The Team met with national employer partner Macy's and hopes to develop "lunch and learn" type events focused around Disability awareness and relevant topics.

The Business & Community Engagement Team has a strong interest in supporting the State's Business Leadership Networks across the state. The Indianapolis Chapter is a key partner for calling chapter member businesses. Indiana VR will further examine ways to support these efforts going forward. Business Leadership Networks are key in supporting businesses who would like to begin hiring initiatives. Indiana VR plans to have a supporting presence going forward.

There has been recent collaboration and cross education between the Indiana Department of Workforce Development and the Indiana Bureau of Rehabilitation Services. The purpose of the intensive cross education is to begin a strategic partnership of working together when it comes to strategic outreach to businesses. A deeper and more strategic partnering with DWD's Business Services should help the State of Indiana better work with business. Because both DWD and VR have access to a pool of candidates looking to enter the workforce, it is logical to coordinate the outreach efforts only after ensuring that the agencies are educated on the specific services available to assist not only the job seeker but also the employer. Employers grow weary of the many agencies working individually to gain opportunities for their clients. VR and the Department of Workforce Development hope to streamline services collaborate and partner in outreach efforts across the state in order to efficiently use their time working with employers.

Future plans for Business & Community Engagement are to expand the capacity. A contract Request for Information (RFI) has been drafted that will explore options for further building the outreach to businesses in effort to expand employer engagement, provide disability-related information and resources (e.g., disability awareness training, Section 503 overview materials for Indiana based federal contractors, business-to-business resources for beginning disability hiring initiatives, etc.), and develop work-based learning opportunities, internships and apprenticeships for individuals with disabilities. The goal is to make outreach more robust across the state with potential hiring events, encourage disability hiring initiatives, job fairs, and other business services. This is not meant to duplicate efforts of other core WIOA partners, but to allow for resources within VR to assist in such critical collaboration, as well as provide expertise and resources for business in the area of disability.

(h) Interagency Cooperation. Describe how the designated State unit will collaborate with the State agency responsible for administering each of the following programs to develop opportunities for competitive integrated employment, to the greatest extent practicable:

- (1) the State Medicaid plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act;
- (2) the State agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities; and
- (3) the State agency responsible for providing mental health services.

Through the VR-funded Benefits Information Network (BIN), VR consumers receive the necessary information to make informed choices about working, such as how work will impact their Medicaid funding as applicable. BIN Liaisons also share information about various federal work incentives as well as information regarding the state's Medicaid Buy-In Program, called MED Works.

The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) and the Bureau of Developmental Disability Services (BDDS) are housed in the same division, the Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services (DDRS). Additionally, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and BDDS field offices are co-located, allowing for increased collaboration in serving mutual consumers, educating referrals about each program's services and ensuring a smooth transition to extended services as appropriate upon exit from VR. At time of job placement, VR Counselors submit transfer documentation to ensure extended services are in place prior to VR case closure as appropriate. (Please reference attachment (c) and (q) for more information.)

The BRS Director, BDDS Director, and DDRS Director regularly collaborate and discuss how program changes in one bureau may have impact on the other bureau. For instance, bureau leaders have recently collaborated on revisions to BDDS waiver definitions to bring definitions in line with the new VR employment service revisions, particularly around supported employment and extended services. Conversations have also begun regarding compliance with the new 511 regulations regarding services to individuals in sub-minimum wage positions.

VR staff also works closely at a local level with the Division of Mental Health and Addiction's (DMNA) funded Centers for Mental Health. VR has a training contract which provides training and consultation to all employment services providers, including mental health centers and VR staff regarding employment for people with disabilities, including a focus on mental illness. The large majority of mental health centers across the state have employment service agreements with VR for the provision of placement services including supported employment. Additionally, stakeholder members from these centers, along with stakeholders from Community Rehabilitation Providers, participated in the VR employment services workgroup which resulted in the roll-out of substantial modifications to the VR employment service model. These revisions were designed to better serve all consumers, including those with the most significant disabilities and the highest support needs. Several revisions were made to the new draft model based on feedback from these workgroup members to ensure the new model is effective in serving all individuals.

(i) 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:

(1) Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

(A) Qualified Personnel Needs. Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:

- (i) the number of personnel who are employed by the State agency in the provision of VR services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;
- (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.

Projections of types and numbers of employees needed are based on current caseload sizes, demographic information regarding the population of Hoosiers with disabilities, the projected number of individuals exiting high school with disabilities, trends regarding number of consumers served in recent years, and current initiatives. The budget and state allocation available also drive the determination for the number of staff that can be sustained within Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). Reports that outline ratios of VR Counselors to consumers on a statewide, region, local area, and counselor basis, are readily available and are regularly reviewed by management. In the last federal fiscal year, the Counselor to consumer ratio was approximately 1:131 given the number of vacancies. VR has consistently hired 20-25 new counselors per year due to retirements, promotion of staff, and general turnover. Over the next five years VR will need to fill additional vacancies due to an increased number of employees reaching retirement age. The projected number of consumers to be served is among the data reviewed in consideration of staffing levels. The following are projections of the anticipated number of applicants and eligible individuals coming into the system annually for each of the next five years.

- FFY15 ACTUAL (Applicants: 12,004 Eligible: 10,133)
- FFY16 ESTIMATE (Applicants: 12,244; Eligible: 10,336)
- FFY17 ESTIMATE (Applicants: 12,489; Eligible: 10,542)
- FFY18 ESTIMATE (Applicants: 12,739; Eligible: 10,753)
- FFY19 ESTIMATE (Applicants: 12,994; Eligible: 10,968)
- FFY20 ESTIMATE (Applicants: 13,253 Eligible: 11,188)

Based on number of applicants to date in FFY15, it is expected that VR will see an increase in applicants and eligible consumers in FFY16, and subsequent due to increased outreach and education at schools statewide in VR's efforts to reach more transition-aged students earlier on in their high school careers. VR is planning outreach efforts aimed at increasing VR applicants and expects the application trend to gradually increase over the next several years. A counselor-consumer ratio of approximately 1:100 is best practice to maintain efficient caseload management and quality service. As the number of applicants and people who are eligible are anticipated to increase, the number of staff needed to meet consumer needs may increase as well. As of this submission, 29 VR Counselors, 1 Itinerant VR Counselor, 12 VR Case Coordinators, 5 secretaries, 5 area supervisors, and 3 regional managers are eligible for retirement.

Row	Job Title	Total positions	Current vacancies	Projected vacancies over the next 5 years
1	Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors	175	24	115
2	VR Area Supervisors	22	2	10
3	VR Region Managers	4	0	3
4	BRS Management/Leadership Staff	6	1	1
5	VR Case Coordinators	60	7	12
6	VR Area Secretaries	19	5	20
	Blind/VI/Deaf programs	8	0	1

8	BRS Central Office Staff	16	3	10
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- (B) Personnel Development. Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:
- (i) a list of the institutions of higher education in the State that are preparing VR professionals, by type of program;
 - (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.

Indiana has one CORE-accredited Rehabilitation master's program to prepare individuals to sit for the CRC exam. Ball State University has a long-standing Masters of Rehabilitation Counseling Program that has graduated over 80 students from the program. The Ball State Rehabilitation program has been CORE accredited since 2004. There were 6 new graduates in the spring 2015 and 3 additional graduates expected in December 2015. The program currently has 7 students enrolled.

Though Indiana has other university institutions that offer degrees in related fields that may meet or partially meet CSPD hiring qualifications (including some that offer Rehabilitation Counseling degrees that are not currently recognized by CRCC), these programs do not offer CORE accredited Rehabilitation Master's programs. VR does encourage students to participate in internships in the VR agency and believe this to be a valuable VR Counselor recruiting practice. VR will continue to work with Ball State to increase the number of interns with hopes of increasing the recruitment pool for vacant VR Counselor positions. VR also works closely with Indiana University through the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community (IIDC) in the provision of the Leadership Academy and other training initiatives.

Row	Institutions	Students enrolled	Employees sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates from the previous year
1	Ball State University	7	0	2	6
2		0	0	0	0
3		0	0	0	0

- (2) *Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel.* Describe the development and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated State unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to

recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

VR acknowledges a long-standing challenge with recruitment and retention of VR Counselors who have met CSPD requirements in the past. In 2014, VR successfully implemented a comprehensive restructuring of the field services staffing model to improve the quality of service provided to our consumers. The addition of a new VR Case Coordinator role helped to ensure that the VR Counselor role is focused primarily on rehabilitation counseling and guidance. This field services restructuring also aimed to enhance recruitment activities to obtain qualified VR field staff. VR will continue working to identify institutions of higher education and professional associations to partner with in the development and implementation of this plan of action.

VR periodically conducts needs assessments with staff to identify training priorities. Staff performance appraisals were substantially revised in 2015 to shift expectations to increase focus on customer service and quality outcomes. The ongoing review of performance goals will also identify additional areas of training need for staff. VR has 1 staff member who coordinates the provision of training for VR staff as part of the overall responsibilities.

VR in partnership with IIDC continues to evaluate and modify a web-based training program, called the Leadership Academy, for continuous improvements and increased effectiveness. This program will be explained in more detail below.

Initiatives within VR that may improve staff retention include the recent addition of 7 itinerant VR Counselor positions to assist with covering caseloads in local VR offices experiencing vacancies in VR Counselor positions. Additionally, the ongoing efforts to increase communication and training across VR may assist with retention. This includes ongoing quarterly statewide supervisor meetings, monthly regional management meetings, and monthly field staff training webinars, new supervisor trainings, regional field visits, and an annual statewide staff symposium. Most recently in September 2015, BRS held a 2-day statewide VR Symposium for all counseling staff, case coordinators, and Central Office staff to come together for the purpose of training and collaboration. Additionally, Field Region Managers are an integral part of monthly Leadership Team meetings and give essential input on policies, training needs, new initiatives and priorities, etc.

VR continues to offer counselors and support staff opportunities to participate in special agency projects outside of their regular work routines, which sends the message that leadership values and desires the input of field staff. In the coming year, VR will work to establish a more targeted focus on reaching out to local universities as a recruitment source for identifying qualified individuals with master's degrees in rehabilitation counseling or closely related areas.

VR has a long-standing history of hiring qualified candidates from minority backgrounds and individuals with disabilities for all BRS positions, including VR Counselors. The Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), the agency in which DDRS/BRS sits, has an Affirmative Action plan that includes FSSA's policy on Affirmative Action, recruitment strategies, identifies responsible parties for implementation and monitoring, and addresses FSSA's progress toward meeting goals for new hires. Outreach strategies include recruitment activities at events such as Indiana Black Expo as well as events at local universities such as job fairs and advisory board meetings. Furthermore, VR job postings are shared locally with Centers for Independent Living, CRPs and Mental Health Centers for broad

distribution. VR Counselors also share openings as appropriate with VR consumers and VR has hired former consumers into VR positions.

- (3) *Personnel Standards*. Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) and to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:
- (A) standards that are consistent with any national or State-approved or -recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing VR services; and
 - (B) 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.

Of the 148 current VR counselors, 19 have their CRC. VR also has 3 certified region managers, 2 certified area supervisors, and 1 individual on the Central Office team who is a CRC. VR recognizes long-standing challenges of the availability of qualified new hires in Indiana due to having only one CORE Accredited Rehabilitation program that graduates only a small number of students each year. While CRCs and/or individuals with closely related master's degrees are certainly the ideal candidates for our VR counselor roles, VR anticipates that by changing the hiring requirements to allow for a relevant bachelor's degree and at least 1 year of pertinent experience in service or advocacy of individuals with disabilities will allow struggling area offices an opportunity to hire more expeditiously and effectively, while still maintaining qualified staff. This will be especially beneficial in offices located in rural communities and offices where positions have historically needed to be reposted a number of times in order to identify qualified candidates.

Due to the shortage of CRCs in the state and WIOA changes to requirements, VR will officially amend its hiring qualifications in 2016 as follows:

Master's degree from an accredited university in rehabilitation counseling, rehabilitation administration, counseling and guidance, social work, special education, sociology, audiology, education, speech pathology, or a closely related human service area or certification as a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) is preferred; OR

In lieu of a Master's Degree a Bachelor's degree from an accredited university in rehabilitation counseling, rehabilitation administration, counseling and guidance, social work, special education, sociology, psychology, audiology, education, speech pathology, or a closely related human service area or certification as a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC); AND

Demonstrated paid or unpaid experience, for not less than (1) one year, consisting of:

- Direct work with individuals with disabilities in a setting such as an independent living center;
- Direct service or advocacy activities that provide such individual with experience and skills in working with individuals with disabilities; or
- Direct experience as an employer, as a small business owner or operator, or in self-employment, or other experience in human resources, recruitment, or experience in supervising employees, training, or other activities that provide experience in competitive integrated employment environments.

Other preferred experience includes:

- Vocational counseling skills, motivational interviewing skills, or related counseling skills
- Awareness of cultural diversity, medical and psychological aspects of disability, counseling theories, assessment tools, job development and placement, Rehabilitation Act, ADA, IDEA, Social Security, Medicaid, Medicare, other state/federal programs, DWD programs, rehabilitation technology, economic and labor market trends, community organizations, and financial aid.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills, creativity, problem-solving, evaluation of services, and time management skills.
- Ability to communicate with diverse populations, flexibility, handling multiple tasks, maintaining professional demeanor, and ability to empathize.
- Ability to interpret psychological/medical evaluation reports and medical terminology.
- Familiarity with Assistive Technology and how to access AT services.
- Knowledge of local community and statewide resources preferred.
- Knowledge of local and statewide job market preferred.
- Willingness to obtain necessary continuing training/education for CRC maintenance, or if not a CRC willingness to work toward becoming eligible to sit for CRC examination.

With these changes to the hiring qualifications, VR projects an increased number of qualified applicants for VR Counselor vacancies to serve its consumers, and hopefully increase retention.

- (4) *Staff Development.* Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section 101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:
- (A) 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
 - (B) procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.

VR continues to assess training methods and curriculum in order to make necessary improvements to the development and delivery of training for staff, specifically new VR Counselors. Counselor training needs are assessed through survey, dialogue, supervisor recommendations, staff feedback, and agency directives. In October 2015, a VR Training Work Group was assembled which is comprised of field staff and Central Office staff members with various levels of experiences and roles.

Training is provided through a variety of modalities, including statewide symposiums, regional trainings, webinars, and in-person workshops. VR continues to collaborate with the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) in coordination of joint trainings to better serve shared consumers as well. In 2015, VR and DWD determined a need for cross-training and identification of subject-matter experts in each of the DWD WorkOne offices and the VR area offices statewide. A pilot group of subject matter experts came together for initial training in July 2015 and this group has been meeting regularly to work collaboratively in joint efforts to better serve consumers.

As mentioned previously, VR also contracts with IIDC for the provision of select training including maintenance and enhancements to the web-based Leadership Academy. Some of the topic areas covered through the Leadership Academy are listed below:

- VR New Counselor Orientation (6-week course covering The Field of Disability Services, Consumer Statuses, Referral, Application, Eligibility & Severity Determination, Fiscal Accountability, Services & Vendors, Additional Services, Comprehensive Assessment, Individualized Plan for Employment, Case Closure, & Post-Employment Services);
- Intro to the Rehabilitation Act and principles of Rehabilitation;
- Addictions;
- Ex-Offenders
- Independent Living; and
- Personality Disorder.

In addition to formal classroom style or web-based training, a great deal of mentoring and coaching occurs at the local level, especially for new staff. Supervisors play a large role in coaching new staff and will continue to be a key part of new staff training. Training curriculum specifically geared toward supervisors has been developed as well and was implemented in 2015. Training workshops have begun taking place regularly for new supervisors and ongoing training for all supervisors. Additionally, online training is required for new supervisors in regards to the human resources aspects of managing employees.

VR also accesses training and resources offered by partners, including the statewide Assistive Technology IN-DATA program which offers 'first Friday' AT webinars specifically for VR staff.

VR began a new contract with a training entity called Educational Data Systems Inc. (EDSI) in October 2015 to plan for the roll out of comprehensive training workshops for staff on counseling and guidance in addition to case management. In 2016, all existing staff will participate in this training and beginning in 2017, all new VR counseling staff will be required to complete the training. It is anticipated that an online component to this training will be added as well to assist with ongoing training needs.

(5) *Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs.* Describe how the designated State unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.

VR maintains the ability to communicate with VR consumers in their preferred mode of communication in a variety of ways. VR staff access and coordinate foreign language translation, ASL communication, Communication Access Real Time (CART), etc. whenever needed. To ensure communication services are available despite a shortage of some providers (i.e. ASL interpreters, CART providers), VR has increased utilization of remote interpreting services. Publications and brochures are available in large print and Spanish versions. VR has VR Counselors that cover population-specific caseloads including individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, individuals with low vision, and individuals with a traumatic brain injury. VR seeks candidates with some fluency in ASL for Counselor positions covering a caseload of consumers with hearing loss. Virtual ASL training was piloted in 2015 for interested staff as well.

- (6) *Coordination of Personnel Development Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.*
As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated State unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

VR has a Statewide Transition Coordinator on staff to train and notify VR field staff of all changes and initiatives related to working with transition-aged students. In addition, VR will be adding a Statewide Transition Director. IIDC continues to serve as a transition resource to VR and DOE. Training and technical assistance is offered statewide and the targeted audience is parents, students, school officials, VR professionals, and CRP staff. Initiatives are currently ongoing to develop and update transition guides that will be available to all appropriate stakeholders. The Transition Alliance workgroup will be expanded in the coming year to serve as an advisory group pertaining to statewide VR Transition initiatives. Partners who sit on this group include parent advocates, DOE, schools, DWD, VR, IIDC, etc. VR is investigating opportunities for cross-training with VR and appropriate school personnel. Targeted training and technical assistance is ongoing for the VR field staff; specifically, VR has held webinars and face-to-face trainings on transition-related topics, such as special education overview, Transition IEPs, 504 Plans, special education eligibility, transition services, etc. All of these strategies will support VRs' priority to increase outreach efforts and access to VR services for transition aged youth.

(j) Statewide Assessment.

- (1) Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, particularly the VR services needs of those:
 - (A) with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;
 - (B) who are minorities;
 - (C) who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program;
 - (D) who have been served through other components of the statewide workforce development system; and
 - (E) who are youth with disabilities and students with disabilities, including, as appropriate, their need for pre-employment transition services or other transition services.
- (2) Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State; and
- (3) Include an assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities for transition career services and pre-employment transition services, and the extent to which such services are coordinated with transition services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act .

Data Collection

While Indiana's formal comprehensive statewide needs assessment is conducted every three years, data is gathered on a continuous basis. It is a joint effort of the Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) and the Commission on Rehabilitation Services (CRS). The Commission provides ongoing input, especially in the acquisition of satisfaction data. It also provides input into the development and content of the final report. Commission members have an opportunity to review and offer comments prior to the release of the triennial needs assessment. Indiana's 2017 comprehensive statewide needs assessment reflects a synthesis of quantitative and qualitative data addressing the state's overall vocational rehabilitation

needs. The data collection techniques varied as well. They included review of demographic data for Indiana, feedback from the Commission on Rehabilitation Services, input from providers, VR staff, Workforce Development staff, WIOA partners, advocates, and consumers.

In addition, VR developed and distributed a detailed survey to the following groups: VR staff, the Commission on Rehabilitation Services, community rehabilitation programs, the Arc of Indiana, In*Source, Autism Society of Indiana, Down Syndrome Indiana, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), Indiana Association of Persons Supporting EmploymentFirst (INAPSE), Indiana Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (INARF), Bureau of Developmental Disability Services, Department of Workforce Development, WorkOne, employers, Indiana Council for Administrators in Special Education (ICASE), Cadres of Transition Leaders, Business Leadership Networks, Indiana Commission on Civil Rights, Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services, and 50 additional entities. Over 460 individuals responded to this survey.

Demographic/Economic Data

PREVALENCE RATE

The percentage of men and women, aged 16-64, who reported a sensory, physical, mental, or self-care disability in 2013 was 9.9% in Indiana and 9.7% in the U.S. The 2013 data indicated that the percentage of non-institutionalized males or females in Indiana, ages 16-64, regardless of ethnicity, with all education levels who reported a disability is 10.2% compared to a national rate of 12%.

The current population in Indiana, based on 2011 U.S. Census Bureau estimates, is more than 6.5 million, with approximately 62% of the population that are working age (18 through 64). Of the working-age population, 8.9% adults have self-reported as having been diagnosed with a disability. A total of 1.7% of this population is employed.

EMPLOYMENT

Indiana's employment rate in 2013 for 487,266 individuals with disabilities, ages 18-64 living in the community was 33.8% (164,556). The employment rate for individuals without disabilities is 76%. This is an employment gap of 42.3%.

Indiana's Department of Workforce Development reported that in June 2015, Indiana's unemployment rate of the general population was reported at 4.9%, closely mirroring the national average of 5.4%.

EMPLOYMENT DEMAND IN INDIANA

Indiana's Department of Workforce Development has a list of Hoosier Hot 50 Jobs. The list's ranking is based on expected demand and wages in 2022 for the state of Indiana. It is anticipated that there will continue to be need for employees over the next decade for each of the following (from most to least): registered nurses, K-12 teachers, truck drivers (heavy and tractor-trailer), sales representatives (wholesale and manufacturing), general operations managers, licensed practical nurses, postsecondary educators, accountants/auditors, office managers, and electricians. Even though this list reflects needs through 2022, all ten of these positions are listed as currently in demand.

POVERTY

The percentage of non-institutionalized persons, aged 21 to 64 years, with a disability in the United States who were living below the poverty line in 2013 was 28.2%. In Indiana that same group living in poverty was 29.3 %. In 2013, the poverty rate of individuals without disabilities, ages 18 to 64 years, living in the community was 13.3%—a poverty gap of 15.6 percentage points.

In 2013, an estimated 31.9% of civilian, non-institutionalized men and women with a work limitation, aged 18-64, in the United States lived in families with incomes below the poverty line. This rate was 35.4% for individuals with work limitations residing in Indiana.

In Indiana, an estimated 15.4% of the general population lived in poverty according to Census data, and the median household income was \$47,508 in 2013.

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME

The percentage of non-institutionalized persons, aged 21 to 64 years with a disability, who were receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits in 2013 was 17.7% in Indiana and 18.9% for the U.S.

Nationally, in December 2012, of the 8,262,877 individuals who received federally administered payments from the SSI program, 1,156,188 were eligible, 67,725 were eligible based on blindness, and 7,038,964 were eligible based on disability. In Indiana, of the 124,998 individuals who received SSI, 873 were eligible based on blindness and 118,655 were eligible based on disability.

Indiana has a Benefits Information Network (BIN) of certified liaisons that assists individuals in assessing the impact of employment on benefits. During the year July 2014 – June 2015, 1,394 BIN plans were completed. The Indiana Institute on Disability and Community (IIDC) at Indiana University conducted eight trainings with 184 Certified BIN liaisons and 14 certified Community Work Incentive Counselors. Indiana VR purchases this assessment of benefits through the trained liaisons.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

In the United States in 2013, non-institutionalized persons, aged 21 to 64 years, with a disability, whose educational attainment was less than a high school education was 20.9%. In Indiana, that group was 21.4% of the population.

Students in the U.S., ages 6 to 21, who were served under IDEA, Part B, were 8.4% of the population. In Indiana, that group is 10.2% of the population.

Indiana data indicated that of the students who exited IDEA, Part B, special education services in 2011-2012, 5,617 graduated with a diploma, 1,056 received a certificate, 820 dropped out and 99 aged out or died.

VETERANS WITH A SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY

In Indiana, the percentage of non-institutionalized civilian veterans, aged 21 to 64 years, who reported a VA service-connected disability in 2013 is 18.9%, compared to a U.S rate of 21.4%.

In 2013, there were 412,317 Indiana civilian veterans, ages 18 years and over, living in the community, 129,291 of whom were individuals with disabilities—a prevalence rate of 31.4%. In that same year, the poverty rate of civilian veterans with disabilities in Indiana, ages 18 to 64 years, living in the community

was 16.9%, while the poverty rate of individuals without disabilities, ages 18 to 64 years, living in the community was 6.7%—a poverty gap of 10.2%.

HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

The percentage of non-institutionalized persons, aged 21 to 64 years, with a disability in Indiana who were uninsured in 2013 was 17%.

INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

The Institute for Community Inclusion data for 2013 shows that Indiana reported 31% of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities were served in integrated employment services. Indiana VR showed a 59.96% employment rate for individuals with a cognitive disability in 2013.

The 2015 Day and Employment Services Outcome System reports on 12,972 individuals from 57 Indiana employment providers. Twenty six percent were served in integrated employment, 27% in sheltered/facility-based work, 27% in alternative to work (seeking employment, volunteer work) and 18% in non-employment day services.

Commission on Rehabilitation Services Input

VR staff received the following comments from the members of the Commission on Rehabilitation Services:

- An emphasis on the importance on benefits counseling services to families as impact of employment on benefits remains a key concern for families.
- A need for increased education and collaboration with WIOA partners on serving individuals with disabilities.
- A need for financial literacy for individuals with disabilities as a strategy for working toward self-sufficiency.
- A need to educate individuals with disabilities about self-disclosure.
- Educating school personnel including special education teachers, guidance counselors and transition coordinators about services offered through WIOA partners, including WorkOne services.
- Continued emphasis on service youth with disabilities through outreach, use of career coaches, work experience opportunities, and increasing expectations for employment.
- Increased collaboration with other partners such as Department of Correction regarding services to shared consumers.
- Improved marketing including sharing of success stories and improving website information.
- Revision to hiring criteria for VR Counselors to address staff shortage and staff retention issues, including implementation of revised CSPD criteria to allow for hiring of qualified candidates with a Bachelor's degree.

Consumer Input

Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services surveyed 697 consumers who had their VR cases closed due to successful job placements, and 168 individuals whose cases were closed unsuccessfully. This survey was

for the first six months of 2015. The table below compares the outcomes of this survey to the past two years.

Question	Successful (26)			Unsuccessful (28)		
	2013	2014	½ 2015	2013	2014	½ 2015
1) I was satisfied with the services I received from VR	4.56	4.60	4.55	3.66	3.69	3.77
2) I like the way I was treated	4.61	4.66	4.59	3.91	4.00	3.92
3) I would recommend VR to others	4.62	4.66	4.63	3.84	3.86	3.95
4) I received the services I needed	4.54	4.59	4.54	3.50	3.52	3.58
5) I received my services in a timely fashion	4.35	4.42	4.38	3.66	3.70	3.67
6) I was able to meet my counselor at a convenient location	4.59	4.65	4.59	4.06	4.14	4.02
7) I am satisfied with my job	4.43	4.46	4.43	N/A	N/A	
8) I am satisfied with my fringe benefits (medical, dental, etc.)	3.76	3.95	3.86	N/A	N/A	
Total surveys returned	2209	1952	697	690	604	168

The rating for the 2015 successful closures on each of the categories was just slightly lower when compared to the prior year, for those individuals whose cases were closed successfully. However, the mean was 4.44 on a 5 point scale. The individuals who were successfully placed in employment gave their highest rating 4.63 to stating that they would recommend VR to others. The lowest rating was received from consumers who were not satisfied with the fringe benefits they received from their employer. The mean for individuals whose cases were closed unsuccessfully was 3.81, which was slightly higher than the previous year. The individuals who did not achieve an employment outcome gave the lowest ratings (3.58 and 3.67) to the questions of whether they received the services they needed and if the services were received in a timely manner.

Current Service Levels

A large number of individuals with disabilities pursue entry into the workforce system through the assistance of Indiana's Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

- In period FFY 2015, VR assisted 3,996 customers to become competitively employed working a combined 116,289 hours per week and earning a combined \$1,505,653.00 per week.
- This totals to \$77,121,371.43 annually for all successfully closed cases.
- This is an increase of \$38,542,383.57 in annual salary reported at application to that reported at closure, for all successfully closed cases.
- For competitively employed customers, this is an average increase of \$9,645.24 in annual salary reported at application to that reported at closure.

- VR was able to help 1,904 customers gain jobs so that their own earnings have become their primary source of support.
- In Fiscal Year 2015, VR achieved 4,103 successful closures and a rehabilitation rate of 58.59%.
- VR spent a total of \$42,914,783 in federal year 2015 for case services. The majority of these funds went to job placement and training services.
- In FFY 2015, 12,044 individuals applied for VR services, with 7,155 consumers completing Individualized Plans for Employment with VR. VR served 28,287 consumers in the year 2015.

The current distribution of Indiana consumers by primary impairment group appears in the list below. Mental illness, physical disabilities, and developmental disabilities/autism are the three most frequent primary impairments faced by Indiana vocational rehabilitation consumers.

Populations Served by Primary Impairment Group

Disability Group	Count of Cases
DD - Developmental Disability	4,861
MI - Mental Illness	7,257
OT - Other Disabilities	3,267
PH - Physical Disability	5,760
SC - Sensory Category	4,516
TB - Traumatic Brain Injury	646

Indiana Employment Outcomes and Federal Indicators

Employment outcomes are a key issue for all parties in the vocational rehabilitation system. It is a key measure by which the service delivery system is evaluated.

- In FFY 2015, Indiana reported 4,103 successful rehabilitations, which was lower than the 4,377 rehabilitations in 2014. This is below the Federal Indicator.
- The rehabilitation rate was 58.59% for FFY 2015, with 97.39% being competitively employed.
- The percentage of people with significant disabilities who were competitively employed was 83.40%.
- The ratio of average wage of individuals employed as compared to all employed Hoosiers was .59 in FFY 2015 (well above the Federal Indicator of .52).
- Individuals placed by VR earned an average wage of \$12.06 an hour compared to all Hoosiers at \$20.11.

- Indiana did not meet the Federal Indicator of income being the largest source of support as compared to when starting the program. This indicator has a required ratio of 53. Indiana’s ratio for this indicator was 47.65.
- The ratio of the service rate for minorities to the service rate for whites for FFY 2015 was .90 which is above the Federal Indicator of .80 (ratio).

SURVEY RESULTS

Respondents:	460
School personnel	30%
Community Rehabilitation staff/Mental Health staff	18%
Vocational Rehabilitation staff	12%
Advocate/Case Manager	10%
Family member	8%
Consumer	4%
Rehabilitation Commission Member (4 responses)	1%
WorkOne staff (4 responses)	1%

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

(A) with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;

What are barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities?

Respondents indicated that the lack of adequate transportation was the most significant barrier to employment. This was very closely followed by the lack of employers willing to hire individuals with disabilities, specifically those individuals who would require job coaching or modifications to jobs or accommodations.

What barriers exist in serving individuals through supported employment?

Reponses provided by 258 individuals were similar to barriers to employment for all individuals with disabilities. The top two barriers were lack of adequate transportation and lack of jobs, specifically lack of employers willing to hire individuals needing significant support. The third barrier identified was the lack of staff, VR counselors, employment specialists, and job coaches. There was also a perceived barrier that supported employment is time limited to the extent that it does not provide sufficient support to individuals.

(B) who are minorities;

What minority groups are unserved or underserved?

African American	31%
Amish	16%

Burmese	12%
Hispanic	10%
Haitian	7%

Others identified were those residing in rural areas and individuals with language barriers.

What are the service gaps for minority groups?

Services and methods to address the language and cultural barriers was the primary gap identified by the 131 respondents to this question. This also noted that there is a need for continued outreach to inform minority groups of the availability of programs and services.

(C) who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program;

What disability groups do you see as being unserved or underserved?

Mental illness	40%
Cognitive disabilities	22%
Autism	20%
Traumatic brain injuries	12%

Other: 20 of the 372 respondents indicated that all groups were underserved. Deaf and hard of hearing also was listed frequently under “Other.”

Who do you see as being unserved or underserved populations?

Individuals residing in rural areas	48%
Individuals with most significant disabilities	42%
Veterans	10%

Other: Ex-offenders and those who are homeless were identified. It should be noted that a few individuals responded, noting that students with milder disabilities are often seen as not being eligible for VR services and are thus underserved.

What is needed to improve the involvement of the underserved populations?

There were two overwhelming responses for this question. One was the need to improve transportation options in general, but especially in rural areas. It was followed closely by the need for additional outreach to increase knowledge of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Respondents also stated that increased involvement with employers is needed to address availability of jobs.

(D) who have been served through other components of the statewide workforce development system;

Please rate the current relationships between Vocational Rehabilitation Services and WorkOne offices.

Great	9%
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Good 62%
Poor 30%

Although the majority of respondents indicated a good relationship between the agencies, there remains room for improvement, with over a fourth reporting a poor relationship.

What suggestions do you have in developing a partnership with WorkOne to assist individuals with disabilities?

The need to develop better communication and awareness between WorkOne offices, VR, and Education, which might include cross-training of staff, was the most frequent response of the 178 who answered this question. The second most frequent recommendation was to assist WorkOne staff in disability awareness and for WorkOne offices to be more accessible, specifically in areas such as use of closed captioning, JAWS, and testing. It should be noted that several respondents indicated they were unaware of WorkOne or the services it provides.

What strategies would enhance the engagement of employers in assisting individuals with disabilities, including students, in obtaining integrated employment?

The 233 respondents to this question identified the need to educate employers on disabilities and tax incentives. Networking with employers to provide on-the-job training and intern sites and for employers to see people with disabilities as valued employees were also frequently noted strategies. It was suggested that VR assist employers in linking with other employers who have successfully hired consumers, through linkages with entities like the Business Leadership Network.

What services or resources would be beneficial to support employers in hiring individuals with disabilities?

The 222 individuals who responded to this question rated disability awareness and assistance with making necessary accommodations as being equally important services to provide to employers. Following close, was the need to inform employers of incentives such as tax credits and how employment of individuals with disabilities benefits employers. The overarching response was to make the process easier for employers.

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

What do you believe are the needs of students with disabilities for pre-employment transition services?

Those responding rated the importance of strategies as listed below. While the top three responses were very close in ratings, all of the other categories were viewed as having value. The two trends in the “Other” category indicated the need for more family involvement and earlier involvement of students.

- Work-based learning experiences, which may include in-school or after school opportunities or experience outside the traditional school setting (including internships such as Project Search), that is provided in an integrated environment
- Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living
- Developing and improving strategies for individuals with intellectual disabilities and individuals with significant disabilities to live independently; participate in post-secondary experiences, and obtain, advance in, and retain competitive integrated employment
- Instruction in self-advocacy and self-determination skills (e.g., problem-solving, choice-making, self-awareness)
- Job exploration counseling
- Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or post-secondary educational programs at institutions of higher education
- Peer mentoring (including peer mentoring from individuals with disabilities working in competitive integrated employment) for career awareness
- Provide instruction to vocational rehabilitation counselors, school transition personnel, and other persons supporting student with disabilities
- Develop model transition demonstration projects

In assisting students with disabilities make the transition from school to work, what would you identify as the primary barriers?

The top three responses were again, very close, and again, all of the responses received high ratings as barriers. Trends in the “Other” category reflected the barriers of transportation, lack of coordination of services, and lack of family involvement.

- Students not prepared for work
- Gap in services from school to work (student leaves school without connections to services)
- Lack of information on available services
- Concerns related to loss of Social Security benefits or health benefits
- Lack of timeliness of services, that is, time from referral to job placement
- Lack of high expectations from families
- Lack of high expectations from school and agency personnel

What strategies do you recommend to improve/expand VR services for students and youth with disabilities?

The 250 respondents to this question gave a variety of responses. The most frequently noted was to have VR involved with students at a much earlier age, which would include having more frequent presence of VR counselors in the school and dedicated transition counselors. It was noted that better coordination is needed with the schools and VR. Another strategy that was frequently mentioned was that of more involvement with families to address expectations and impact of work on benefits.

(2) Include an assessment of the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State:

In 2015, Indiana made major changes to its Employment Services Model. While retaining many of the components of the Results Based Funding (RBF) system, the rate structure now also includes hourly fees for services such as Discovery and for additional work place supports that are needed by consumers. Extensive trainings were held statewide, over the course of several months, to explain the new model and to address questions and concerns on the changes. Those who attended the trainings were primarily from VR and community rehabilitation programs, but individuals from the Bureau of Developmental Disability Services, DWD, advocates, and school personnel were also in attendance.

An introductory one-day training on Discovery was attended by 285 individuals. A more detailed, two-day training on the Discovery process was held statewide, with 268 individuals attending from over 74 community rehabilitation programs. Indiana currently has VR employment service agreements with 89 community rehabilitation programs across the state.

What are your perceived needs to improve Community Employment Programs?

Are there service gaps? If so, what?	147	80%
Is there a need for expanded services? If so, in what area?	93	51%
Is there a need for additional staff development? If so in what area?	115	63%
Are there needed Improvements in service delivery? If so what?	96	52%

Gaps were identified, specifically, coordination of services between agencies and staff turnover at all agencies. The need for expanded services, including transition services and services to rural areas was also mentioned. Staff development needs were identified in the areas of job coaching and development. Improvements were noted again in the area of communication between agencies.

Community Rehabilitation Program Training Needs

In the fall of 2015, VR staff and staff of community rehabilitation programs (CRP) were surveyed as to their training needs. Surveys were received from 622 individuals – 60% were from CRP personnel and 28% from VR staff.

The top five General Employment needs were identified as:

- Discovery process – in-depth training
- Understanding supported employment
- Job-readiness training
- Understanding the difference between supported and customized employment
- Understanding how to fund employment services

In Working with Employers, the following were identified as training needs:

- Customizing jobs – job carving and restructuring
- Developing business partnerships
- Job development strategies
- Marketing services
- Developing small businesses/self-employment

The top five other Unique Training Needs, were identified as:

- Working with consumers who have mental health needs

- Working with consumers who are ex-offenders
- Working with consumers with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Working with consumers with autism
- Working with consumers with traumatic brain injury

The survey included specific questions regarding transition services and training needs. Top responses included:

- Developing quality work experiences and /or internships
- Working with transition teams (e.g., schools, VR)
- Understanding the transition process with schools
- Working with transition-age youth (adolescents)
- Other: (getting family support, knowing what schools do, engaging students, how do schools decide who to refer to VR; roles/responsibilities, all of the above, transition councils)

Identified training needs for Job Site Training and Supports were:

- Developing employment support and retention plans
- Teaching social and self-management skills
- Developing and building natural supports
- Developing accommodations
- Onsite systematic instruction and support strategies

Off-site support training needs included:

- Developing employment support and retention plans
- Teaching social and self-management skills
- Strategies for anger management and anxiety reduction
- Benefits planning and management (social security and work incentives)
- Other (time management, marking VR to partner agencies, training for job coaches and VR vendors, peer communication on job, fiscal/billing, soft skills)

Survey participants identified that they wanted training to be a hybrid of face-to-face and webinars. From the information generated, Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services is working with the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community (IIDC) at Indiana University to provide the needed training.

(3) Include an assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities for transition career services and pre-employment transition services, and the extent to which such services are coordinated with transition services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Please identify strategies for coordination with employers on transition services for students and youth with disabilities.

Work experiences at local businesses	54%
Disability Awareness Training	26%
Employers as mentors	23%

Most respondents indicated that if the survey would have allowed, they would

have chosen all three choices. In the “Other” category, several respondents indicated the need for a VR staff dedicated to building employer relationships which would include information on disabilities and incentives to hiring.

Overall Comments or Suggestions That Have Not Been Covered

The 47 individuals who responded to this question provided a variety of responses, but no real trends were identified. Several indicated the need for continued evaluation of programs and policies and the need for changes to occur as a result.

Provide that the State shall submit to the Commissioner a report containing information regarding updates to the assessments for any year in which the State updates the assessments:

With the annual state plan submission, Indiana will submit a report containing information on any assessments that have been updated. Indiana will conduct the next comprehensive, statewide assessment from 2017-2020.

Conclusions

VR has received considerable input from the surveys that were submitted during this statewide needs assessment. The 2014 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act presents considerable changes and challenges. Indiana VR will use the thoughtful comments and suggestions obtained to assist in furthering the development of quality programs and services for individuals with disabilities throughout the state.

Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) has made significant strides and impact in the last three years. The leadership has continued to obtain stakeholder input in identifying needed modifications to VR employment services. System revisions were rolled out in July 2015 and are designed to ensure that all VR consumers, including those with the most significant disabilities, have better access to the services and supports needed to prepare for, obtain, retain, and advance in competitive, integrated employment. The new system is more consumer focused, or *consumer centric, allows for more individualization of services and supports, and increases accountability of both VR and provider staff.* These significant programmatic changes are moving a system from a one size fits all “conveyor belt” approach to one that is more focused on the individual and their needs.

Highlighting some past recommendations that were provided in the previous TNA 2012 (submitted FY 2013) help to set the framework that leads up to present day VR activities. Included in this section, is a quick review of past survey recommendations and where the VR program is today. The **PAST and PRESENT** section highlights recommendations found in the TNA 2012 and describes actions taken based upon those recommendations. The section entitled **FUTURE** provides the current 2015 Triennial Needs Assessment recommendations to guide future strategic planning.

PAST AND PRESENT:

TOPIC: Marketing and Public Relations - The overall need of better marketing /public relations with consumers, the community, business/employers, and VR staff, as well as enhancing the relationship with partners (CILs, WorkOnes, LEAs, BLNs, BDDS, etc.).

In 2013, a position was created that was fully dedicated to the role of Business & Community Engagement. It was determined the dedication of this position would be to the development of information regarding VR Services and creating avenues to communicate the information through educational opportunities, presentations, newsletters, webinars, and through social media. Providing the information to stakeholders about VR Services within the communities across the state was a priority. This, coupled with an increased emphasis on each individual VR Counselor's Outreach resulted in an overall statewide increase of referrals to VR services. Social media accounts on Twitter and Facebook for BRS/VR were created to help reach more individuals with information on VR Services. A short video that provided an overview of services was completed and distributed on social media. An emphasis on State agency cross education, collaboration and training is also ongoing across the state (Work Ones, DWD, local Workforce Investment Boards, Employers, CRPs).

TOPIC: Training – There is a definite need for better and more training opportunities for staff, stakeholders and CRP staff.

Since 2013, there was a dedicated position created of a VR Training Coordinator. The purpose of the position is the coordination of trainings opportunities across the state to staff and CRPs. There was a considerable increase in the training opportunities that were provided by VR and its partners to support employment specialists and CRPs with their job duties. In addition to a new overall rate structure implementation training, specialized training on topics like discovery and employment services were provided across the state to provide multiple resource opportunities to strengthen the skills and knowledge base of the persons who work directly with VR consumers. Opportunities to have training in different formats (webinar, in person or conference call) was another achievement to be noted. . A "Friday Field Chat" was implemented for all staff to call in once a month to discuss Director's Initiatives, or other relevant topics. Training opportunities were increased to VR staff by developing training curriculum for support staff and management staff. Training opportunities will be further expanded for providers over the next four year through the development of new training contracts that will offer additional classroom based, webinar, and hands-on workshops

TOPIC: Transition Services – A process for providing Transition Services needs to be revised and more uniformly applied statewide.

In 2013, a dedicated role of Transition Coordinator was created. Primary goals of the position included development and implementation of a statewide plan for educating the transition age youth and stakeholders about Transition Services, and provide technical assistance and training to VR staff. As a result, relationships between VR and local education agencies have improved in several local areas, and both VR and LEA's are more education about the programs and services offered by each partner. Transition students are also entering VR at an earlier age. Some specific, key achievements of the Transition Coordinator were the development of a map of schools across the state which indicated the specific VR Counselors assigned to each school, and the development and distribution of FAQ sheets through collaboration with the Indiana Department of Education to teachers, counselors and parents across the state. Also, Transition Conferences and Resource Fairs have a more consistent presence of VR Counselors. Because of the strengthened collaboration between the State Department of Education, Transition Cadres and Transition Resource Workgroups, better communication and collaboration between stakeholder groups focusing on students and transition has become the norm.

Topic: Outreach to Minorities – More outreach to minorities should be done through the use of agencies/organizations with which minorities have regular contact.

Through the newly created Business & Community Engagement role, there was an increased effort to provide outreach to Indiana's minority groups through agencies/organizations with which minorities have regular contact. For example, the Native American Indiana Affairs Commission, The Latino Institute, the Burmese American Association and the Haitian American Association, The Commission for the Social Status of Black Males and the Indiana Civil Rights Commission are recent partners of engagement activities. The ratio of VR services provided to minorities has increased steadily over the past few years (ratio of services to minorities to whites was .90 in FFY15, compared to .82 in FFY12).

FUTURE

The current 2015 TNA survey sheds light on the perceived needs and service gaps across the state when serving persons with disabilities. This information is important to study and thoroughly consider when developing strategic plans for VR Services. Recurring themes of lack of access to transportation, limited access to employment opportunities, and lack of employers willing to hire persons with disabilities continue and should continue to be a priority focus. The emphasis on Transition services in light of WIOA legislation will be a focus of future collaborative efforts with other state agencies (Department of Education and Workforce Development), stakeholders and employers.

Transportation – the lack of access to transportation is a recurring theme and a significant barrier to all persons with disabilities.

The current and most prevalent barrier that isn't new to the world of disability is the lack of access to transportation. Creating better access to transportation is a priority that current leadership recognizes as a need to explore. The topic was recently discussed at a strategic planning meeting of the Governor's Council for People with Disabilities. Leadership is committed to exploring ideas to increase access to transportation for persons with disabilities. Lack of access to transportation is a long-standing barrier and not one that is easily or quickly resolved. VR will continue to work with providers and employers to explore creative solutions to ensure consumers have employment opportunities despite transportation barriers.

Defining minorities and service gaps: Given the diverse groups that are present in Indiana, there will continue to be targeted efforts to minority groups and an effort to better understand the cultural differences that can also present barriers to service delivery.

Unservd and Underserved Populations: Unserved are those who are eligible for VR services, but not receiving services. **Underserved** is defined as not receiving equal or full benefits of VR. (Susan Stoddard, PhD RSA USDOE) This definition certainly includes minorities and ethnic groups who speak a language other than English. These definitions also can also apply to specific disability groups with Mental Illness, Cognitive Disabilities and Autism as indicated through feedback from surveys. Also noted were individuals living in rural areas and recommendations to strengthen rural community outreach will be evaluated.

Based on this survey, a majority of persons with disabilities who have been served through other components of the statewide workforce development system had a good or great experience. This is expected to continue as a result of targeted strengthening of collaborative efforts. Suggestions received for developing these partnerships are encouraging as VR staff have already begun cross training about the services provided by each agency. Much more work is to be done, but the foundation is set. Suggestions to provide more specific trainings on accessible technology (JAWS) and the use of closed captioning were also noted.

Suggestions for engaging employers that would result in more opportunities for youth include more disability awareness trainings and other opportunities to employers to learn about disability and benefits of hiring persons with disabilities like tax credits. Strengthening the local Business Leadership Networks across the state will help to foster collaboration and education of employers about disability and disability hiring initiatives.

What are the main needs of students and you with disabilities? The WIOA legislation continues to be a main focus for Vocational Rehabilitation and other state agencies. A major focus area is services to Transition age youth that include Pre Employment Transition Services (PETS): 1) job exploration and counseling 2) work based learning 3) counseling/post-secondary 4) workplace readiness and 5) self-advocacy training. The recent revisions to the VR Employment Service Model increase emphasis on Discovery activities through an enhanced menu of services and a modified funding structure that funds discovery services individually instead of through a milestone payment. These revisions are especially timely in light of the new requirement for VR to utilize 15% of Title I funds for PETS. Discovery activities include services such as job shadowing, situational assessments, work experiences, informational interviews, vocational counseling and guidance, vocational testing and other services needed to evaluate consumer strengths, interests, abilities and ideal work conditions.

Continued provision of comprehensive training to stakeholders – especially those of Community Rehabilitation Providers is needed and has been clearly communicated. Training specific to developing quality work experiences, working with transition age youth and providing PETS will continue. VR has entered into contractual agreements with training and technical assistance entities that will be providing a wide range of training to employment service providers. Training topics will include but are not limited to, development of natural supports, job readiness training techniques, and hands-on job coaching techniques.

Finally, the hiring, training, and retention of VR Staff is critical in ensuring quality service provision to VR consumers, leading to competitive, integrated employment outcomes. Indiana VR Leadership recognizes a need for improvement in training staff as well as a need to greatly improve retention of VR staff, particularly VR Counselors. VR Leadership is developing a plan with State Personnel to broaden the requirements for VR Counselor positions to mirror the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) revisions in WIOA. This will assist Indiana in hiring from a greater candidate pool, which is especially important in rural areas and areas that experience ongoing challenges in identifying appropriately qualified candidates with a Master's degree in Rehabilitation or closely related area.

Additionally, VR will continue to invest in training opportunities for VR Staff. VR Counseling and Guidance training will be rolled out by March 2016 and delivered in each region to ensure small classroom sizes. VR will also continue to revise the web-based Leadership Academy content to ensure needed modifications resulting from WIOA, policy changes, and other initiatives. VR will continue to obtain feedback from VR staff on training needs and work diligently to meet each of those needs.

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Attachments

Triennial Needs Assessment Vocational Rehabilitation Survey. Available October 13 -25, 2015.
[survey provided below]



**Division of Disability and
Rehabilitative Services**
*Bureau of Rehabilitation Services
Vocational Rehabilitation Services*

Every three years, Vocational Rehabilitation agencies are required to submit a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment as an attachment to the State Plan. Indiana's plan is to be submitted in March 2016. As part of the assessment, we are requesting your feedback on the needs for services or gaps in services. Please click on the survey or copy and paste the URL into your browser to complete the survey. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Please tell us about you. Check the description/affiliation that best describes your role.

- VR Commission Member
- VR Personnel
- School Personnel
- Advocacy Organization
- Case Manager
- Family Member
- Self-advocate/Consumer
- BDDS Personnel
- WorkOne Staff
- Mental Health Center staff
- Community Rehabilitation Provider representative (e.g. Employment Service Provider Personnel)
- Other _____

Students and Youth with Disabilities Needs: The below questions are targeted to seek input on students (ages 14-21 in school) and youth (ages 14-24 regardless of whether they are in school). The responses assist in identifying transition needs of both students and youth with disabilities. Additionally, the input will help identify strategies for methods used to improve/expand VR services for students with disabilities.

What do you believe are the needs of students with disabilities pre-employment transition services?

	Highest Need	Medium Need	Low Need
Job exploration counseling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work-based learning experiences, which may include in-school or after school opportunities, or experience outside the traditional school setting (including internships, such as Project Search), that is provided in an integrated environments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or post-secondary educational programs at institutions of higher education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instruction in self-advocacy and self-determination skills (e.g., problem-solving, choice-making, self-awareness)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Peer mentoring (including peer mentoring from individuals with disabilities working in competitive integrated employment) for	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<p>career awareness</p> <p>Develop model transition demonstration projects</p> <p>Provide instruction to vocational rehabilitation counselors, school transition personnel, and other persons supporting student with disabilities</p> <p>Developing and improving strategies for individuals with intellectual disabilities and individual with significant disabilities to live independently; participate in post-secondary experiences, and obtain, advance in, and retain competitive integrated employment.</p> <p>Other</p>	<p><input type="radio"/></p> <p><input type="radio"/></p> <p><input type="radio"/></p> <p><input type="radio"/></p> <p><input type="radio"/></p>	<p><input type="radio"/></p> <p><input type="radio"/></p> <p><input type="radio"/></p> <p><input type="radio"/></p> <p><input type="radio"/></p>	<p><input type="radio"/></p> <p><input type="radio"/></p> <p><input type="radio"/></p> <p><input type="radio"/></p> <p><input type="radio"/></p>
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In assisting students with disabilities make the transition from school to work, what would you identify as the primary barriers?

	High barrier	Medium barrier	Low barrier
Lack of information on available services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students not prepared for work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Concerns related to loss of social security benefits or health benefits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of timeliness of services, that is, time from referral to job placement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gap in services from school to work (student leaves school without connections to services)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of high expectations from families	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of high expectations from school and agency personnel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What strategies do you recommend to improve/expand VR services for students and youth with disabilities?

Please identify strategies for coordination with employers on transition services for students and youth with disabilities. Check all that apply and please add additional strategies.

- Employers as mentors
- Work experiences at local businesses
- Disability Awareness Training
- Other _____
- Other _____

Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities (individuals who have functional limitations to employment in three or more areas) and Supported Employment (providing job coaching and additional supports to individuals as needed) needs:

What barriers exist in serving individuals through supported employment?

Employer Engagement (how to involve employers):

What strategies would enhance the engagement of employers in assisting individuals with disabilities, including students, in obtaining integrated employment (employment in the community with at least minimum wage)?

What services or resources would be beneficial to support employers in hiring individuals with disabilities (e.g., disability awareness training, ADA workplace accommodations, etc.)?

What do you see as barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities?

Partnerships with the statewide workforce development system (i.e. WorkOnes):

What suggestions do you have in developing a partnership with WorkOne to assist individuals with disabilities?

Please rate the current relationships between Vocational Rehabilitation Services and WorkOne offices.

- Great
- Good
- Poor

Who are minority groups that are unserved or underserved?

- African American
- Burmese
- Haitian
- Amish
- Other _____

What are the service gaps for minority groups?

What disability groups do you see as being unserved or underserved? Individuals with

- Traumatic Brain Injuries
- Autism
- Mental Illness
- Cognitive disabilities
- Other _____
- Other _____

Who do you see as being unserved or underserved populations?

- Individuals with most significant disabilities
- Individuals residing in rural areas
- Veterans
- Other _____
- Other _____

What is needed to improve the involvement of the underserved populations?

Community Rehabilitation Providers and Service Needs:

What are your perceived needs to improve Community Employment Programs?

- Are there service gaps? If so, what? _____
- Is there a need for expanded services? If so, in what area? _____
- Is there a need for additional staff development? If so in what area? _____
- Are there needed Improvements in service delivery? If so what? _____
- Other: _____

Overall Comments or Suggestions That Have Not Been Covered:

(k) Annual Estimates. Describe:

- (1) The number of individuals in the State who are eligible for services.
- (2) The number of eligible individuals who will receive services under:
 - (A) The VR Program;
 - (B) The Supported Employment Program; and
 - (C) each priority category, if under an order of selection.
- (3) The number of individuals who are eligible for VR services, but are not receiving such services due to an order of selection; and
- (4) The cost of services for the number of individuals estimated to be eligible for services. If under an order of selection, identify the cost of services for each priority category.

The current population in Indiana, based on 2011 U.S. Census Bureau estimates, is more than 6.5 million with approximately 62 percent of the population of working age (18 through 64). Of the working-age population, 8.9% have self-reported as diagnosed with a disability. A total of 1.7% of this population is employed (VonSchrader, S., Lee, C. G. (2015). *Disability Statistics from the Current Population Survey (CPS)*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Employment and Disability Institute (EDI). Retrieved August 17, 2015 from www.disabilitystatistics.org).

62% of 6,500,000 = 4,030,000 individuals who are working age (between 18-64 years of age); 8.9% of working age individuals who have a disability = 358,670; 1.7% of those are working = 6,097. This results in 352,573 individuals with a disability in Indiana who are not working.

VR is able to serve 20,034 individuals on an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) with available funds.

Projected FFY15 Expenditures equal a maximum of \$75,955,000 (\$74,480,000 Title I including Federal grant and non-federal match, \$475,000 Title VI-B, \$1,000,000 SSA/VR Program Income). Of the projected total expenditures, \$53,168,500 is the maximum projected cost for case services, leaving \$22,786,500 projected for administrative costs.

Title I – Non-Federal: \$15,864,240; Federal: \$58,615,760; Total Title I: \$74,480,000

Title VIB - \$475,000 (estimate)

Program Income - \$1,000,000 (estimate after CIL and Older Blind contracts are funded)

Indiana is not under an Order of Selection. Total cost of client services, if serving 20,034 individuals under an IPE, is anticipated to be \$53,168,500 (Title I 51,693,500 + Title VI-B 475,000 + Program Income 1,000,000).

Category	Title I or Title VI	Estimated Funds	Estimated Number to be Served	Average Cost of Services
Title I (federal + state)	Title I	\$51,693,500	19,478	\$2,654
Part B of Title VI	Title VI	\$475,000	179	\$2,654
Program Income		\$1,000,000	377	\$2,654
				—
Totals		\$53,168,500	20,034	\$2,654

(I) 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:
 - (A) the most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates;
 - (B) the State’s performance under the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA; and
 - (C) other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107.

GOAL 1: Purposefully collaborate with the WIOA core programs and other appropriate agencies to provide a client-centered approach to service delivery to assist individuals with disabilities achieve their employment outcomes.

Priority 1.1: Develop a common understanding among WIOA core programs and other appropriate agencies (e.g., Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services and Department of Education) of Vocational Rehabilitation and the services it may provide to eligible consumers, in varying capacities, in order to provide integrated service delivery and improve employment outcomes for consumers. VR Leadership will continue discussions with appropriate agencies throughout FFY 2016 and develop and/or revise written agreements in FFY 2016.

Priority 1.2: Continue development of a web-based VR case management system to improve the efficiency and enhance the mobile working environment of VR field staff and enrich the data utilized by VR to make informed program decisions. The system will also ensure appropriate system integration and data-sharing to align resources, collect common consumer information, increase efficiencies, track effectiveness of the program, and ultimately to improve the consumer's experience in VR in meeting his/her employment goal. Develop a project plan and process flow in FFY 2016.

Priority 1.3: Develop processes and procedures to ensure proper and consistent referrals to and from VR and WIOA core programs (and other appropriate programs) in order to maximize the service options and service delivery for individuals with disabilities. Written procedures will be drafted in FFY 2016.

Priority 1.4: Ensure VR staff is trained, highly knowledgeable, and are providing information on services across WIOA core programs, and other appropriate programs that may assist individuals with disabilities achieve their employment outcome. New staff will participate in both web-based and classroom-based training throughout, at minimum, the first year of employment.

Priority 1.5: Work in partnership with WIOA core programs to strategically enhance employer engagement and work-based learning opportunities for individuals with disabilities. This includes expanding VR employer engagement to develop appropriate disability-related information and resources (e.g., disability awareness training, Section 503 overview materials for Indiana based federal contractors, business-to-business resources for beginning disability hiring initiatives, etc.) for employers. Development of a strategic plan will begin in FFY 2016 to outline collaborative approaches to enhance employer engagement.

GOAL 2: Increase the number of people with disabilities in integrated, competitive employment.

Priority 2.1: Develop a coordinated process with the Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services and State and local educational agencies in assisting individuals with disabilities, especially youth with disabilities who are considering subminimum wage employment or who are already employed, at a subminimum wage, to maximize opportunities to achieve competitive integrated employment through services provided by VR and the local educational agencies. Identify resources for conducting the necessary education and outreach to this population, including adequate personnel resources, in FFY 2016.

Priority 2.2: Identify best practices, create strategies, and partner with other agencies to better serve students and youth with disabilities to ensure a pathway and appropriate services to meet their employment outcomes. This includes expanding pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities and meeting the 15% spend requirement.

Priority 2.3: Develop a targeted education campaign to elevate the importance and expectation of employment for individuals with disabilities. This includes information and education related to benefits

planning and economic independence to families, students, and beneficiaries of Social Security Income or Social Security Disability Insurance. VR will partner with INSOURCE, a parent group for youth with disabilities, the Client Assistance Program, and Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security on developing the campaign and disseminating information. Strategies for increased education and awareness will be developed during FFY 2016.

Priority 2.4: Continue development of blind entrepreneurs through the Business Enterprise Program and increase trainees of the program. At least 50% of trainees will secure employment as licensed vendors within 6 months of completing training.

GOAL 3: Develop program initiatives and training that adequately support VR staff and community rehabilitation providers in the provision of quality services.

Priority 3.1: Conduct a systematic review of the new Employment Service Model (effective July 1, 2015) to identify best practices and determine necessary system revisions to ensure the quality of services and employment outcomes. Review trends in service provision and employment outcomes on a quarterly basis throughout FFY 2016, and continue to meet at least quarterly with the Employment Service Model workgroup to review strengths and identify areas of improvement.

Priority 3.2: Continue development of VR staff through professional development and training, including the creation of a web-based training curriculum (VR Leadership Academy) that can be shared across WIOA core programs to ensure consistency in information and increased knowledge about VR service delivery. VR will introduce new training by March 2016 that will aim to increase focus on counseling and guidance.

Priority 3.3: Develop training and technical assistance opportunities to community rehabilitation providers and staff (e.g., program managers and employment specialists) to ensure best practice and improve the quality of employment services and supported employment to consumers of varying disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities. Increased training opportunities will be available to providers in FFY 2016 as compared to prior years.

(m) 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.

This section is not applicable. Indiana currently is not on an Order of Selection.

(n) Goals and Plans for Distribution of title VI Funds.

- (1) Specify the State's goals and priorities for funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services.

- (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.

VR will purchase Supported Employment (SE) services for consumers with most significant disabilities (MSD), with the funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act. Consumers are able to access SE services through Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs), which include Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs) across the state. SE services, if appropriate for the individual's plan for employment, are provided through Title VI-B dollars. VR will continue to supplement funding of supported employment services to meet demand through Title I funds.

VR implemented major revisions to VR employment services in July 2015. Prior to these revisions, VR purchased employment services primarily through a Results Based Funding (RBF) approach. One significant revision that occurred is that SE services are no longer fully funded through employment milestones (or the previous RBF model). Because many individuals with MSD will require SE services that extend beyond the employment milestone payments, SE services are funded in addition to the current employment milestone payments. VR funding for SE services is outlined in the Table below. (Please note that the complete employment service model, implemented July 2015, can be viewed at www.vrs.in.gov). For more specific information, please see Attachment (q).

With the employment service changes, VR has collaborated with IIDC and Griffin and Hammis to provide additional training and technical assistance to Community Rehabilitation Providers and VR in the area of Discovery statewide. The training focused on Discovery, which is an individualized information gathering process that will guide employment services for the consumer. The training provided a framework to develop and implement a person-centered employment plan. While Discovery is important for many consumers, it is critical for consumers with the most significant disabilities and has an impact on their supported employment needs. VR continues to work collaboratively with the Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services (BDDS), the Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA), the Department of Education, IIDC, INARF, INAPSE, the Arc of Indiana, and other key stakeholders to improve competitive integrated employment opportunities for consumers with the most significant disabilities through supported employment. Interagency collaboration will aim to increase the quality of SE services, including customized employment, and ensure appropriate extended services are appropriately utilized when necessary for long-term supports.

VR continues to partner with schools to provide appropriate outreach and education to students and youth with disabilities who may need supported employment. In addition, VR may provide work experiences or job-shadow opportunities to students and youth with disabilities. Furthermore, Project SEARCH provides students and youth with quality internship experiences in preparation for competitive employment and VR plans to expand these opportunities in the future.

VR is working with BDDS, schools, families, and CRPs to create a coordinated process and supported employment services to assist individuals with the most significant disabilities, especially youth with disabilities who are considering subminimum wage employment or may need extended services. Supported employment services are important services in order to provide opportunities to achieve competitive integrated employment.

With the VR employment service changes mentioned above, VR and BDDS worked collaboratively to update an extended service definition for Indiana's Family Supports Waiver and Community Integration and Habilitation Waiver in order to clarify extended services activities and compliment the supported employment changes made in VR. Both changes became effective on July 1, 2015. Indiana has established two goals for its SE program.

Goal 1: Ensure that individuals receiving supported employment services have achieved stabilization, or their highest level of independence on the job, after a period of fading, prior to VR case closure. VR Employment Service revisions implemented in July 2015 increased focus on stabilization and increased access to supported employment services for VR consumers. It is anticipated that greater long-term retention will result from these changes, for individuals receiving supported employment services.

Measure: Begin collecting wage and hour information for individuals receiving supported employment services and obtain baseline data by October 2016.

Goal 2: VR Supported Employment providers will increase knowledge and skills on the provision of supported employment services, including greater understanding and focus on development of natural supports, job readiness training techniques, customized employment, and appropriate fading of supports.

Measure: VR will invest in training for supported employment providers including classroom-based, web-based, and hands-on workshops that focus on job coaching and job readiness training techniques. Training will be initiated on or before October 2016 with at least one-third of providers (29) participating in one or more training events by January 2017.

Goal 3: VR will increase the quantity and quality of job outcomes for students and youth with the most significant disabilities through Project SEARCH.

Measure: At least 75 students will obtain work experience through Project SEARCH, and at least 50% of SEARCH participants will obtain competitive employment outcomes. Additionally, VR will establish an expansion plan for 2017.

(o) State's Strategies. Describe the required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the VR and the Supported Employment programs (See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act and section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)):

- (1) The methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities.
- (2) How a broad range of assistive technology services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process and on a statewide basis.
- (3) The outreach procedures that will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities, as well as those who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program.
- (4) The methods to be used to improve and expand VR services for students with disabilities, including the coordination of services designed to facilitate the transition of such students

- from school to postsecondary life (including the receipt of VR services, postsecondary education, employment, and pre-employment transition services).
- (5) If applicable, plans for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs within the State.
 - (6) Strategies to improve the performance of the State with respect to the performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA.
 - (7) Strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce development system in assisting individuals with disabilities.
 - (8) How the agency's strategies will be used to:
 - (A) achieve goals and priorities by the State, consistent with the comprehensive needs assessment;
 - (B) support innovation and expansion activities; and
 - (C) overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State VR Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program.

In July 2015, VR implemented major revisions to VR Employment Services to address the following needs of consumers based on stakeholder feedback:

- To develop a system that is responsive to all, including individuals with high support needs as well as consumers with minimal support needs;
- To refocus on Discovery, especially for individuals with minimal/no prior work experience;
- To ensure that individuals with MSD have access to adequate Supported employment services which includes ongoing support services;
- To ensure that individuals reach stabilization, or their highest level of independence, prior to VR case closure;
- To retain a system that focuses on outcomes, but also recognizes quality and individualization and allows for flexibility;
- To retain a system that is not difficult to administer; and
- To aim to improve the consumer experience.

Key revisions included:

- Increased focus and re-emphasis on Discovery and Supports needed to achieve true stabilization;
- Discovery activities are provided prior to milestone payments, funded per activity, and are no longer paid under a milestone. The menu of VR-funded Discovery activities is greatly enhanced.
- SE services (including ongoing support services) may be provided and funded outside of, and in addition to, milestone payments.
- Increased flexibility to allow for more individualization based on consumer needs;
- Elimination of 2 separate tiered milestone payments
- Development of 3 new Milestones:
 - Milestone 1 = **Job Development and Placement (1 week on the job)**
 - Milestone 2 = **Support and Short-term Retention (4 weeks on the job)**
 - Milestone 3 = **Retention (90 days AFTER stabilization)**

- Reduced financial incentive to quickly reach ‘stabilization’ and closure by ensuring adequate supports are available, including up to 24 months of VR-funded SE services to ensure true stabilization.
- Changes to rates and expectations
- Increased VR Counseling engagement in the employment services process

This year, VR also continued its presence on social media. Beginning with an outreach campaign on Twitter that targeted the transition age youth, the *#Work4LifeIN* campaign was the first of its kind in Indiana. The logo was printed on small posters and handed out to the targeted population for pictures to be posted on the Twitter page. Following the success of Twitter, a Facebook page was launched midyear. This has going to quickly expand the audience receiving messages about Vocational Rehabilitation Services and specifically, the initiatives of VR. This platform helps communicate a consistent message about the program.

Furthermore, VR is increasing the provision of training to both VR staff and provider staff to improve the quality of services provided to VR consumers. VR has contracted with additional training entities to bring increased training to staff in FFY2016 including counseling and guidance training for VR Counselors, and employment services training to provider staff. Training will be delivered through a variety of modalities including web-based, classroom based, and hands-on workshops.

Assistive Technology During Rehabilitation Process - Pursuant to the Indiana VR rules and policy, VR Counselors review each individual’s need for Assistive Technology (AT) devices and services at each stage of the rehabilitation process (i.e. eligibility determination, plan development and implementation, and placement). This is done through personal interviews with the consumer, observations, and professional AT assessments. Appropriate training is also provided as necessary, to ensure that consumers are able to independently utilize their adaptive equipment.

Assistive Technology Statewide - VR has awarded the Assistive Technology Grant to a statewide 501(c)(3) assistive technology program, Easter Seals Crossroads Rehabilitation Center. Contract deliverables include: coordination and collaboration with VR on AT services; increasing public awareness, training and technical assistance; providing device demonstrations, a device loan program, device reutilization program and state financing. This ‘INDATA’ program also offers targeted training to VR staff to increase staff knowledge on the availability and provision of AT services and devices.

Outreach procedures that are currently being used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities as well as those who have been unserved or underserved began with state agency level outreach. In order to address underserved and unserved populations, VR has initiated interagency cooperation with the following programs: Indiana Civil Rights Commission, the Native American Affairs Commission, the American Indian Center of Indiana, the Latino Institute, Commission on the Social Status of Black Males, Indiana Black Expo, the Haitian American Association, and the Burmese American Association. For consumers with the most significant disabilities, VR continues to collaborate with BDDS, DOE, local educational agencies, INARF, IPAS/CAP to ensure opportunities are afforded to these individuals to achieve employment.

One of the key VR employment service revisions is the increase of VR-funded Discovery activities. These activities were developed in large part with transition students in mind as many of the activities are pre-employment transition services, such as work experience, situational assessments, job shadows, informational interviews, and others. Prior to these revisions, VR Counselors often struggled to identify VR services that could be provided to transition aged youth who were not quite ready to exit and enter

the workforce or continue into post-secondary training. Many of those students require pre-employment transition services to identify and prepare for careers. These youth will have much better access to Discovery activities in the new VR employment service model.

VR has also increased outreach and education to transition aged youth, including development of a brief video that has been widely disbursed including posted through social media. VR is also partnering with INSource, an organization for parents of students with disabilities, to increase awareness and education about VR services at the local level.

There are no immediate plans for establishing, developing or improving CRP programs within the state; however VR continues to explore innovative strategies to address needed transition initiatives and services for individuals with the most significant disabilities as identified in the triennial needs assessment.

VR has reviewed the new performance accountability measures and begun discussions on how to capture new data elements in order to report on the new measures. The recent revisions to the VR Employment Services model were designed to improve the quality of employment outcomes, such as increasing wages, hours worked, and retention. It is expected that VR performance on these qualitative factors will begin to increase as a result. VR is in process of contracting with an entity to ensure appropriate data collection and evaluation of employment service revisions.

VR continues to engage in collaborative discussion with DWD on several initiatives and cross-training and education has been a major part of this effort. VR and the workforce regions are working to have each identified a Subject Matter Expert to facilitate the cross-training and education of VR and DWD staff as well as improving coordination in serving mutual consumers. This includes the creation of a common referral document, as well as a tracking sheet to better facilitate the provision of services to mutual consumers, and to track the outcomes of the referrals being made. VR has also continued to present to the Workforce Development Boards on Disability Awareness as well as the WorkOne office staff to ensure a better understanding of the needs of our mutual consumers. We will evaluate the effectiveness of all of these various strategies to formulate additional collaborate efforts as needed.

Each of the strategies listed above support VR's goals and priorities. Initiatives such as the major changes to the VR employment service model, the increased availability of training to both VR and provider staff, increased outreach and collaboration among partners, etc. are all expected to improve services to VR consumers in terms of both the quality and quantity of employment outcomes.

The Innovative and Expansion authority is utilized to support the Indiana Council on Independent Living (ICOIL), as well as new and innovative initiatives that open the door for new employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities and/or increase opportunities for those with the most significant disabilities. One potential innovative strategy is increasing hiring opportunities for individuals with disabilities in state government through the INTERN program. The INTERN program focuses on matching VR consumers with internships and employment opportunities across state government.

Based on the findings of the comprehensive statewide assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities and the states goals and priorities, VR will explore the use of Innovation and Expansion to increase consumer education and technical assistance for VR and CRP staff, increase employment opportunities for those individuals who are most significantly disabled, and implement initiatives associated with increasing services and best practices for students and youth with disabilities.

As mentioned above, the VR employment service revisions implemented July 2015 increased access to discovery activities and supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities who require supported employment services. The previous RBF model did not always allow for appropriate service provision or provide a funding structure necessary for those VR consumers with the most significant disabilities who have very high support needs.

Additionally, VR has partnered with INSOURCE to increase education and awareness about VR at the local level. INSOURCE is composed of parents of youth with disabilities. VR is also exploring ways to increase outreach to individuals in sub-minimum wage jobs to educate about VR and employment.

(p) Evaluation and Reports of Progress: VR and Supported Employment Goals. Describe:

- (1) An evaluation of the extent to which the VR program goals described in the approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan for the most recently completed program year were achieved. The evaluation must:
 - (A) Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.
 - (B) Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

AGENCY GOAL: TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN INTEGRATED, COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT

OBJECTIVE A: VR will collaborate with state and local partners that also serve individuals with disabilities to increase appropriate VR applicants.

Priority 1. Conduct outreach activities to increase knowledge and awareness of VR and ensure that VR services are available to all eligible individuals who require them.

Measure. VR will experience at least a 2% increase in VR applicants from the prior year. (FFY13: 13,042)

2015 OUTCOME: Not achieved. There were 12,044 VR applicants in FFY15, a 7.6% decrease in applicants. Factors impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities were largely related to substantial staff shortages, as well as a need for an increased number of VR Counselors. Indiana VR experienced a larger than average turnover rate of VR Counselors in the last year due to retirements, resignations, and staff promotions. This has resulted in a longer timeframe for meeting with new referrals. It should be noted that referrals to VR have not decreased, in fact referrals have increased approximately 8% which indicates that outreach strategies have been effective. However, VR staff shortages have prevented VR from processing new referrals as expeditiously as needed. VR received approval in October 2015 to hire 9 additional VR Counselors, 7 itinerant VR Counselors, and 7 VR Case Coordinators to help mitigate this and decrease the length of time it takes to process a new referral. VR is also working FSSA/DDRS on strategies for staff retention.

Priority 2. VR, in cooperation with the Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services (BDDS), will continue to provide and enhance a seamless service delivery system for consumers transitioning into VR services, then from VR Services to Extended services.

Measure: VR will see a 2% increase in employment outcomes for individuals with a primary impairment of a cognitive disability from the prior FFY. (FFY13: 1,666)

2015 OUTCOME: Not achieved. 1463 individuals with a primary impairment of cognitive impairment achieved a successful VR outcome in FFY15, which is a decrease of 12%. The primary reason for the decrease is that there was a decrease in overall successful outcomes in FFY15 when compared to FFY13 due to an overall decrease in the number of consumers served. The number of successful outcomes dropped by 11.8% from FFY13 (4,652) to FFY15 (4,103). The number of consumers served in FFY13 was 28,889 compared to 26,632 in FFY15, reflecting a 7.8% decrease in consumers served. An additional

factor that impeded achievement of this priority is the staff shortages mentioned above. Due to staff shortages, caseloads have also increased.

Priority 3: Identify 2-4 specific partners for collaboration and targeted outreach to populations who may benefit from VR services.

Measure: VR will conduct or participate in 20 or more targeted education and outreach activities in FFY15 (i.e. agency/bureau cross training event, outreach to parent advocacy organizations).

2015 OUTCOME: Achieved. VR has completed well over 20 targeted outreach activities across the state. Activities that focused on educating the public on Transition services began with the VR Transition Specialist visiting all the VR Area offices. First priority was focused to ensuring that all counselors were equipped with a comprehensive overview of Indiana's initiatives surrounding transition. After every counselor received a transition specific overview, counselors were encouraged to enter the communities and schools in their areas with this message. Ongoing and targeted outreach to parent organizations like INSOURCE (Indiana Resource Center for Families with Special Needs) and ICASE (Indiana Council of Administrators of Special Education), for the purpose of maintaining a consistent message regarding our services ensued. The Transition Specialist attended career and resource fairs across the state to raise the profile of the VR. Many counselors continued this effort in each area across the state in order to provide a consistent message on transition services provided by VR in the schools. The Department of Education and Statewide Transition Council and the Indiana Institute on Community also came together to help ensure the VR transition priorities and initiatives were communicated to potential consumers, parents of consumers, and educators.

There are other education and outreach partners focused on minority populations across the state that include: the Haitian American Association, the Burmese American Association, the Native American Commission and the Indiana Latino Institute. Targeted outreach to these populations included visits to their resource fairs, individual meetings with the Directors of these organizations and continued contact over the year.

OBJECTIVE B: Indiana VR will increase the quantity and quality of job placements.

Priority 1. VR will develop state and local strategies to improve services provided to transition aged youth, e.g. internships/work experiences while still in high school.

Measure: VR will experience at least a 2% increase in transition aged applicants to VR compared to the prior year. (FFY13: 4,063).

2015 OUTCOME: [Data is being evaluated and will be available prior to submission.]

Priority 2. VR will implement a process for increasing accountability of CRPs to improve the quality of employment services and outcomes.

Measure: A process for increasing CRP accountability will be implemented by July 2015.

2015 OUTCOME: Achieved. A VR employment provider application was released in FFY15 resulting in the development of 89 provider agreements. This process better allows for VR to ensure appropriate accreditation requirements are met. Information collected through the application process has also enabled VR to develop a tool for VR Counselors and consumers to quickly identify appropriate service providers in each geographic area across the state. Additionally, VR rolled out substantial changes to the VR employment service model in July 2015 which increases provider accountability for providing individualized services and supports by strengthening the requirements about identification and changing the funding structure for services to reduce the financial incentive for quick stabilization and closure.

Priority 3. VR, with input from CRPs and other stakeholders, will conduct a review of VR employment services rates. Necessary modifications will be made to ensure that the employment services model and rate structure supports the provision of quality services and employment outcomes.

Measure: Recommendations for employment services rate restructuring will be implemented on or before July 2015.

2015 OUTCOME: Achieved. VR employment service revisions including rate changes, were implemented July 2015. These changes are designed to move the employment service model to a more individualized, consumer-centric approach. The Employment Services workgroup and other stakeholders played a major role in the design of the new model.

Priority 4. VR will continue to work closely with the Blind and Visually Impaired Services (BVIS) through the Business Enterprise Program (BEP) to expand employment opportunities.

Measure: The employment rate for BEP trainees will at a minimum meet the federal rehabilitation rate indicator of 55.8%.

2015 OUTCOME: Achieved. The 2014 Business Enterprise Program training class had a graduating class of five (5) individuals. Three (3) were placed by year's end 2014 and the other two were placed in 2015. The BEP staff continue to build new vending relationships with businesses to assist licensed vendors in achieving their employment goals.

OBJECTIVE C: VR will develop program initiatives and training that adequately supports staff in the provision of quality services.

Priority 1. VR will make progress toward the development of a web-based VR case management system to improve efficiency and enhance the mobile working environment of VR field staff.

Measure: Requirements will be gathered for a new, web-based case management system with targeted implementation during FFY15.

2015 OUTCOME: Not achieved. The timeline for the development of a new system has been readjusted in light of other priorities such as WIOA and the recent VR Employment Service Revisions. VR continues to work toward movement to a new system and is currently developing process flowcharts in preparation for requirements gathering. VR has hired a Project Manager to coordinate this effort.

Priority 2. VR will identify an improved system for the provision and identification of professional development and training for staff, i.e. new VR Counselor training.

Measure: VR will explore options for staff professional development and identify a proposed solution by May 2015.

2015 OUTCOME: Achieved. In FFY15, VR introduced training specifically designed for VR Management staff and VR Support Staff. In prior years, training was focused almost exclusively for VR Counselors; however VR recognized a need to develop appropriate curriculum and training for all new VR field staff at each position level, including VR Counselors, VR Field Manager, VR Case Coordinators, and VR Secretaries.

Priority 3: VR in collaboration with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (DHHS) and BVIS will provide necessary training and technical assistance to VR counselors who have a specialized caseload serving individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, and individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

Measure: Quarterly meetings/trainings will be held with specialty VR Counselors, facilitated by DHHS and BVIS staff. The first meeting/training for FFY15 will be completed by fall 2014. Agenda's will be set based on training and discussion needs identified by VR Specialty Counselors and their Supervisors.

2015 OUTCOME: Achieved. BVIS staff provided quarterly training meetings to the VR Counselors that specialize in serving consumers with low vision. This training included adaptive aid updates, ophthalmologist and optometrist guest speakers, consumer feedback as well as field trips that would assist in furthering the education of the VR counselors in respects to blindness. The BVIS staff also provided web based training resources and developed an email list serve where questions can be posted and answered with all VI/VR Counselor's participation. DHHS staff also conducted quarterly meetings with VR Counselors that specialize in serving consumers who are Deaf or hard of hearing. These meetings included a training workshop with hearing aid manufacturers to ensure VR staff is well informed about the latest technological advances with hearing aids and assistive listening devices.

Priority 4. VR, along with providers, INARF, other state agencies (i.e. Department of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA)), and other stakeholders will facilitate cross training opportunities for VR and provider staff to clarify VR policies and practices and enhance consistency in service delivery.

Measure: A minimum of three formal cross-training events will occur during FFY15.

2015 OUTCOME: Achieved. VR conducted 15 joint training events throughout the state during May-July 2015 to ensure ample training opportunities for both VR and provider staff on the VR employment service revisions. Joint training on Discovery services was also conducted in several locations throughout the state during FFY15 and is continuing into FFY16. VR and DWD also participated in cross-training to increase knowledge about each program's services. Similarly, VR and BDDS participated in cross-training to increase knowledge and gain better understanding about the transfer from VR-funded supported employment services to BDDS-funded extended services.

(2) An evaluation of the extent to which the Supported Employment program goals described in the Supported Employment Supplement for the most recent program year were achieved.

The evaluation must:

- (A) Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.
- (B) Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

Supported Employment Goals:

Priority 1. VR will analyze the current employment services rate structure for eligible SE consumers and implement necessary system changes in an effort to improve SE service provision.

Measure: Implement necessary system changes by July 2015.

Outcome: Achieved. Employment Service Revisions were implemented July 1, 2015 which included major changes to both the funding structure and service provision expectations for employment services, specifically supported employment services and Discovery activities. VR will be evaluating the impact of the system changes and reviewing data quarterly. Data as well as ongoing feedback from stakeholders including the employment service workgroup, will be utilized to make ongoing revisions and address additional areas of improvement.

Priority 2. VR will continue to increase the quantity and quality of job outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities through Project SEARCH.

Measure: At least 75 students will obtain work experience through Project SEARCH, and at least 50% of SEARCH participants will obtain competitive employment outcomes.

Outcome: Achieved. The graduating 2014 SEARCH class resulted in 66% of SEARCH interns obtaining competitive, integrated employment (54 individuals out of 81 total participants). There were 85 participants in the 2015 SEARCH class that just graduated in May 2015. As of September 2015, 32 or 38% of interns have obtained employment so far, with additional SEARCH graduates still actively seeking employment. The average wage for those 32 graduates is \$8.46/hour which is an increase from the average wage from the prior year (\$8.18) and the average weekly hours worked remained the same as the prior year (27).

(3) The VR program's performance on the performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA.

The new performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA have not yet been implemented, and become effective July 2016.

(4) How the funds reserved for innovation and expansion (I&E) activities were utilized.

VR continued to support the Indiana Council on Independent Living (ICOIL) with reserved I&E funds. ICOIL members were given opportunity to attend national conferences, and were reimbursed for their travel expenses to board meetings. VR continued to support the INTERN program which focuses on matching VR consumers with internships and employment opportunities across state government. In light of overall changes to VR Employment Services which were implemented in July 2015, VR will be working to review and evaluate the program elements of the INTERN program, and reassess staffing resources to ensure sustainability of the program. VR has continued to be an active partner with an innovative 'teaching hotel' project in Muncie, Indiana. VR is establishing a fee for service structure and will be referring appropriate consumers who require hospitality training through the 'teaching hotel' in line with their IPE goal. Finally, VR has continued to increase outreach to transition aged youth through a designated VR Transition Coordinator. The Transition Coordinator provides technical assistance to VR staff in working through relationship building with local schools, and assists with educating schools to increase awareness of VR services.

(q) Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services. Include the following:

- (1) The quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.
- (2) The timing of transition to extended services.

Indiana's Supported Employment (SE) services are highly individualized and involve ongoing support services and other appropriate services needed to support and maintain an individual with the most significant disability (MSD), including youth with the most significant disabilities in SE for a period of time that generally does not exceed 24 months. Such services, such as job coaching, are for individuals who have SE and long-term supports identified on the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Often, because of the nature and severity of the individuals' disability, there is a need for extended services that are provide by a State agency, private nonprofit organization, natural supports, or any other appropriate resources that are funded outside of VR.

Consumers with the most significant disabilities obtain SE services through Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) across the state. The service delivery requirements are to provide appropriate ongoing support services to individuals with MSD for whom competitive employment has not traditionally occurred, or for whom competitive employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of the significance of the disability, and who requires SE services. SE services are provided from the time of job placement through achievement of stabilization and retention (90 days after stabilization). The expected outcome of SE services is to ensure stabilization on the job has appropriately occurred after a period of fading (of the necessary supports). The intensive level of support needs should be well-documented by the CRPs in the Employment Support and Retention Plan, and the expectation of fading (i.e., decreasing the amount of support as a consumer becomes more proficient in completing job duties) is important to reach optimal independence. VR acknowledges that fading may not always occur in a completely linear process, and levels of SE support may ebb and flow depending on the needs of the consumer. However, a fading pattern should be evident prior to the identification that stabilization has occurred for a consumer

needing SE services. More specifics regarding Supported Employment may be found in the Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services – Manual of Employment Services at www.vrs.in.gov.

The scope of SE services may include, but not limited to, the following:

- Preparation for employment, job development and placement services;
- Intensive job coaching (on-site or off-site);
- Gathering information regarding the persons referred (e.g., through appropriate Discovery activities);
- Analyzing the information to determine opportunities for employment in the labor market geographically accessible to them;
- Providing counseling or training to obtain and maintain the desired employment;
- Identifying and/or developing job opportunities;
- Providing on-site job analysis, consultation, and recommendations for worksite and job modifications when appropriate;
- Maintaining an organized system of recording job openings and contacts;
- Developing appropriate natural supports; or
- Providing feedback to persons seeking employment.

VR implemented major revisions to VR employment services in July 2015. Prior to these revisions, VR purchased employment services primarily through a Results Based Funding (RBF) approach. One significant revision that occurred is that SE services are no longer fully funded through employment milestones (or the previous RBF model). Because many individuals with MSD will require SE services that extend beyond the employment milestone payments, SE services are funded in addition to the current employment milestone payments. VR funding for SE services is outlined in the Table below. (Please note that the complete employment service model, implemented July 2015, can be viewed at www.vrs.in.gov).

SE Funding Source	SE Services From Placement to Retention
Discovery	Discovery hourly services (i.e., job shadows, situational assessment, work experience, etc.) are provided to assess strengths, interests, talents, ideal work environments, etc. in order to identify an appropriate SE outcome.
Milestone 1: Job Development and Placement	Job development placement services are provided to assist individuals to obtain employment in line with the SE IPE.
Milestone 2: Support and Short-Term Retention	Supports are provided day one on the job through completion of four calendar weeks on the job.
SE Monthly Level Funding	Supports typically start after the fourth week on the job and are provided through achievement of stabilization. Fading (decreasing the amount of support as a

	consumer becomes more proficient in completing job duties) of support should occur during this period.
Milestone 3: Retention	Supports are provided from stabilization through the ninety-day retention period.

Note: SE monthly level funding may begin sooner than four weeks, and/or could extend beyond stabilization if the consumer's level of support extends beyond what is provided through the Milestone 2 and/or Milestone 3 payments.

Extended services shall be identified as early as possible with the VR Counselor and CRP staff working together to secure necessary resources. It is critical that early conversations take place between VR, the consumer, and the CRP to begin planning for the transition to extended services early in the process. However, employment services may begin regardless of whether an identified funding source for extended services has been provided. It is important to recognize the impact that a good job match with appropriate and intensive ongoing supports may have on the amount and type of extended services an individual may need long term in order to maintain the consumer's job. It is valuable to begin identifying extended service options (including natural supports) an individual may have available to him/her early in the process. When it has been determined that a consumer is stable on the job, the process to transition to extended services must begin, and this process must identify the consumer's ongoing specific need(s), types of supports and services, the sources of extended services (e.g., natural supports, Medicaid Rehabilitation Option (MRO), Bureau of Development Disability Services, other) and the projected number of hours. VR Counselors are required to assist in facilitating the seamless transition to extended services *prior* to VR case closure. The Transfer to Extended Services form is completed for VR consumers who require extended services. The form is completed following achievement of stabilization. VR and CRP personnel work jointly to complete this document. VR forwards completed form to entities providing supports at least 60 days prior to achievement of Milestone 3 (Retention).

VR administration continues to focus on the need to ensure quality SE service; as such services are essential in securing quality employment outcomes for those consumers with MSD. VR will continue to work closely with the Bureau of Developmental Disability Services, the Division of Mental Health and Addiction, and CRPs to identify areas of concern, implement needed changes in practices, and provide training and/or technical assistance.

**VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES
CERTIFICATIONS**

States must provide written and signed certifications that:	
1.	The (enter the name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate,) is authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act), as amended by WIOA, ¹⁵ and its supplement under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act ¹⁶ ;
2.	As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of VR services, the (enter the name of designated State agency) ¹⁷ agrees to operate and administer the State VR Services Program in accordance with the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan ¹⁸ , the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations ¹⁹ , policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of VR services and the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;
3.	As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act for supported employment services, the designated State agency agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan ²⁰ , the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations ²¹ , policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under title VI are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;
4.	The designated State agency and/or the designated State unit has the authority under State law to perform the functions of the State regarding the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement;

¹⁵ Public Law 113-128.

¹⁶ Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA, signed into law on July 22, 2014.

¹⁷ All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

¹⁸ No funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

¹⁹ Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 79, 81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3485; and the State VR Services Program regulations.

²⁰ No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

²¹ Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in footnote 6.

5.	The State legally may carry out each provision of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement.
6.	All provisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement are consistent with State law.
7.	The (enter title of State officer below) has the authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement;
8.	The (enter title of State officer below) has the authority to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and the supplement for Supported Employment services;
9.	The agency that submits the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement.

ASSURANCES

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances:

The State Plan must provide assurances that:	
1.	Public Comment on Policies and Procedures: The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.
2.	Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement: The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.

3.	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act. (b) the establishment of either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable (Option A or B must be selected): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (A) is an independent State commission. (B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council (c) consultations regarding the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act. the non-Federal share, as described in 34 CFR 361.60. (d) 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/No) (e) 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/No) (f) statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act. Is the designated State agency is 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/No) See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan. (g) the descriptions for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11), (24)(B), and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act. (h) all required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act . (i) the requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act. (j) 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. (k) 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. (l) the submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act.
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4.	<p>Administration of the Provision of VR Services: The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act. (b) impose no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for VR services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State in accordance with section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act . (c) provide the full range of services listed in section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services in accordance with section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act? (Yes/No) (d) 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. (e) comply with the requirements for the development of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act . (f) comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act. (g) provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act. (h) comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual 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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) meet the requirements in sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act if the State elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs
5.	<p>Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The designated State unit assures that it will include in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. (b) The designated State agency assures that it will submit reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Financial Administration: The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for

	<p>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.</p> <p>(b) The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act.</p>
7.	<p>(a) Provision of Supported Employment Services: The designated State agency assures that it will provide supported employment services as defined in section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(b) The designated State agency assures that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act ii. an individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act, which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act.

Appendix 1: Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Include the State's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA.

	Projected Baseline	PY 2016 / FY 2017			PY 2017 / FY 2018		
		Proposed	Negotiated	Proposed Final Change in Performance	Proposed	Negotiated	Proposed Final Change in Performance
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)							
Adults							
Dislocated Workers							
Youth							
Wagner- Peyser / Labor Exchange							
Adult Education							
Rehabilitative Services							
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)							
Adults							
Dislocated Workers							
Youth							
Wagner- Peyser / Labor Exchange							
Adult Education							
Rehabilitative							

Services							
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)							
Adults							
Dislocated Workers							
Youth							
Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange							
Adult Education							
Rehabilitative Services							
Credential Attainment Rate							
Adults							
Dislocated Workers							
Youth							
Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange							
Adult Education							
Rehabilitative Services							
Measureable Skill Gains							
Adults							
Dislocated Workers							
Youth							
Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange							

Adult Education							
Rehabilitative Services							
Effectiveness in Serving Employers							
Adults							
Dislocated Workers							
Youth							
Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange							
Adult Education							
Rehabilitative Services							
Combined Federal Partner Measures							
1							
2							
3							
etc.							
State / Governor Education and Workforce Measures							
1							
2							
3							
etc.							

VII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS

States choosing to submit a Combined State Plan must provide information concerning the six core programs—the Adult Program, Dislocated Worker Program, Youth Program, Wagner-Peyser Act Program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Program—and also submit relevant information for any of the eleven partner programs it includes in its Combined State Plan. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program.²² If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the “common planning elements” in Sections II and III of this document, where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program. The requirements that a State must address for any of the Combined State Plan partner programs it includes in its Combined State Plan are available in a separate supplemental document, *Supplement to the Workforce and Innovation Act (WIOA) Unified and Combined State Plan Requirements*. The Departments are not seeking comments on these program-specific requirements, which exist under separate OMB control numbers.

²² States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) and 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 that are included would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

PRA BURDENS TABLE

OMB Control Number	Topic	Estimated Total Burden	Citation for Requirement to Respond
Common Form Elements			
1205-ONEW	Common Requirements and Program-Specific requirements for: The Adult Program, the Dislocated Worker Program, the Youth Program, the Wagner-Peyser Act Program, the Adult Education and Literacy Program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Program	3,268 hours	WIOA sec. 102 and 103
1205-ONEW	Two Special Combined State Plan Questions: Section I of document “WIOA State Plan Type” and Section IV of document “Coordination.”	10 hours	WIOA sec. 102(b)(2)(C)(viii)
Supplemental Collections for Combined Plan Partners’ Program-Specific Elements			
1830-0029	Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-270) State Plan Guide	2,240 hours	Sections 122(a)(1) and 201(c) of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Act), 20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq. as amended by P.L. 109-270, and WIOA sec. 103
0970-0145	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) State Plan Guidance	594 hours	42 U.S.C. 602, and WIOA sec. 103
0584-0083	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Operating Guidelines, Forms, and Waivers, Program and Budget Summary Statement	1431 hours ²³	7 CFR 271-274.1, and WIOA sec. 103
1205-ONEW	Trade Adjustment Assistance	50 hours	WIOA sec. 103
1225-0086	Grant Application Requirements for the Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program	1620 hours	38 U.S.C. § 4102A(c) , and WIOA sec. 103.
1205-0132	Unemployment Insurance State Quality Service Plan Planning and Reporting Guidelines	1530 hours	29 CFR 97.40 ET Handbook No. 336 18 th Edition, and WIOA sec. 103.
1205-0040	Senior Community Service Employment Program Performance Measurement System	406 hours	20 CFR Part 641, and WIOA sec. 103
1205-ONEW	HUD Employment and Training Activities	tbd ²⁴	, and WIOA sec. 103
0970-0382	Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Model Plan Applications	112 hours ²⁵	Section 676(b) of the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9908(b)), and WIOA sec. 103.
1205-ONEW	Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program	40 hours	WIOA sec. 103

²³ This number represents estimated average burden for the portion of the SNAP plan that covers programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) and section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 only.

²⁴ This number represents estimated average burden for the portion of HUD program plans that cover employment and training activities only.

²⁵ This number represents estimated average burden for the portion of the CSBG plan that covers employment and training activities only.

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