West Virginia’s Unified State Plan
Required Elements for
Submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Plan Modifications under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
Required Elements for Submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Plan Modifications under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

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

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

- the Adult program (Title I of WIOA), o the Dislocated Worker program (Title I),
  o the Youth program (Title I),
- the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program (Title II), and o the
  Wagner-Peyser Act program (Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III), o 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-IV of this document) where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program where such planning requirements exist separately for the program. The Combined State Plan partner programs are—

- Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins
  Career and
  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)))
  o 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 of 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))

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 out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development that are included would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.
How State Plan Requirements Are Organized.

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

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

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

  State Strategy Implementation,

  - State Operating Systems and Policies,
  - Assurances,
  - Program-Specific Requirements for the Core Programs, and
  - Program-Specific Requirements for the Combined State Plan partner programs. (These requirements are available in a separate supplemental document).

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

When responding to Unified or Combined State Plan requirements, States must identify specific strategies for coordinating programs and services for target populations.²

²Target populations include individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in WIOA Sec. 3, as well as veterans, unemployed workers, and youth.
While discussion of and strategies for every target population are not expected, States must address as many as are applicable to their State’s population and look beyond strategies for the general population.

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

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

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

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

  o Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins
  o Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)
  o 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)))
  o Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o)) 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.))
  o Jobs for Veterans State Grants program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.)
  o 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 program (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..

(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.
Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis

West Virginia’s economy can be divided into 11 major sectors: mining and logging; construction; manufacturing; trade, transportation, and utilities; information; financial activities; professional and business services; educational and health services; leisure and hospitality; other services; and total government. Between 2012 and 2022, many of these sectors will see strong employment declines, while others will experience intense growth.

Within the mining and logging sector, notable employment declines are expected in Crop Production, Animal Production, and Forestry and Logging. The long-term trend in employment for coal mining is for an overall decline as well, as advances in extraction equipment lessen the need for more miners. Also, many areas of the state have seen mines play out, or close down as a result of government regulation, safety issues, and a lessening demand for coal from China and other nations. One type of mining, however, oil and gas extraction, is expecting modest employment growth, as exploration of the Marcellus Shale gas field continues.

The greatest employment growth in the construction industry will be found in construction of buildings.

Heavy & civil engineering construction is expecting only slight growth, while the specialty trade contractors sector is to remain basically unchanged 2022.

Employment in nearly all manufacturing industries in West Virginia is expected to continue declining through 2022, with considerable losses in Beverage and Tobacco Product manufacturing, Textile Product Mills, Primary Metal manufacturing, and Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component manufacturing. However, four industries, Wood Product manufacturing, Transportation Equipment manufacturing, Plastic and Rubber Products manufacturing, and Furniture and Related Product manufacturing, are actually anticipating employment growth through 2022, albeit slight in some cases.

The major sector of trade, transportation, and utilities appears a mixed bag of employment growth and decline. Growth is anticipated in Health and Personal Care Stores, General Merchandise Stores,
Gasoline Stations, Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers, Motor Vehicles and Parts Dealers, Warehousing and Storage, Couriers and Messengers, Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation, and Truck Transportation. However, employment declines are expected in both Merchant Wholesalers, Durable and Nondurable Goods, Furniture and Home Furnishing Stores, Clothing and Clothing Accessories stores, Air Transportation, and Rail Transportation.

The information sector should see employment growth in both Data Processing services, and Broadcasting (except internet). Employment declines are expected in Publishing Industries (except Internet), Telecommunications, and Motion Picture and Sound Recording industries.

The industries within the financial services sector anticipating employment growth include Securities, Commodity Contracts, and Other Financial Investments; Real Estate; Real Estate, Rental and Leasing services. Employment declines are expected in Credit Intermediation and Related Activities, while little employment change is expected in Insurance Carriers and Related Activities.

The professional and business services sector should see slow, steady growth throughout the next few years. Industries within this sector expecting growth include Professional, Scientific, and Technical services; Administrative and Support Services; Management of Companies and Enterprises, and Waste Management and Remediation services.

The educational and health services sector will see growth through 2022, with the majority of employment growth shown in Ambulatory Health Care services, followed by Social Assistance, Nursing and Residential Care Facilities, and Hospitals. West Virginia’s aging population solidifies the need for more health care workers. Educational services should also see employment growth through 2022.

The leisure and hospitality sector is expecting minimal growth in Performing Arts, Spectator Sports, and Related Industries; and Museums, Historical Sites, and Similar Institutions. Food Services and Drinking Places are expecting more sizeable growth, while Accommodation, including Hotels and Motels should see a slight decline in employment through 2022.
The other services sector should see growth in Private households, as well as Religious, Grant Making, Civic, Professional, and Similar organizations. Repair and Maintenance is expecting little change in employment over the period, while Personal and Laundry Services should expect employment declines.

Employment growth is expected in all three major sectors of government, Federal, State, and Local, through 2022.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry Title</th>
<th>Estimated 2012 Employment</th>
<th>Projected 2022 Employment</th>
<th>Annual Growth Rate</th>
<th>Numeric Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Growing Industries</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambulatory Health Care Services</td>
<td>7,982</td>
<td>11,102</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>3,120</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wood Product Manufacturing</td>
<td>1,369</td>
<td>1,739</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and Support Services</td>
<td>3,640</td>
<td>4,287</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>647</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services</td>
<td>3,152</td>
<td>3,614</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of Buildings</td>
<td>1,234</td>
<td>1,440</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals</td>
<td>4,283</td>
<td>4,804</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing and Residential Care Facilities</td>
<td>3,706</td>
<td>4,178</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>472</td>
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<tr>
<td>Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers</td>
<td>1,344</td>
<td>1,429</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>85</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hospitals</td>
<td>6,730</td>
<td>7,212</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil and Gas Extraction</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Declining Industries</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component Manufacturing</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>-3.8</td>
<td>-63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Production</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>-3.8</td>
<td>-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining (except Oil and Gas)</td>
<td>7,618</td>
<td>6,375</td>
<td>-3.0</td>
<td>-1,243</td>
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<tr>
<td>Printing and Related Support Activities</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>-2.2</td>
<td>-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forestry and Logging</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>-1.8</td>
<td>-67</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postal Service</td>
<td>795</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
<td>-75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Manufacturing</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>-1.2</td>
<td>-4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>-1.1</td>
<td>-33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>-1.1</td>
<td>-4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>871</td>
<td>-1.1</td>
<td>-31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Growing industries in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Region 1 are scattered throughout various employment categories that fall within the Service-Providing Sector. Both the health services and professional business services sectors contain over one-half of the industries on the list including Ambulatory Health Care Services; Administrative and Support Services; Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; Nursing and Residential Care Facilities; and Hospitals. Other growing industries are found throughout various sectors including Wood Product Manufacturing, Construction of Buildings, and Oil and Gas Extraction. The greatest declines in WIOA Region 1 are found in the manufacturing sector, with the greatest numeric loss, however, in Mining (except oil and gas).

### WIOA Region 2 Industry Employment Projections 2012-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry Title</th>
<th>Estimated 2012 Employment</th>
<th>Projected 2022 Employment</th>
<th>Annual Growth Rate</th>
<th>Numeric Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Growing Industries</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambulatory Health Care Services</td>
<td>6,923</td>
<td>9,622</td>
<td>6.62</td>
<td>2,699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services</td>
<td>3,873</td>
<td>4,438</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals</td>
<td>2,301</td>
<td>2,582</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of Buildings</td>
<td>1,361</td>
<td>1,585</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing and Residential Care Facilities</td>
<td>2,681</td>
<td>3,022</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>341</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation Equipment Manufacturing</td>
<td>1,463</td>
<td>1,660</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>197</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wood Product Manufacturing</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Government, Excluding Post Office</td>
<td>1,152</td>
<td>1,234</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and Support Services</td>
<td>4,375</td>
<td>5,149</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>774</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Declining Industries</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>-3.39</td>
<td>-109</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mining (except Oil and Gas)</td>
<td>8,263</td>
<td>6,910</td>
<td>-3.39</td>
<td>-1,353</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postal Service</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>-1.65</td>
<td>-53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing</td>
<td>1,427</td>
<td>1,377</td>
<td>-1.28</td>
<td>-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rail Transportation</td>
<td>1,216</td>
<td>1,167</td>
<td>-1.18</td>
<td>-49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and Laundry Services</td>
<td>839</td>
<td>787</td>
<td>-1.06</td>
<td>-52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinery Manufacturing</td>
<td>566</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>-1.04</td>
<td>-56</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>978</td>
<td>891</td>
<td>-0.93</td>
<td>-87</td>
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<tr>
<td>Credit Intermediation and Related Activities</td>
<td>1,598</td>
<td>1,522</td>
<td>-0.92</td>
<td>-76</td>
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<tr>
<td>Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods</td>
<td>1,306</td>
<td>1,220</td>
<td>-0.68</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Growing industries in WIOA Region 2 are scattered throughout various economic sectors with the greatest increase within Service-Providing industries. Both Ambulatory Health Care Services and Nursing Care Facilities are projected to gain employment through 2022. Increases in employment are projected for Construction of Buildings as well as two manufacturing industries: Transportation Equipment and Wood Products. More than two-thirds of the declining industries in WIOA Region 2 are found among the Goods-Producing sectors, with the greatest loss in Mining (except oil and gas), and a significant number in manufacturing, particularly Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component manufacturing.
WIOA Region 3 Industry Employment Projections 2012-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Growing Industries</th>
<th>Estimated 2012 Employment</th>
<th>Projected 2022 Employment</th>
<th>Annual Growth Rate</th>
<th>Numeric Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambulatory Health Care Services</td>
<td>6,416</td>
<td>8,921</td>
<td>6.89</td>
<td>2,505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil and Gas Extraction</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services</td>
<td>5,791</td>
<td>6,638</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of Buildings</td>
<td>1,015</td>
<td>1,184</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals</td>
<td>11,396</td>
<td>12,794</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>1,398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Processing, Hosting and Related Services</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and Support Services</td>
<td>6,207</td>
<td>7,305</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>1,098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Activities for Mining</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Securities, Commodity Contracts, and Other Financial Investments</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Personal Care Stores</td>
<td>1,037</td>
<td>1,184</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Declining Industries</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Printing and Related Support Activities</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>-2.21</td>
<td>-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining (except Oil and Gas)</td>
<td>1,694</td>
<td>1,416</td>
<td>-1.78</td>
<td>-278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal Service</td>
<td>881</td>
<td>793</td>
<td>-1.58</td>
<td>-88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods</td>
<td>932</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>-1.54</td>
<td>-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and Laundry Services</td>
<td>1,067</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>-1.38</td>
<td>-67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Manufacturing</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>-1.1</td>
<td>-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinery Manufacturing</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>-1.03</td>
<td>-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>628</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>-0.93</td>
<td>-56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical Manufacturing</td>
<td>1,875</td>
<td>1,758</td>
<td>-0.89</td>
<td>-117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods</td>
<td>2,391</td>
<td>2,323</td>
<td>-0.72</td>
<td>-68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Growing industries within WIOA Region 3 are scattered throughout various economic sectors, the largest increases in the Service-Providing Sector. Ambulatory Health Care; State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals; and Administrative and Support Services are projected to have the greatest growth. Most declining industries are found in the Goods-Producing sector, chiefly Mining (except oil and gas) and Chemical Manufacturing.
**WIOA Region 4 Industry Employment Projections 2012-2022**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Growing Industries</th>
<th>Estimated 2012 Employment</th>
<th>Projected 2022 Employment</th>
<th>Annual Growth Rate</th>
<th>Numeric Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambulatory Health Care Services</td>
<td>3,448</td>
<td>4,793</td>
<td>6.74</td>
<td>1,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services</td>
<td>1,447</td>
<td>1,658</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of Buildings</td>
<td>887</td>
<td>1,035</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood Product Manufacturing</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals</td>
<td>1,991</td>
<td>2,231</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and Support Services</td>
<td>1,973</td>
<td>2,322</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Activities for Mining</td>
<td>689</td>
<td>792</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Personal Care Stores</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>726</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Equipment Manufacturing</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing</td>
<td>1,384</td>
<td>1,463</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Declining Industries</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Printing and Related Support Activities</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>-2.24</td>
<td>-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical Manufacturing</td>
<td>2,649</td>
<td>2,482</td>
<td>-1.09</td>
<td>-167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal Service</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>-1.08</td>
<td>-42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>-1.06</td>
<td>-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit Intermediation and Related Activities</td>
<td>1,206</td>
<td>1,148</td>
<td>-0.95</td>
<td>-58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>738</td>
<td>-0.93</td>
<td>-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods</td>
<td>831</td>
<td>807</td>
<td>-0.78</td>
<td>-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>-0.69</td>
<td>-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and Laundry Services</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>-0.65</td>
<td>-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecommunications</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>-0.61</td>
<td>-37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Growing industries in WIOA Region 4 are scattered throughout the various employment sectors, with Ambulatory Health Care Services topping the list. Administrative Support Services and Professional and Business Services are two industries projected for significant growth through 2022. Several manufacturing industries are projected for modest growth. These include Wood Product Manufacturing, Transportation Equipment Manufacturing, and Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing. Industry declines are likewise scattered throughout the sectors, with the greatest decline in Chemical Manufacturing.
### WIOA Region 5 Industry Employment Projections 2012-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Estimated 2012 Employment</th>
<th>Projected 2022 Employment</th>
<th>Annual Growth Rate</th>
<th>Numeric Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Growing Industries</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambulatory Health Care Services</td>
<td>3,278</td>
<td>4,556</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>1,278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services</td>
<td>2,131</td>
<td>2,441</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing and Residential Care Facilities</td>
<td>2,556</td>
<td>2,878</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and Support Services</td>
<td>2,344</td>
<td>2,759</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil and Gas Extraction</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitals</td>
<td>5,068</td>
<td>5,430</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Personal Care Stores</td>
<td>522</td>
<td>596</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals</td>
<td>1,180</td>
<td>1,322</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals</td>
<td>3,728</td>
<td>3,889</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Declining Industries</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing and Related Support Activities</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>-2.25</td>
<td>-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinery Manufacturing</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>-1.14</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical Manufacturing</td>
<td>1,700</td>
<td>1,593</td>
<td>-1.09</td>
<td>-107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal Service</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>-1.07</td>
<td>-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and Laundry Services</td>
<td>755</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>-1.03</td>
<td>-46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>536</td>
<td>-0.92</td>
<td>-52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit Intermediation and Related Activities</td>
<td>1,475</td>
<td>1,407</td>
<td>-0.79</td>
<td>-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing</strong></td>
<td>1,688</td>
<td>1,633</td>
<td>-0.75</td>
<td>-55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>742</td>
<td>-0.68</td>
<td>-52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecommunications</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>-0.65</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nearly one-half of the growing industries in WIOA Region 5 are health-care related, with significant growth in Ambulatory Health Care Services, Nursing and Residential Facilities, and Hospitals. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services and Administrative and Support Services are two industries projected to grow through 2022. Declining industries are scattered throughout the employment sectors, with the most significant numerical decline in Chemical Manufacturing.
### WIOA Region 6 Industry Employment Projections 2012-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Growing Industry</th>
<th>Estimated 2012 Employment</th>
<th>Projected 2022 Employment</th>
<th>Annual Growth Rate</th>
<th>Numeric Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambulatory Health Care Services</td>
<td>8,376</td>
<td>11,644</td>
<td>6.82</td>
<td>3,268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood Product Manufacturing</td>
<td>1,900</td>
<td>2,413</td>
<td>5.16</td>
<td>513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil and Gas Extraction</td>
<td>876</td>
<td>1,028</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and Support Services</td>
<td>4,800</td>
<td>5,652</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services</td>
<td>6,413</td>
<td>7,345</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of Buildings</td>
<td>2,310</td>
<td>2,695</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Activities for Mining</td>
<td>2,993</td>
<td>3,438</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals</td>
<td>4,705</td>
<td>5,275</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing and Residential Care Facilities</td>
<td>3,993</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Processing, Hosting and Related Services</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Declining Industries</th>
<th>Estimated 2012 Employment</th>
<th>Projected 2022 Employment</th>
<th>Annual Growth Rate</th>
<th>Numeric Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mining (except Oil and Gas)</td>
<td>3,687</td>
<td>3,086</td>
<td>-2.93</td>
<td>-601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Metal Manufacturing</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>-2.75</td>
<td>-106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>1,373</td>
<td>1,248</td>
<td>-2.33</td>
<td>-125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Production</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>-2.21</td>
<td>-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing and Related Support Activities</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>-2.19</td>
<td>-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>486</td>
<td>-2.09</td>
<td>-56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forestry and Logging</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>-1.8</td>
<td>-34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal Service</td>
<td>912</td>
<td>822</td>
<td>-1.72</td>
<td>-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecommunications</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>-1.13</td>
<td>-41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Manufacturing</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>-1.06</td>
<td>-8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Growing industries in WIOA Region 6 include Ambulatory Health Care Services, Nursing and Residential Care Facilities, Administrative and Support Services, and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services. Declining industries chiefly include Mining (except oil and gas), Primary Metal Manufacturing, and Utilities.
### WIOA Region 7 Industry Employment Projections 2012-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Growing Industry</th>
<th>Estimated 2012 Employment</th>
<th>Projected 2022 Employment</th>
<th>Annual Growth Rate</th>
<th>Numeric Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambulatory Health Care Services</td>
<td>2,870</td>
<td>3,993</td>
<td>7.04</td>
<td>1,123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood Product Manufacturing</td>
<td>881</td>
<td>1,116</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services</td>
<td>1,915</td>
<td>2,195</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals</td>
<td>1,981</td>
<td>2,221</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing and Residential Care Facilities</td>
<td>2,208</td>
<td>2,489</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and Support Services</td>
<td>2,203</td>
<td>2,593</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of Buildings</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>724</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitals</td>
<td>4,370</td>
<td>4,681</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Personal Care Stores</td>
<td>627</td>
<td>716</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Government, Excluding Post Office</td>
<td>3,045</td>
<td>3,252</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Declining Industries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Declining Industries</th>
<th>Estimated 2012 Employment</th>
<th>Projected 2022 Employment</th>
<th>Annual Growth Rate</th>
<th>Numeric Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animal Production</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>-3.79</td>
<td>-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal Service</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>-1.85</td>
<td>-45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining (except Oil and Gas)</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>-1.78</td>
<td>-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods</td>
<td>1,017</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>-67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>-1.05</td>
<td>-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>-0.94</td>
<td>-42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit Intermediation and Related Activities</td>
<td>1,350</td>
<td>1,286</td>
<td>-0.88</td>
<td>-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crop Production</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>-0.73</td>
<td>-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical Manufacturing</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>-0.66</td>
<td>-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and Laundry Services</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>-0.64</td>
<td>-31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Several industries contained within the list of growing industries in WIOA Region 7 are found within the Health Care sector, and include Ambulatory Health Care Services, Hospitals, and Nursing and Residential Care Facilities. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services and Administrative and Support Services are projected for growth through 2022. Other growing industries are found in Wood Product Manufacturing; State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals; Construction of Buildings; Health and Personal Care Stores; and Federal Government, Excluding Post Office. Declining Industries are scattered throughout the employment sectors with the sharpest declines in Credit Remediation and Related Activities; Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods; and Mining (except oil and gas).
Many outside of our state erroneously believe that most West Virginians are employed in the coal-mining industry, but this is hardly the case. Coal mining and other extraction occupations make up only a small part of the entire labor force. Figure 1 shows that the largest employment groups currently are Office & Administrative Support (111,051) and Healthcare Practitioners & Support (78,662).

Figure 1: Top 10 Employment Groups 2015

Source: WorkForce West Virginia-Occupation

Within the last three years (2013-2015), Office & Administrative Support, Transportation & Material Moving, and Healthcare Practitioners & Technical are the occupation groups with the highest demand (see Figure 2 and Table 1). However, if adding Healthcare Support, total job openings for
both Healthcare groups jumps up to 7,587 in 2015, making Healthcare occupations the hottest demand occupation group in West Virginia currently.

Figure 2: Occupation Groups with Highest Job Demand 2013-2015

![Top Ten Occupation Groups](image)

Source: WorkForce West Virginia-MACC

Table 1: Job Openings 2013-2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation Group</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office &amp; Administrative Support</td>
<td>9,217</td>
<td>7,027</td>
<td>5,652</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation &amp; Material Moving</td>
<td>3,667</td>
<td>4,344</td>
<td>5,171</td>
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<tr>
<td>Healthcare Practitioners &amp; Technical</td>
<td>1,724</td>
<td>2,833</td>
<td>4,994</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sales &amp; Related</td>
<td>1,822</td>
<td>2,853</td>
<td>2,665</td>
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<tr>
<td>Construction &amp; Extraction</td>
<td>2,097</td>
<td>3,763</td>
<td>2,626</td>
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</table>
## Healthcare Support

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>2013</th>
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<th>2015</th>
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<tr>
<td>Healthcare Support</td>
<td>1,761</td>
<td>1,877</td>
<td>2,593</td>
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<td>Protective Service</td>
<td>1,018</td>
<td>3,196</td>
<td>2,214</td>
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<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>1,047</td>
<td>1,612</td>
<td>2,208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Preparation &amp; Serving</td>
<td>1,272</td>
<td>1,556</td>
<td>2,137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building &amp; Ground Cleaning &amp; Maintenance</td>
<td>1,841</td>
<td>1,766</td>
<td>2,076</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: WorkForce West Virginia-MACC

Breaking down the data into greater detail, Registered Nurses are in greatest demand currently, with more than 2,000 openings in 2015 (see Figure 3), followed by Customer Services Representatives (1,954), Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses (1,871), and Heavy Truck Drivers (1,797). There is also a substantial number of job openings in Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics (1,289) thanks to recent growth and technological advances in the Transportation industry.

Figure 3: Top 10 occupation with high demand in 2015
Over the next ten years, the healthcare and support services industry will be growing rapidly, with a huge demand throughout West Virginia. As projected in Table 2, 6 out of 10 of the highest demand occupations are healthcare-related, such as Personal Care Aides, Registered Nurses, Home Health Aides, Licensed Practical Nurses, Nursing Assistants, and Medical Assistants, with more than 1,200 opening jobs every year. Also, as shown in Table 3, the growth rate for several occupations in the healthcare sector is projected to grow by more than three percent every year.

Table 2: Annual Opening Projected (2012-2022)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Estimated Employment</th>
<th>Projected Employment</th>
<th>Total Annual Opening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Care Aides</td>
<td>13,331</td>
<td>18,114</td>
<td>573</td>
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<tr>
<td>Registered Nurses</td>
<td>19,540</td>
<td>22,083</td>
<td>635</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home Health Aides</td>
<td>5,074</td>
<td>6,959</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Annual Growth Opening</td>
<td>Annual Growth Rate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined Food &amp; Serving Workers</td>
<td>21,826</td>
<td>23,673</td>
<td>1,018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Customer Services Reps</td>
<td>11,836</td>
<td>13,010</td>
<td>444</td>
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<tr>
<td>Licensed Nurses</td>
<td>6,601</td>
<td>7,673</td>
<td>269</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nursing Assistants</td>
<td>7,989</td>
<td>8,965</td>
<td>250</td>
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<tr>
<td>Janitors &amp; Cleaners</td>
<td>11,581</td>
<td>12,410</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretaries &amp; Admin Assistants</td>
<td>12,411</td>
<td>13,158</td>
<td>310</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medical Assistants</td>
<td>3,274</td>
<td>4,057</td>
<td>141</td>
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</table>

Sources: Workforce West Virginia-Labor Market Information

Table 3: Annual Job Growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Annual Growth Opening</th>
<th>Annual Growth Rate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Therapist Aides</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.52</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diagnosis Medical Sonographers</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Therapist Assistants</td>
<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home Health Aides</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>3.21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Therapists</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>3.13</td>
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</table>
### 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.

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

**A. Knowledge**

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

#### Figure 4: Model Knowledge, Skills, & Ability for Registered Nurse
Sources: Onetonline.org

With the intensive growth of Healthcare and Social Assistance industries through 2022, the need for education and higher-skill workers is anticipated. Table 4 shows, that for a nurse, therapist, or physician assistant, knowledge of medicine is a must (ranks 86 to 98 out of 100). Fluent English is necessary to understand medical terminology and communicate with patients and medical staff. Customer and Personal Services knowledge is also important for Registered Nurses and LPNs (86 of 100) and Physical Therapists (87 of 100) because of the close relationships formed between nurse and patient.

Table 4: Knowledge Assessment for Top 5 Healthcare Occupations

(Important Scale: out of 100)
Similarly, Table 5 shows that Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Programming Skills are essential for people working in the computer science field (rank from 70-90 of 100). However, several skills in certain jobs are not evaluated depending on the field and skill value. Table 5 shows only the most required skills that rank from 70 to 100. The higher ranking, the more important the skill.

**Table 5: Skill Assessment for Top 5 Computer Occupations**

(Important Scale: out of 100)
<table>
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<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complex Problem Solving</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>72</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programming</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: O*Net & WorkForce West Virginia-Labor Market Information

(B) *Workforce Analysis.* The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3 of WIOA\(^4\). This population must include individuals with
disabilities among other groups 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.

Demographics of the State’s Economy

Age

The U.S. Census Bureau’s 2014 American Community Survey estimates West Virginia’s population 16 years of age and over at 1,510,708. Approximately 53.2 percent of this total is in the labor force, while 49.5 percent of those in the labor force are estimated to be employed. The unemployment rate for this population is 6.9 percent.

The population is separated by age group into seven categories. West Virginians aged 16 to 19 are estimated to number 91,827, with 32.9 percent in the labor force and 26.6 percent employed. The estimated unemployment rate for this group is 19.1 percent, the highest rate among all age groups. Many teenagers have difficulty finding employment because of lack of experience, and because some employers are unable or unwilling to hire teens due to strict labor laws and the inconvenience of scheduling around school functions and extracurricular activities.

The group of 20 to 24 year olds contains an estimated number of 122,531. Of these, 66.9 percent are in the labor force with an estimated 58.4 percent employed. The corresponding unemployment
rate is 12.6 percent. In 2014, 97 unemployed within the age range of 19 to 24 exhausted unemployment benefits. In 2015, that number had risen to 227.

The group of 25 to 44 year olds contains 447,092, the largest number among all age groups. Approximately 74.7 percent are in the labor force, with 69.0 percent employed. The unemployment rate for this group is 7.3 percent. In 2014, 931 unemployed within the age range of 25 to 44 exhausted unemployment benefits. That number rose to 1,652 in 2015.

The group containing 45 to 54 year olds has 250,979 people, with 69.7 percent in the labor force and approximately 66.7 percent employed. The unemployment rate is 4.3 percent. In 2014, 473 unemployed within the age range of 45 to 54 exhausted unemployment benefits. In 2015, the number rose to 762.

Those 55 to 64 years of age number 269,224, with 51.3 percent in the labor force and 49.1 percent employed. The unemployment rate for this age range is 4.3 percent. In 2014, the number of 55 to 64 year olds who had exhausted benefits stood at 355, and rose to 668 in 2015.

The number of West Virginians 65 to 74 years of age is estimated at 190,573, with 19.7 percent in the labor force and 19.0 percent employed. The unemployment rate for this age group is 3.2 percent. In 2014, 112 unemployed 65 years and older exhausted unemployment benefits. In 2015, that number had risen to 189.

There are an estimated 138,482 West Virginians 75 years of age or older, with 5.5 percent in the labor force and 5.4 percent employed. The unemployment rate for this group is 2.1 percent, the lowest among all age groups.

Disability

According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2014 American Community Survey, West Virginia’s total civilian noninstitutionalized population 16 years of age and older is estimated at 1,481,670 with
343,794 having a disability and 1,137,876 having no disability. Of this total civilian non-institutionalized population, 50.5 percent are employed. The percentage of those with some form of disability who are employed is 18.3 percent. The percentage of those with no disability who are employed is estimated to be 60.2 percent.

The percent of the total civilian noninstitutionalized population not in the labor force is estimated at 45.8 percent. The percentage of those with some form of disability who are not in the labor force is 78.7. The employed population age 16 and over is estimated to be 748,143. Of this number, 62,963 are estimated to have a disability, while 685,180 are estimated as having no disability.

The total number of West Virginians age 25 and older is 1,269,783, with 328,338 having a disability and 941,445 having no disability. The number of West Virginians 25 and older holding less than a high school diploma or its equivalent is approximately 14.6 percent. The percentage of West Virginians with a disability who did not graduate from high school is estimated at 28.1 percent.

Those state residents 25 and older with a high school diploma, GED, or alternative are estimated at 41.1 percent. An estimated 42.2 percent of residents with a disability are contained in this group.

The percent of the population 25 and over with some college or an associate’s degree is approximately 24.9 percent. An estimated 21.1 percent of residents having a disability have some college or an associate’s degree. The portion of the population 25 and older who hold a Bachelor’s Degree or higher is 19.4 percent. An estimated 8.6 percent of West Virginians with a disability are contained within this group.

The West Virginia population age 16 and over for whom the poverty status is determined during the 2014 survey is estimated to be 1,464,695, with 343,308 estimated to have a disability and 1,121,387 having no disability. Approximately 16.7 percent of this total civilian non-institutionalized population was below 100 percent of the poverty level. An estimated 24.0 percent of those having a disability

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6 Table S1811, SELECTED ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS FOR THE CIVILIAN NONINSTITUTIONALIZED POPULATION BY DISABILITY STATUS 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year estimates, BLS
are found in this group. Those at 100 to 149 percent of the poverty level registered at 10.2 percent. An estimated 14.6 percent of those with a disability are contained in this group. Persons at or above 150 percent of the poverty level are estimated at 73.1 percent. An estimated 61.4 percent of individuals with a disability are found in this group. In 2014, the number of unemployed with a disability who exhausted their unemployment benefits was 31. This number nearly doubled to 59 in 2015.

**Sex and Race**

West Virginia’s population 20 to 64 years of age is approximately 1,089,826 with an estimated 66.9 percent in the labor force. An estimated 62.4 percent of 20 to 64 year olds are employed. The estimated unemployment rate for those aged 20 to 64 is 6.6 percent.

The population aged 20 to 64 years broken out by sex is 545,585 male and 544,241 female. It is estimated that 71.7 percent of males are in the labor force compared to 62.1 percent of females. The breakdown of the labor force 20 to 64 years of age shows that 66.2 percent of males and 58.6 percent of females are employed. In 2014, 807 females exhausted their unemployment benefits. This number jumped to 1,324 in 2015. The number of males exhausting their unemployment benefits stood at 1,158 in 2014 and climbed to 2,153 in 2015.

West Virginia’s population 16 years and older broken out by race and Hispanic or Latino origin stood at 1,510,708 during the 2014 survey period. Of this total, 1,424,805 are White, 54,624 are Black or African American, and 10,309 are Asian. Additional categories include two or more races at 15,016 and Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race) at 16,803. White alone, not Hispanic or Latino stood at 1,412,501.

In 2014, the number of unemployed who exhausted their unemployment benefits can be broken into the following: Hispanic 22, Asian 7, African American 98, and White 1,713. In 2015, this expanded to Hispanic 37, Asian 13, African American 202, and White 2,998.
Race and the Labor Force

The estimated racial breakout of the West Virginia labor force is as follows: 53.3 percent of the White population is in the labor force and 49.7 percent is employed; 51.5 percent of the Black or African American population in the state is in the labor force, and 46.6 percent is employed; 63.8 percent of the Asian population in the state is in the labor force, and 59.2 percent is employed. In additional categories, 48.9 percent of those of two or more races are in the labor force, with 43.1 percent employed; Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race) reported 56.5 percent in the labor force, with 49.6 percent employed; and White only, not Hispanic or Latino, has 53.3 percent of their population in the labor force, with an estimated 49.7 percent employed.

Education and the Labor Force

West Virginia’s population 25 to 64 years of age is 967,295, with 66.9 percent in the labor force and 62.9 percent employed. The estimated number of the state population who did not graduate from high school is 111,289, with 37.4 percent in the labor force and 32.5 percent employed. This group exhibits the lowest amount of employment among the categories of educational attainment, reinforcing the fact that jobseekers without at least a high school diploma experience greater difficulty in attaining employment than their counterparts.

Those with a high school or equivalent education number 392,169, with 63.0 percent in the labor force and 58.5 percent employed. Those with some college or an Associate Degree number 260,722, with 72.4 percent in the labor force and 68.0 percent employed. The number of state residents 25 to 64 years of age with a Bachelor’s Degree or higher is 203,115, with 83.5 percent in the labor force and 81.4 percent employed. The unemployment rate varies proportionately to the level of education obtained. The unemployment rate runs from 13.1 percent for those who have not obtained a high school level education, to 2.3 percent for those who have a Bachelor’s Degree or higher.
A look at unemployment benefit exhaustees by education level provides expected results. In 2014, the number of unemployed with no more than a high school education who exhausted their benefits stood at 1,042, while the number of those with an Associate Degree was 66, the number with a Bachelor’s Degree was 150, and the number with a Doctorate Degree was 12. In 2015, these figures changed to High School Graduate at 1,794, Associate Degree at 124, Bachelor’s Degree at 299, and Doctorate Degree at 37, reinforcing the fact that despite a troubled economy, the more education one has, the more likely one is to find employment.

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

Population

West Virginia’s overall population is expected to decline by 0.5 percent from 2015 to 2020. Regionally, it is anticipated that significant population decreases will occur primarily in the southwest (Boone, Logan, McDowell, Mingo, Wayne, Wyoming), central West Virginia (Fayette, Clay, Roane, Ritchie), and the northern panhandle (Brooke, Hancock, Wetzel), while both the north-central region (Monongalia) and eastern panhandle (Berkeley, Hampshire, Jefferson) are expected to experience substantial growth. Correspondingly, the greatest employment gains are anticipated to occur in many of the aforementioned regions of the state.

Labor Force

The labor force participation rate (LFPR) in West Virginia has been declining since 2008, mirroring the national trend. The State’s average LFPR has historically been lower than the nation as a whole for several decades. West Virginia generally follows the national pattern, though it tends to go


8 The percentage rate of the non-institutionalized population that is either employed or actively seeking work.
through periods of higher volatility, with a standard deviation of 1.75 versus 1.48 for the U.S. (Figure 5). During and immediately after the economic recession of the 1980s, West Virginia’s LFPR diverged significantly from the national LFPR. By the late 1980s, the State began to recover as the LFPR trended upward through the 1990s and early 2000s.

Figure 5 Annual Average Labor Force Participation Rates, 1976-2014

It is expected that the LFPR will continue to decline for both West Virginia and the U.S. Chart 1 depicts the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) LFPR projection through 2024.  

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While it is anticipated that the overall LFPR for the U.S. will decrease, it is likely that the West Virginia LFPR will experience a steeper decline due to the State’s relative age demographics. As of 2014, West Virginia ranks as the second-oldest state in the nation, with a median age of 42, compared to 38 for the U.S. Looking at the numeric change in employment by age group between 2010 and 2014, the largest increase was among those age 55 and older, while the biggest losses occurred in the 45-54 age group (Figure 6). By 2024, approximately 123,822 of workers in the 55-64 age group will have matriculated into the 65-99 age group. According to the latest Census data,

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10 Local Employer-Household Dynamics. U.S. Census Bureau. [http://qwiexplorer.ces.census.gov/#x=0&g=0](http://qwiexplorer.ces.census.gov/#x=0&g=0)
only 19 percent of the 65-74 age group and 3.2 percent of those 75 and older were still employed in West Virginia’s workforce in 2014\textsuperscript{11}.

Figure 6 Employment Change by Age Group, 2010-2014

![Employment Change by Age Group](image)

### Industries

The service-providing sectors continue to expand in both West Virginia and the Nation as a whole, while goods-producing sectors comprise less and less of the total state economy. It is expected that goods-producing sectors will decline by 2,548 while the service-providing sectors will add 115,081 jobs by 2022 (Figure 7).

Figure 7 West Virginia Industry Composition, 2012-2022

\textsuperscript{11} Table S2301, Employment Status (2014 1-year Estimate). American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau.  
http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_1YR_S2301&prodType=table
Drilling down to more specific industry sectors it can be observed that, by far, healthcare-related industries and occupations are anticipated to have the fastest job growth through 2022\textsuperscript{12}. This is largely due to the expansion of West Virginia’s aging population, a significant driver of demand for health and social services. It is expected that the 65 Years Old or Older age group will increase from 16 percent of the State’s population to 22.9 percent by 2030\textsuperscript{13}. Another driver of the demand for healthcare is the relative health of the State’s citizenry. Overall, in 2015 West Virginia ranks 47\textsuperscript{th} in the nation on health and well-being, with significant challenges in regard to Smoking (50\textsuperscript{th}), Diabetes (50\textsuperscript{th}), Drug Deaths (50\textsuperscript{th}), Heart Disease (50\textsuperscript{th}), Immunization (50\textsuperscript{th}), Obesity (49\textsuperscript{th}), and Cancer Deaths (48\textsuperscript{th})\textsuperscript{14}. Other service-providing sectors where strong growth is anticipated include Education; Professional and Business Services, Government; and Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (Figure 8). Figure 8 West Virginia Growing Industry Sectors, 2012-2022


\textsuperscript{13} Christiadi, Deskins, and Lego. Population Trends in West Virginia through 2030.  

\textsuperscript{14} America’s Health Rankings.  
http://www.americashealthrankings.org/states
Among the goods-producing sectors, the industries anticipated to experience the greatest decline are Manufacturing and Natural Resources and Mining (Figure 9). Most of this decline is a result of the downturn in the demand for coal; however, some of the losses are slightly offset by recent growth in natural gas extraction industries. It is expected that as infrastructure work in natural gas pipelines and structures is completed, employment in these industries will level off and begin to decline by the end of the current decade and into the early 2020’s.

Figure 9 West Virginia Declining Industry Sectors, 2012-2022
Turnover rates are another important aspect to consider in reviewing employment trends. Turnover rates can vary by industry and by a variety of demographic characteristics, such as education, race, sex, and age. In West Virginia, industry sectors with the highest average turnover rates include Accommodation and Food Services; Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation; and Administrative and Support and Waste Management. Sectors with the lowest turnover rates include Utilities, Educational Services, and Government (Figure 10). High turnover rates in industry sectors can indicate a number of possibilities, including, but not limited to, seasonality, short business cycles, part-time employment status, employee dissatisfaction, and health risks.
Among the various demographic characteristics, between 2010 and 2014 turnover rates were higher among males (9.0%) compared to females (8.1%). In regard to race, turnover rates were lowest among Whites (8.4%) and Asians (9.2%); the highest turnover was among Native Hawaiians (11.7%), African Americans (11.9%), American Indians / Alaska Natives (12.1%) and Mixed Race (12.6%). Turnover rates were highest among those age 14-24 and lowest among those age 45-64. Also, higher levels of education corresponded with lower levels of job turnover, with the average

![Average Turnover Rates by Industry Sector, 2010-2014, West Virginia](image-url)
turnover rate for those with less than a High School diploma at 9.4 percent compared to 7.1 percent for those with a Bachelor’s degree or higher\textsuperscript{15}.

From a regional perspective, overall employment turnover ranged from 9.3 percent in Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act Region 1, to 7.8 percent in Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act Region 5 (Figure 11).

Figure 11 Average Regional Turnover Rate, 2010-2014

Occupations

Healthcare-related occupations dominate the list of highest growing jobs through 2022. Of the top 10 occupations with the most annual growth openings, six are healthcare related. Those six include Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses, Home Health Aides, Personal Care Aides, Nursing Assistants, and Medical Assistants\textsuperscript{16}. Again, as with industry sectors, service-providing occupations

\textsuperscript{15} Local Employer-Household Dynamics. U.S. Census Bureau. \url{http://qwiexplorer.ces.census.gov/#x=0&g=0}

in general are expected to have the highest growth. The number of new jobs by major occupational group can be observed in Figure 12. The groups with the highest expected growth include Healthcare Practitioners; Personal Care and Service; Healthcare Support; Office and Administrative Support; Food Preparation and Serving; and Education, Training, and Library occupations.

Figure 12 West Virginia Growth by Major Occupation Group, 2012-2022

Regionally, Healthcare Practitioners was the highest growth occupation group across all seven of West Virginia’s WorkForce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) regions. Commonalities among all seven regions include Healthcare Practitioners and Healthcare Support near the top of the rankings, Personal Care, Food Preparation, Education, and Office and Administrative Occupations. It
is difficult to overstate the demand for healthcare in West Virginia. The top six occupational groups ranked by growth for each WIOA region can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6 Occupational Groups ranked by Growth within WorkForce Region, 2012-2022

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<tr>
<td>5. Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations</td>
<td>5. Education, Training, and Library Occupations</td>
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<td>4. Construction and Extraction Occupations</td>
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<td>5. Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>WIA 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Healthcare Support Occupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Personal Care and Service Occupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Education, Training, and Library Occupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Production Occupations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While there are many commonalities that speak to the economic direction of the state as a whole, there are unique characteristics found in some of the regions. (See Figure 13 for a regional map).
Region 1

Region 1 represents the south-eastern portion of West Virginia. Growth by occupational group generally follows the pattern of the state, and does not vary in any statistically significant manner. In regard to declining sectors, it is expected that Coal Mining, which is a substantial portion of the region’s employment, will see the largest job losses\textsuperscript{17}.

Region 2

Region 2, which represents the south-western section of West Virginia, also does not vary significantly from the state in regard to occupational job growth. However, this region is known for its high concentration in Coal Mining, which, as in Region 1, is anticipated to be the industry experiencing the most job losses through 2022.

Region 3

Region 3 is in the unique position of representing only a single county: Kanawha. The top occupational groups in this region mostly follow the state pattern, with two exceptions: 1) Business and Financial Operations, and 2) Management.

The largest contributor to Business and Financial Operations occupations come from the Professional, Scientific, and Technical industry sector. This sector has the 4\textsuperscript{th} highest growth for the region, just behind Administrative and Support Services, State Government, and Ambulatory Health Care.

Management occupations have a high concentration in this region for a couple of reasons. First, the State’s Capitol, and thus the vast majority of state government administration, is located here.

Second, a significant number of business headquarters and administrative offices are located in the Kanawha Valley.

Industry sectors with the most anticipated job losses are Coal Mining and Chemical Manufacturing.

**Region 4**

Region 4 encompasses the north-western area of West Virginia. Like Regions 1 and 2, occupational job growth is not expected to differ significantly from the state. In terms of declines, the biggest job losses are expected in the Primary Metal Manufacturing sector and the Chemical Manufacturing sector.

**Region 5**

Region 5 represents the northern panhandle of the state. Like regions 1, 2, and 4, this area does not differ appreciably from the state regarding occupational growth pattern. Overall, the region has been historically heavy on concentration in manufacturing which is experiencing declines. This downward trend for manufacturing is expected to continue, with the heaviest job losses falling in the Primary Metal, Petroleum and Coal Products, and Chemical manufacturing areas. Coal Mining is expected to encounter the most job losses through 2022.

**Region 6**

Region 6 is located in the north-central part of West Virginia. In terms of absolute numbers, this region has the highest employment of any region in the state. To an extent, the expected occupational growth mirrors the state’s growth, but with a much heavier portion for healthcare and related occupations. The strongest job growth for healthcare occupations throughout the state can be found in this region. It also houses the highest concentration of jobs in Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services and Educational Services. Region 6 has also been the primary beneficiary of natural gas development in recent years as the region is geographically situated atop the Marcellus Shale field. The only notable declines are expected in Coal Mining and Chemical Manufacturing.
Region 7

Region 7 occupies the eastern panhandle of West Virginia and shares four Metropolitan Statistical Areas with Maryland, Pennsylvania, Washington D.C., and Virginia. While production occupations are expected to decline slightly across the state as a whole, they are expected to have at least moderate growth in Region 7 due to the high concentration of manufacturing in the eastern panhandle. Most of the region's manufacturing employment is in Food Manufacturing, but the strongest growth will be in the Wood Products Manufacturing sector, which is estimated to add 235 new jobs by 2022. Production occupations should experience even stronger growth as the Proctor and Gamble manufacturing plant begins adding 300 jobs in 2017. By 2019 it is anticipated that the facility will reach full capacity of 700 full-time jobs. However, some of the growth may be offset by slight declines in Food Manufacturing. Comparatively, this region is anticipated to have the fewest job losses among all of the WorkForce West Virginia regions, with the only significant losses in Printing and Related Support Activities.

(iii) Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce. Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.
Education

Over the coming decade, it is expected that West Virginia’s job market will trend toward jobs that require more postsecondary education. Presently, based on 2014 data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS)\(^{19}\), West Virginia ranks last in percent of population age 25 years or older with a Bachelor’s degree or higher. As of 2014, 19.2 percent of West Virginians age 25 and older have a Bachelor’s degree or better compared to 30.1 percent nationally. Based on WorkForce West Virginia’s employment projections (2012-2022)\(^{20}\), it is expected that jobs requiring a Bachelor’s degree or higher will increase 11,613 (Table 7). More broadly, the trend is toward more education, and the demand for jobs necessitating any postsecondary education will be greater than jobs that do not. Categorically, occupations requiring a High School Diploma or less are anticipated to grow by 18,322, while jobs requiring formal education beyond high school will expand by 20,790.

Table 7 Projections by Level of Education

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

\(^{19}\) Table CP02, Comparative Social Characteristics in the United States, American Community Survey, U. S. Census Bureau [http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_1YR_CP02&prodType=table](http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_1YR_CP02&prodType=table)

Beyond formal secondary and postsecondary education, some occupations require additional on-the-job-training. In general, it is expected that jobs requiring this additional training will comprise a slightly smaller share of the total employment by 2022. Table 8 depicts the expected change by job training between 2012 and 2022. For most categories, the relative share of employment is expected to change only slightly. It is notable that jobs requiring no additional training are anticipated to make-up a larger share of the employment.

Table 8 Projections by Training

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

Education attainment scales with both poverty status and median annual earnings. As educational levels increase, earnings increase, and consequently poverty decreases. In Table 9, data from the U.S. Census Bureau\(^1\) depict the relative poverty levels by educational attainment. Across the board, rates are higher for females than for males.

\(^{1}\) Table S1501 Educational Attainment, 2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau
\[http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_1YR_S1501&prodType=table\]
Table 9 Poverty Rate by Education Level – West Virginia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school graduate</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
<td>33.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate or GED</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college or associate’s degree</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarities can be observed when comparing median annual earnings by educational attainment (Table 10). Again, higher levels of education correlate to higher levels of earnings, with females earning comparatively less in all categories.

Table 10 Median Annual Earnings by Education Level – West Virginia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population 25 years and over with earnings</td>
<td>$31,426</td>
<td>$38,840</td>
<td>$25,344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school graduate</td>
<td>$20,404</td>
<td>$26,245</td>
<td>$13,359</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
High school graduate or GED | $26,671 | $34,337 | $19,916
---|---|---|---
Some college or associate’s degree | $30,545 | $40,065 | $25,265
Bachelor’s degree | $40,963 | $49,127 | $35,956
Graduate or professional degree | $52,574 | $64,051 | $49,299

Based on 2014 Census data, levels of unemployment correlate with levels of education (Table 11). The higher the level of education, the higher the level of participation in the labor force and, conversely, the lower the rate of unemployment. Individuals with less than a high school diploma or equivalent had an unemployment rate (13.1%), nearly six times higher than individuals with a Bachelor’s degree or higher (2.3%), and more than twice the unemployment rate of individuals with only some college or an Associate’s degree (5.9%).

Table 11 - Employment Status by Education Level – West Virginia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Attainment</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>In Labor Force</th>
<th>Employed</th>
<th>Unemployment Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than a high school graduate</td>
<td>111,289</td>
<td>37.4%</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22 Table S2301 Employment Status, 2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau
http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_1YR_S2301&prodType=table
High School Graduate or GED | 392,169 | 63.0% | 58.5% | 7.0%
---|---|---|---|---
Some College or Associate degree | 260,722 | 72.4% | 68.0% | 5.9%
Bachelor’s degree or higher | 203,115 | 83.5% | 81.4% | 2.3%

Also, as education levels increase, job turnover rates decrease. Using combined Census and BLS data from 2nd quarter of 2010 through 3rd quarter 2014, we calculated the average turnover rate23 (Table 12).

Table 12 - Turnover Rate by Education Level - West Virginia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turnover Rate</th>
<th>Less than a high school graduate</th>
<th>High School Graduate or GED</th>
<th>Some College or Associate degree</th>
<th>Bachelor’s degree or higher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The educational makeup of West Virginians in the labor force, specifically those who were employed as of the 4th quarter, 2014, varies considerably by region of the state. As a whole, between 1997 and 2014, the number of West Virginia job holders increased at all levels of education24. Over this 17 year period, jobholders with less than a high school diploma increased by 18.9 percent, while those with a High School diploma or equivalent increased by a slim margin of 0.48 percent. West

23 Local Employer-Household Dynamics. U.S. Census Bureau. [http://qwiexplorer.ces.census.gov/#x=0&g=0](http://qwiexplorer.ces.census.gov/#x=0&g=0)

24 ibid
Virginia job holders with either some college or an Associate degree increased by 12.33 percent, and jobholders with a Bachelor’s degree or higher increased by a mere 2.82 percent.

Regionally, the percent change in employment by education varied considerably by region. Figure 14 depicts how these changes occurred over the 17 year period. The areas with the largest changes in positive growth were Region 6 (North Central WV) and Region 7 (Eastern Panhandle). Both of these regions have also experienced the greatest population growth over the past decade, and are anticipated to have the strongest population growth in West Virginia through at least 2020\textsuperscript{25}. In terms of jobholders with at least some college completion, Region 7 has experienced the fastest growth, followed moderately by Region 6.

Conversely, Region 4 (Northwestern WV) and Region 5 (Northern Panhandle) experienced an increase in jobholders with less than a high school diploma only, with all other levels of education having decreased. The picture for Region 3 (Kanawha County) was mixed, with increases in jobholders with less than a high school diploma and some college or an Associate degree, and declines in those with Bachelor’s degrees and a high school diploma or equivalent. Region 1 (Southeastern WV) saw modest increases in jobholders with all levels of education, while Region 2 (Southwestern WV) experienced slightly less growth at all education levels.
except a high school diploma or higher, which declined slightly. For a map of West Virginia’s Workforce Regions see Figure 13.

(iv) Describe apparent ‘skill gaps’.

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

1. Communication Skills

Communication skills are expected to have the greatest demand in West Virginia through 2022. Those specific skills are Active Listening, followed by Social Perceptiveness, Speaking, Service Orientation, and Reading Comprehension (Table 13). Active Listening may be defined as “giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions appropriately, and not interrupting at inappropriate times”\(^{26}\). This simple and basic skill is necessary in many occupations, especially in healthcare and other service-related fields that require good communication and comprehension between service provider and customer. Over the next ten years, employers will need at least 452,472 employees with this skill, while the current supply is 421,376. This means we need more than 30,000 people to acquire or develop this skill to meet the expected demand. The occupational group with the highest demand for this skill falls mostly in healthcare support occupations, with 12,000 workers, who share 38.75% of the total need.

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\(^{26}\) Occupational Network (O-NET) Online. https://www.onetonline.org/skills/
### Table 13: Skills Gap 2012-2022

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

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

Figure 15 : Skills Gap Distribution
Figure 15 depicts how the skills gap varies by region. While Active Listening is still the highest need in all WIOA regions, the demand for other skills vary. Social Perceptiveness and Service Orientation take second and third places in almost all WIOA regions. The need for Speaking and Reading Comprehension skills rank second and third respectively in Kanawha County (WIOA Region 3).

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Attainment</th>
<th>Region 1</th>
<th>Region 2</th>
<th>Region 3</th>
<th>Region 4</th>
<th>Region 5</th>
<th>Region 6</th>
<th>Region 7</th>
<th>West Virginia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree or advanced degree</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>1251</td>
<td>-2712</td>
<td>-661</td>
<td>-740</td>
<td>2693</td>
<td>3156</td>
<td>3274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college or Associate degree</td>
<td>2266</td>
<td>3375</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>-52</td>
<td>-146</td>
<td>8742</td>
<td>4838</td>
<td>19489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school or equivalent, no college</td>
<td>-892</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>-1479</td>
<td>-2305</td>
<td>-2573</td>
<td>5650</td>
<td>2355</td>
<td>806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school</td>
<td>1020</td>
<td>1317</td>
<td>1299</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>4001</td>
<td>1465</td>
<td>9399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational attainment not available (workers aged 24 or younger)</td>
<td>-1471</td>
<td>-1711</td>
<td>-2820</td>
<td>-1094</td>
<td>-679</td>
<td>2630</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-5145</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. **Knowledge and Ability also create a big effect on Skills gaps**

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

Among West Virginia’s workforce, the greatest gap in knowledge is Customer and Personal Service (see Table 18). More than 30,000 positions will be needed by 2022 that require competency with the principles and processes for providing customer and personal services; including customer needs assessment and evaluation of customer satisfaction. English, surprisingly, is the second-highest knowledge gap requirement. The growing healthcare sector needs at least 10,000 employees who have knowledge in Psychology and Medicine and Dentistry. The occupations that require most Medical knowledge are Registered Nurses (2,543 employees), Licensed Practical Nurses (1,174 employees), and Medical Assistants (783 employees). An estimated 8,000 Personal Care Aides, Home Health Aides, and Customer Service Representatives are in positions that require knowledge of Customer and Personal Service and English.

*Table 18: Knowledge Gaps*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customer and Personal Service</td>
<td>459,393</td>
<td>30,223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language</td>
<td>337,443</td>
<td>21,759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>99,876</td>
<td>11,434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine and Dentistry</td>
<td>58,389</td>
<td>10,212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Training</td>
<td>96,791</td>
<td>7,887</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
By 2022, West Virginia employers will need more than 30,000 employees who have the ability to comprehend and express information orally (see Table 19). Additionally, people with Problem Sensitivity will also be in high demand (27,885 in total). Aside from communication abilities, people with visual acuity will be in demand (20,362 employees).

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

The skill with greatest expected demand and gap is active listening. Literacy and communication skills top the list, comprising four out of the top five skills. Active listening is followed by social perceptiveness, speaking, service orientation and reading comprehension. The complete list skills projected to be in demand can be found in Table 20.

Table 20: Skills Gaps

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

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

**Appendix**

**A. Knowledge**

O*Net generates 33 requirements related to knowledge for all occupations in United States as shown in Table 21.

Table 21: Knowledge Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Knowledge Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration and Management</td>
<td>Knowledge of business and management principles involved in strategic planning, resource allocation, human resources modeling, leadership technique, production methods, and coordination of people and resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>Knowledge of plant and animal organisms, their tissues, cells, functions, interdependencies, and interactions with each other and the environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building and Construction</td>
<td>Knowledge of materials, methods, and the tools involved in the construction or repair of houses, buildings, or other structures such as highways and roads.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>Knowledge of the chemical composition, structure, and properties of substances and of the chemical processes and transformations that they undergo. This includes uses of chemicals and their interactions, danger signs, production techniques, and disposal methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical</td>
<td>Knowledge of administrative and clerical procedures and systems such as word processing, managing files and records, stenography and transcription, designing forms, and other office procedures and terminology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications and Media</td>
<td>Knowledge of media production, communication, and dissemination techniques and methods. This includes alternative ways to inform and entertain via written, oral, and visual media.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers and Electronics</td>
<td>Knowledge of circuit boards, processors, chips, electronic equipment, and computer hardware and software, including applications and programming.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer and Personal Service</td>
<td>Knowledge of principles and processes for providing customer and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>Knowledge of design techniques, tools, and principals involved in production of precision technical plans, blueprints, drawings, and models.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics and Accounting</td>
<td>Knowledge of economic and accounting principles and practices, the financial markets, banking and the analysis and reporting of financial data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Training</td>
<td>Knowledge of principles and methods for curriculum and training design, teaching and instruction for individuals and groups, and the measurement of training effects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering and Technology</td>
<td>Knowledge of the practical application of engineering science and technology. This includes applying principles, techniques, procedures, and equipment to the design and production of various goods and services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language</td>
<td>Knowledge of the structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Knowledge of the theory and techniques required to compose, produce, and perform works of music, dance, visual arts, drama, and sculpture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Production</td>
<td>Knowledge of techniques and equipment for planting, growing, and harvesting food products (both plant and animal) for consumption, including storage/handling techniques.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
<td>Knowledge of the structure and content of a foreign (non-English) language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition and grammar, and pronunciation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>Knowledge of principles and methods for describing the features of land, sea, and air masses, including their physical characteristics, locations, interrelationships, and distribution of plant, animal, and human life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History and Archeology</td>
<td>Knowledge of historical events and their causes, indicators, and effects on civilizations and cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law and Government</td>
<td>Knowledge of laws, legal codes, court procedures, precedents, government regulations, executive orders, agency rules, and the democratic political process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Knowledge of arithmetic, algebra, geometry, calculus, statistics, and their applications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical</td>
<td>Knowledge of machines and tools, including their designs, uses, repair, and maintenance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine and Dentistry</td>
<td>Knowledge of the information and techniques needed to diagnose and treat human injuries, diseases, and deformities. This includes symptoms, treatment alternatives, drug properties and interactions, and preventive health-care measures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel and Human Resources</td>
<td>Knowledge of principles and procedures for personnel recruitment, selection, training, compensation and benefits, labor relations and negotiation, and personnel information systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy and Theology</td>
<td>Knowledge of different philosophical systems and religions. This includes their basic principles, values, ethics, and ways of thinking, customs, practices, and their impact on human culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>Knowledge and prediction of physical principles, laws, their interrelationships, and applications to understanding fluid, material, and atmospheric dynamics, and mechanical, electrical, atomic and sub-atomic structures and processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production and Processing</td>
<td>Knowledge of raw materials, production processes, quality control, costs, and other techniques for maximizing the effective manufacture and distribution of goods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>Knowledge of human behavior and performance; individual differences in ability, personality, and interests; learning and motivation; psychological research methods; and the assessment and treatment of behavioral and affective disorders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Safety and Security</td>
<td>Knowledge of relevant equipment, policies, procedures, and strategies to promote effective local, state, or national security operations for the protection of people, data, property, and institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and Marketing</td>
<td>Knowledge of principles and methods for showing, promoting, and selling products or services. This includes marketing strategy and tactics, product demonstration, sales techniques, and sales control systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology and Anthropology</td>
<td>Knowledge of group behavior and dynamics, societal trends and influences, human migrations, ethnicity, cultures and their history and origins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecommunications</td>
<td>Knowledge of transmission, broadcasting, switching, control, and operation of telecommunications systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapy and Counseling</td>
<td>Knowledge of principles, methods, and procedures for diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of physical and mental dysfunctions, and for career counseling and guidance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>Knowledge of principles and methods for moving people or goods by air, rail, sea, or road, including the relative costs and benefits.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: O*Netonline.org

**B. Skills**
Like knowledge skills can be learned and developed with experience. More than that, through study, a skill represents a person’s ability to develop knowledge, enhancing his or her capacity to perform the work. Each occupation requires different skills with different levels of importance. Generally, employers evaluate their employees’ skills based on 6 groups: Basic, Social, Resource Management, System, Technical, and Complex Problem Solving Skills (Table 22).

Table 22: Skill Requirements

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

Ability is what someone is capable of doing. Employers assess their employees’ ability based on 52 elements in 4 groups (Table 23).

Table 23: Ability Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Abilities</td>
<td>Abilities that influence the acquisition and application of knowledge in problem solving</td>
<td>Category Flexibility, Deductive Reasoning, Flexibility of Closure, Fluency of Ideas, Inductive Reasoning, Information Ordering, Mathematical Reasoning, Memorization, Number Facility, Oral Comprehension, Oral Expression, Originality, Perceptual Speed, Problem Sensitivity, Selective Attention, Spatial Orientation, Speed of Closure, Time Sharing, Visualization, Written Comprehension, Written Expression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychomotor Abilities</td>
<td>Abilities that influence the capacity to manipulate and control objects</td>
<td>Arm-Hand Steadiness, Control Precision, Finger Dexterity, Manual Dexterity, Multi-limb Coordination, Rate Control, Reaction Time, Response Orientation, Speed of Limb Movement, Wrist-finger Speed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Abilities</td>
<td>Abilities that influence strength, endurance, flexibility,</td>
<td>Dynamic Flexibility, Dynamic Strength, Explosive Strength, Extent Flexibility, Gross Body Coordination, Stamina, Static Strength, Trunk Strength</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Sensory Abilities

**Abilities that influence visual, auditory and speech perception**

- Auditory Attention
- Depth Perception
- Far Vision
- Glare Sensitivity
- Hearing Sensitivity
- Near Vision
- Night Vision
- Peripheral Vision
- Sound Localization
- Speech Recognition
- Speech Clarity
- Visual Color Discrimination

Sources: Onetonline.org

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**2(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 required and optional one-stop delivery system partners.

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27 Required one-stop partners: Required one-stop partners: In addition to the core programs, the following partner programs are required to provide access through the one-stops: Career and Technical Education (Perkins), Community Services Block Grant, Indian and Native American programs, HUD Employment and Training programs, Job Corps, Local Veterans’ Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans’ Outreach program, National Farmworker Jobs program, Senior Community Service Employment program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (unless the Governor determines TANF will not be a required partner), Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, Unemployment Compensation programs, and YouthBuild.

28 Workforce development activities may include a wide variety of programs and partners, including educational institutions, faith- and community-based organizations, and human services.
Workforce Development, Education and Training Activities Analysis

The state will use data from Research Information & Analysis (WorkForce West Virginia’s RIA Division), regional labor surveys, and other sources to analyze the current economic conditions and evaluate the workforce development environment for West Virginia employers.

The State’s Workforce Development Activities

The Governor’s Workforce Policy Work Group developed a gap analysis tool to analyze the educational certificate and degree program graduate numbers (supply) aligned with the statewide labor market workforce projections (demand) by pathway. This is a five phase process to 1) identify statewide supply/demand data, 2) disaggregate data by the Community and Technical College/Career and Technical Education Consortia Planning Districts established in accordance with §18B-3C-4, 3) conduct a gap analysis by the internal work group to provide data for each consortium region Sector Strategy process and to assist in prioritizing educational programs in pathways, 4) identify employers in each region for high demand occupations for sector strategy and 5) determine business/industry credentials of value and attainment data collection process. The work group is receiving guidance through the National Governor’s Association.

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

- Region One: The Region One Workforce Development Board, headquartered in Beckley, administers workforce activities in an eleven-county region covering the southeastern portion of the State.
- Region Two: The Southwestern West Virginia Workforce Development Board, located in Huntington, governs a seven-county region in the southwestern portion of the State.
- Region Three: The Workforce Development Board of Kanawha County oversees activities in the State’s only single-county workforce development region from its office in Charleston.
• Region Four: Nine counties are served by the Workforce Development Board Mid-Ohio Valley, which is located in Parkersburg.
• Region Five: The Northern Panhandle Workforce Development Board provides services in six counties and is based in Wheeling.
• Region Six: The Region Six Workforce Development Board, located in Fairmont, provides services in a thirteen-county region in the north-central portion of the State.
• Region Seven: Eight counties in the easternmost portion of West Virginia are served by the Region Seven Workforce Development Board located in Moorefield.

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

• Trade Adjustment Assistance
• Second Chance Act
• Jobs for Veterans Grant (LVER/DVOP)
• Job Corp
• Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)
• Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
• National Farmworker Jobs Program
• Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP)
• Unemployment Compensation
• Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
• Career and Technical Education (Perkins)
• Indian & Native American Programs
• Youthbuild
The Interagency Collaborative Team (ICT) was established under the state Workforce Investment Act to ensure coordination between the agencies engaged in workforce development activities, the local workforce Development Boards and WorkForce West Virginia.

The ICT continues to operate as a state interagency source for addressing issues or concerns related to building and maintaining the most effective and efficient implementation of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the overall workforce development system in West Virginia. The team’s focus is on how best to collaborate between and among the state agencies directly involved in workforce development activities. ICT serves as a forum for the WDBs to seek information or recommendations to fulfill their responsibilities. Workforce West Virginia convenes the team at least monthly to provide administrative and other services.

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

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

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

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

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

The state understands the importance of having a recognized postsecondary degree from the perspectives of both employers and job seekers. The core partners have always strived for quality, career-based employment outcomes for its consumers, when appropriate. A wide range of education and training paths are offered by the partners. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services for example, offers individuals with disabilities opportunities to prepare them for the West Virginia economy. Pre-employment transition services, including job exploration counseling; work-based learning experiences; counseling on enrollment opportunities; workplace readiness training; and instruction in self-advocacy, are provided for those who need assistance in finding a career path.
that matches their interests and abilities. Once a career path has been selected, post-secondary education and training programs are made available with West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services funds to help individuals get the specialized college, apprenticeship, or employment supports they need to be successful in the workplace.

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

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

The Employment Subsidy Program (ESP) was a “win-win” for all. The task of working directly with employers to place the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources clients in jobs was administered by the Workforce Development Boards with assistance from the One-Stop Partners. Because they had previous experience working with the employee sector, they were able to quickly identify those employers who would hire clients.
While the program was discontinued due to lack of funding, the state has strengthened partnerships and communication with the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources. Future collaborations between the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources and the local regions can focus on job placement through state or federal Department of Health and Human Resources grants to support the staff and services.

Collaboration between WorkForce West Virginia and the West Virginia Department of Education has produced several opportunities for Out of School Youth. Labor market research indicates that the state’s 16 to 19 year olds are estimated to number 91,827, with 32.9 percent in the labor force and 26.6 percent employed. The estimated unemployment rate for the group is approximately 19.1 percent, the highest rate among all age groups. Many teenagers have difficulty finding employment because of a lack of experience, and because some employers are unable or unwilling to hire teens due to strict labor laws and the inconvenience of scheduling around school functions.

Given these two critical pieces of information; 1) Reading Comprehension is the greatest demand gap and 2) the state’s highest unemployment rate is among ages 16 to 19. West Virginia has focused on increasing work readiness certification in basic skills in partnership with the West Virginia Department of Education and Adult Education partners, and Community and Technical Colleges.

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

WorkForce West Virginia has dedicated staff to work with statewide industry organizations such as the West Virginia Oil and Natural Gas Association and the Independent Oil and Natural Gas Association. These staff members will attend industry job fairs, forums and promote job opportunities statewide.
The state encourages WIOA (adult, dislocated worker & youth) customers to seek retraining and reemployment opportunities in the emerging Marcellus Shale industry and will continue to support all Local Workforce Development Boards with funding for training in the gas and oil industry.

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

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

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

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

The state will encourage Local Workforce Development Boards to engage in partnerships with local educational entities, businesses, community-based organizations, etc. in order to communicate the benefits of technical training and the development of robust and comprehensive career pathways models.
WorkForce West Virginia will work with Adult Education, CTEs and CTCs to develop and promote streamlined training courses for individuals who already possess some transferable skills. These streamlined programs will have multiple points of entry and lead to nationally recognized credentials in technical occupations and will allow job seekers to enter the workforce more quickly.

WorkForce West Virginia will promote technical training through our website and also through activities such as workshops, job fairs, rapid response activities, youth programs, social media, informational meetings, etc. We will support efforts to better understand the connections between technology-based economic development and education and skills development for existing workers.

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

Strengths and Weakness of Workforce Development Activities

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

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

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

1. Integrate and align,
2. Meet employers’ (large and small) needs,
3. Maximize economic opportunities that are currently taking place across the state and
4. Address each region’s unique workforce challenges/needs.

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

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

- Manufacturing -- Learn and Earn Program Initiative
- Oil and Gas Education and Training Initiatives
- Dislocated Coal Miner Training Initiative
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) SPACES Grant
- Construction Management Certificate

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

**West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (specific)**

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services is a state agency with a primary mission to enable and empower individuals with disabilities to work and live independently. The agency provides comprehensive, direct, and personalized services that prepare persons with disabilities for careers consistent with their interests, needs, and abilities. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services also helps persons with disabilities to maintain their current employment if a disability is making it difficult to continue working. The agency leads the state workforce development systems efforts to serve consumers with disabilities and to ensure that these individuals acquire core fundamental skills to meet the needs of current and future business interests.

Weaknesses: West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services has identified several weaknesses for the agency. The primary issue is a lack of human resources caused, in part, by vacant positions and increased retirements. For example, because of these restraints, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services is currently under an Order of Selection (OOS) and has closed OOS Categories 3 and 4; these individuals may still apply for services and be placed on a waitlist. While West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services is unable to serve these individuals, referrals will be made, as appropriate, to WorkForce West Virginia and Adult Education for services. If additional resources become available, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services may serve individuals from the waitlist.

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

West Virginia is taking a comprehensive approach to improving its workforce development and training efforts. These efforts are being driven at the highest level by the Governor’s Workforce Planning Council, a cabinet-level group chaired by Governor Earl Ray Tomblin. The Council is a policy-making entity that meets on a monthly basis to discuss workforce issues, outlines potential problems and solutions, and ensures inter-agency collaboration and integration whenever possible.

The council serves to align and integrate workforce assistance by supporting training programs provided by key departments such as: Commerce, Health & Human Resources, Rehabilitation Services, WorkForce West Virginia, K-12 Education, Higher Education, Veteran’s Assistance, Minority Affairs and Family/Social Support.

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

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

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

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

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

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

**State Strategic Vision and Goals**

**Vision**

Governor Earl Ray Tomblin has been spearheading a variety of workforce strategies and training programs. The Governor understands the vital importance of West Virginia’s employers having a well-trained, workforce-ready labor force. He also is equally aware of the critical need to provide more individuals with the opportunity to be productive members of the state’s labor force and, thereby, to improve the state’s labor participation rate.

As part of this, West Virginia is taking a comprehensive approach to improving its workforce development and training efforts. These efforts are being driven at the highest level by the Governor’s Workforce Planning Council, a cabinet-level group chaired by Governor Earl Ray Tomblin. The Council is a policy-making entity that meets on a monthly basis to discuss workforce issues, outlines potential problems and solutions, and ensures inter-agency collaboration and integration whenever possible.

The council serves to align and integrate workforce assistance by supporting training programs provided by key departments such as: Commerce, Health & Human Resources, Rehabilitation Services, WorkForce West Virginia, K-12 Education, Higher Education, Veteran’s Assistance, Minority Affairs and Family/Social Support.
Another key objective of the group has been to restructure or improve the effectiveness of the state’s workforce training and support programs so they meet the needs of the state’s employers -- and new employers. The council also has a separate working group that focuses more on specific issues, obstacles or new policies.

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

- Workforce Program Alignment
- Innovative Workforce Preparation/Training Programs and Career Pathways
- Growing Entrepreneurship Activities
- West Virginia Sector Strategies Project
- Governor’s Workforce Readiness Certification
- Workforce Outreach
- Workforce Transitioning
- Grant Coordination and Management
- Adult Education
- WIOA Planning and Implementation

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

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)**

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

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

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

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

- My State, My Life: The state’s new “My State, My Life” campaign was created by members of the Governor’s Workforce Planning Council to promote future employment opportunities and highlight post-secondary education programs. The campaign targets middle- and high-school students with two themes: that they can build the career of their dreams right here in West Virginia – and that to do it, they need to take charge of their own lives and educations. The campaign focuses on a 5-minute video detailing opportunities available to West Virginia students and a new web site that provides an integrated, central resource center. The goal is to encourage young West Virginians to pursue a variety of educational and career paths so that they can be part of a more skilled workforce and help the state provide workers for new and expanding businesses.

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

- Workforce Readiness Certification: The state Department of Education and the Governor’s Workforce Planning Council are exploring development of a workforce readiness certificate program that will be available to high school graduates (and adults) so they can obtain this new certification as a way to better prepare and position themselves for employment.

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

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

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

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

**Adult: Aligning New C&TC Programs with Workforce Opportunities**

**West Virginia Sector Strategy Project**

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

- Integrate and align,
- Meet employers’ (large and small) needs,
• Maximize economic opportunities that are currently taking place across the state and
• Address each region’s unique workforce challenges/needs.

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

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

• Manufacturing -- Learn and Earn Program Initiative
• Oil and Gas Education and Training Initiatives
• Dislocated Coal Miner Training Initiative
• National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) SPACES Grant
• Construction Management Certificate

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

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

• Health
• Architecture and Construction
• Transportation
• Human Services
• Information Technology
• Manufacturing
• Other (Hospitality, Arts, Business, Human Services)

**Adult: Veterans**

Inventoried existing Veterans workforce training and education programs available in West Virginia provided strong support for tuition assistance (Veteran's Re-Education Act Fund, Veterans Upward Bound, etc.) and educational support programs for veterans, particularly for those who have exhausted the GI Bill and need a new vocation due to dislocation or unemployment. Special emphasis also was placed on programs to facilitate re-employment of returning active duty and reserve personnel.

**Adult: Transitioning From Welfare Assistance to Self-Sustainability**

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

**Juvenile Justice Reform**

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

**Offender Reentry Initiative**

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

**Title IV, Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

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

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

**Other:**

- Development of apprenticeship training programs
- Alignment and expansion of entrepreneurship/start-up ventures
- Promotion of youth entrepreneurship in our school system
(2) Goals. Describe the goals for achieving this vision based on the analysis in (a) above of the State’s economic conditions, workforce, and workforce development activities. This must include—

(A) Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment\textsuperscript{29} and other populations.\textsuperscript{9}

(B) Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

Goals

Goal #1: Workforce Development System Integration

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

Goal #2: Customer-Driven Approach (Individual & Employer)

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

Goal #3: Career Pathways Development

\textsuperscript{29} 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.

\textsuperscript{9} Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth and any other populations identified by the State.
It is imperative that the workforce development system provide education and training for skills that lead to quality employment in high-demand jobs or entry-level occupations that lead to high demand jobs. Career pathways must be diverse with multiple entry and exit points allowing individuals of varying abilities, including low-skilled adults and youth with multiple barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities, to have realistic access to pathways. The State will support career pathways that help adults and youth enter the labor force and/or advance among multiple occupations, advance within an occupation or move to a new occupation that has similar skills to a previous occupation.

Goal #4: Increase Opportunities for Youth

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

(3) Performance Goals. Using the table provided in Appendix 1, include the State's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA. (This Strategic Planning element only applies to core programs.)

Performance Goals

See Appendix 1.
(4) Assessment. Describe how the State will assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce development system in the State in relation to the strategic vision and goals stated above in sections (b)(1), (2), and (3) and how it will use the results of this assessment and other feedback to make continuous or quality improvements.

Assessment

Framework for Program Assessment

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

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

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

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

State Plan Policies

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

- Sector strategies: aligning workforce and education programs with leading and emergent industry sectors’ skills needs.
- Career pathways: enabling of progressive skills development through education and training programs, using multiple entry and exit points, so that each level of skills development corresponds with a labor market payoff for those being trained or educated.
- Regional partnerships: building partnerships between industry leaders, workforce professionals, education and training providers, and economic development leaders to develop workforce and education policies that support regional economic growth.
- “Earn and learn”—using training and education best practices that combine applied learning opportunities with material compensation while facilitating skills development in the context of actual labor market participation.
- Supportive services: providing ancillary services like childcare, transportation, and counseling to facilitate program completion by those enrolled in training and education courses.
- Creating cross-system data capacity: using diagnostic labor market data to assess where to invest, and also, the use performance data to assess the value of those investments.
- Integrated service delivery: braiding resources and coordinating services at the local level to meet client needs.

This State Plan provides the policy framework and direction for day-to-day operations of WIOA funded programs. The role of state agency and state department plan partners under this plan is to
provide policy direction, program oversight, support, and technical assistance for and to local and regional service providers covered by the plan. State plan partners include the following:

- WorkForce West Virginia (WFWV)
- West Virginia Workforce Development Board (WDB)
- West Virginia Community and Technical College System (CTCS)
- West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE)
- West Virginia State Board of Education (SBE)
- West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)
- West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR)
- Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development

Regional Plans and “Regional Sector Pathways”

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

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

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

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

- Industry sector leaders, associations, and business organizations
- Regionally organized local workforce development boards
- Local economic development organizations
- Regional consortia of community colleges
- Regional consortia of adult basic education providers (including both WIOA Title II and other state-funded basic education programs)
- Representatives of K-12 CTE programs funded by either federal Perkins funds or various state-specific CTE funding streams, when relevant county offices of education and other local educational agencies determine that participation will benefit the students participating in their CTE programs

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

Regional efforts under WIOA are expected to build upon the State Board’s regional Sector Strategies Project discussed later in the State Plan.
Local Plans and One-Stop Centers of West Virginia

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

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

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

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

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

(1) Describe the strategies the State will implement, including industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations and career pathways, as required by WIOA section 101(d)(3)(B), (D). “Career pathway” is defined at WIOA section 3(7). “Indemand industry sector or occupation” is defined at WIOA section 3(23).
(2) Describe the strategies the State will use to align the core programs, any Combined State Plan partner programs included in this Plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and any other resources available to the State to achieve fully integrated customer services consistent with the strategic vision and goals described above. Also describe strategies to strengthen workforce development activities in regard to weaknesses identified in section II (a)(2).

**State Strategy**

**Goal #1: Workforce Development System Integration**

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

- **Strategy 1.1:** Work with partners to create a better understanding of what a truly integrated workforce system looks like.
- **Strategy 1.2:** Ensure cross-training of all workforce development staff.
- **Strategy 1.3:** Maintain frequent communication with all partners within the workforce development system.
- **Strategy 1.4:** Develop common IT system to be used by core partners.

**Goal #2: Customer-Driven Approach (Individual & Employer)**

We will create an approach based on the needs of the job seekers as well as the needs of the employer. Our workforce development system must examine the needs of the employer, assess the skills and skills gaps of the workforce and then create solutions to ensure maximum benefit to both customer groups.
Strategy 2.1: Work with employers to identify true workforce needs.

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

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

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

Goal #3: Career Pathways Development

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

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

Strategy 3.2: Enhance current career pathways system.
Strategy 3.3: Educate individuals (job-seekers and employers) and encourage career pathways in training and employment environments.

**Goal #4: Increase Opportunities for Youth**

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

   *Strategy 4.1:* Implement new WIOA regulations regarding youth.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**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).

**State Strategy Implementation**

**State Board Functions**

**Training of the state board members**

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

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

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

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

**Implementation of State Strategy**

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

**Goal #1: Workforce Development System Integration**

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

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

- Coordinate and develop memorandums of understanding with all partners. These will be developed with a clear purpose of cooperation and service to all customers of the workforce system (individuals and employers).
- Share goals both locally and at the state level.
- Promote program integration in order to overcome silos and achieve unified goals.
Strategy 1.2: Ensure cross-training of all workforce development staff.

- The state will develop a comprehensive on-line training program for all workforce development staff.
- Develop team-based case management for the customers at our one-stops. West Virginia will be moving toward team-based customer service as we work to develop a one-stop certification process. Training for one-stop partners and new tools will be needed to ensure consistency across West Virginia.
- A high priority will be placed on staff training in serving individuals with barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities. A Workforce Achievement type of certification will be developed to deliver a comprehensive training program for all staff at each level of the workforce system. It will support consistency and quality of service across the state.
- Technical training will be provided on the data-sharing IT system to all affected staff both at a regional and centralized location.

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

- The state has monthly Interagency Collaborative Team Meetings to discuss workforce issues. The team consist of members from each agency subject to the reporting provisions of WIOA.
- Workforce development news and notices are maintained and updated frequently on the Workforce West Virginia website. www.workforcewv.org
Council is tasked with coordinating initiatives, leveraging resources, and planning for the delivery of a comprehensive workforce strategy that ensures an integrated and strategic approach in meeting the educational and training needs of West Virginia's employers and students, and enhancing the economic development efforts of the state.

- The state holds monthly workforce development board director meetings.
- The state holds quarterly state workforce development board meetings.

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

- The state will develop IT system that will allow co-enrollment of individuals receiving services from the 3 core partners.
- The West Virginia WDS will utilize its integrated data system to monitor and evaluate the performance of the WIOA core partner programs in relation to the four state goals described above. The data collected for the common performance measures and the WIOA Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) will provide all of the data elements needed to monitor and evaluate performance on the state goals. Because these data are required to be collected by all WIOA core programs, there will be no additional burden posed on the programs.

Goal #2: Customer-Driven Approach (Individual & Employer)

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

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

- The State will use data and work with employers to identify the skills and competencies necessary to attain family-sustaining employment and will offer high quality training to individuals to obtain those skills.
• The State will promote and develop sector strategies based on labor market information and employer need. This includes supporting the growth and expansion of the industry partnerships through increased state investment.

• The State Board will set standards for providing products and services to employers through enhanced agency coordination in providing business services and expanded partnerships with economic development providers, local chambers of commerce and other associations serving the needs of employers. State agencies may act as intermediaries for organizing outreach to employers on a wider geographical basis than local regions.

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

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

• The State will develop and implement a workforce development survey to be sent to West Virginia employers. The State will utilize survey results in order to gain new and enhanced insights into workforce challenges and needs. The State will develop a dedicated survey unit focused on soliciting targeted employer input on a wide and diverse range of workforce issues as well as gauging the labor market from the employer perspective. Survey results will be used for strategic planning, measuring impact, and discovering opportunities.
Governor’s Office and agency executives will regularly meet with business leaders around the state to solicit feedback and ideas from employers.

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

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

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

- The State will mainstream job seekers with barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities, to the maximum extent possible by offering realistic entry points into career pathways and by ensuring necessary supportive services are in place and coordinated across agencies, so that those individuals with the most significant barriers to employment are successful in accessing and navigating career pathways. When appropriate, job seekers will be co-enrolled between core and other partner programs in order to provide the most comprehensive services possible.
- Through integrated efforts, the WIOA core partners will increase awareness and access to services to individuals with barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities. These efforts include maximizing resources, co-enrollment, and cross
referrals, outreach and service delivery will allow for increased awareness and access to services.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Goal #3: Career Pathways Development

It is imperative that the workforce development system provide education and training for skills that lead to quality employment in high-demand jobs or entry-level occupations that lead to high-demand jobs. Career pathways must be diverse with multiple entry and exit points allowing individuals of varying abilities, including low-skilled adults and youth with multiple barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities, to have realistic access to pathways. The State will support career pathways that help adults and youth advance among multiple occupations, advance within an occupation or move to a new occupation that has similar skills to a previous occupation.
Strategy 3.1: Ensure career pathways development as set forth in WIOA is followed.

- The State adopts the WIOA Section 3(7) definition of career pathways as listed in Appendix I.

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

Strategy 3.2: Enhance current career pathways system.

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

- The State will continue to refine the Sector Partnership program to ensure career pathways are aligned to occupations that are high-demand, have higher skill needs and are likely to pay family-sustaining wages. The State will consult with LWDBs and engage employers to accomplish this goal.
The State will also support placement of individuals with barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities, into quality entry-level jobs that provide the work experience and non-technical skills necessary to lead to employment in high-demand jobs, and will consult with LWDBs and engage employers to identify the career pathways for which such quality entry-level jobs can serve as pre-bridge and bridge models.

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

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

The State will promote and support the creation of pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship programs, (ApprenticeshipUSA) particularly in non-traditional occupations and for non-traditional populations, as part of relevant career pathway models. The State will add apprenticeship opportunities to West Virginia WorkForce programs and will promote them as job/training options to job seekers.

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

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

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

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

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

Goal #4: Increase Opportunities for Youth
Unemployment rates for older youth and young adults remain substantially higher than those for the population as a whole. The likelihood of employment is highly correlated with educational levels; rates of employment and labor market participation for individuals with secondary credentials or less are substantially lower than for those with postsecondary credentials. For these reasons, the workforce development system must recognize the employment challenges faced by youth, particularly those without postsecondary credentials. Partners must work together to alleviate barriers and create opportunities for our youth.

Strategy 4.1: Implement new WIOA regulations regarding youth.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- The State will support LWDB collaboration with YouthBuild, JobCorps, and AmeriCorps sites and will encourage inclusion of those partnerships in local plans.

**Strategy 4.3: Offer youth a clear path to success.**

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

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

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

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

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

Core Program Activities to Implement State Strategy

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

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

Further alignment of services will be conducted at the individual consumer level. As appropriate, consumers may be referred to any of the core partners. When this occurs and a consumer is served by more than one WIOA agency (co-enrolled), the benefits of West Virginia’s integrated IT system become available to the consumer and service providers. The integrated system will update daily to inform service providers of the services that other agencies are providing a co-enrolled consumer. This knowledge will allow each agency to coordinate services while also avoiding the duplication of services. In addition, core partners will host and participate in community forums targeting special populations and provide public service announcements about services available. This system is in the process of being developed and in the initial stage of implementation.

Core and partner programs will collaborate to ensure that resources are leveraged and services are not duplicated. Integration among core partners enables the West Virginia Workforce System to remain flexible and adaptable while operating in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

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

- Providing services that facilitate the match between high-demand jobs, employers and job seekers;
- Providing employment, training, and retention services for eligible WIOA participants and prioritizing services to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals and individuals who are disabled and/or basic skills deficient, to spur financial self-sufficiency;
- Developing adult education and family literacy programs that ensure all adults have the basic education skills they need to contribute to their families and communities;
- Providing employment, training, and retention services to individuals with barriers to employment, including veterans, individuals with disabilities, trade-affected individuals, older individuals, ex-offenders, homeless individuals, long-term unemployed individuals, and youth;
- Encouraging the use of training services that provide portable, stackable and transferable credit and credentials;
- Providing “wrap around” support services, such as child care, unemployment insurance, and transportation to enable eligible individuals to work or participate in employment and training activities;
- Monitoring and evaluating compliance of local area service delivery for fiscal accountability and program effectiveness; and
- Providing technical assistance to local Boards and training providers to ensure the most effective delivery of workforce services.

The state will take further actions to coordinate services between WIOA core programs and non-core programs and services to create an effective career pathway system. These actions will include the following:
The education agencies and educational institutions will work with the State WDB and LWDBs to build career pathways that include secondary and postsecondary career and technical education programs of study.

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

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

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

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

**Alignment of Activities outside the Plan**

The workforce development system in West Virginia extends beyond the core programs to include programs administered by numerous state agencies and quasi-governmental entities.
With a market-based and customer-focused plan, the Workforce Development Boards continue to refine and improve West Virginia’s structure for aligning core and optional programs under WIOA and other available resources to realize the state’s vision and achieve its goals.

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

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

- DRS works extensively with education partners including Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to coordinate the provision of pre-employment and other transition services for students with disabilities.
- WIOA Youth service providers coordinate with LEAs, adult education agencies, county human service offices, county assistance office income maintenance caseworkers, EARN contractors, juvenile justice and local law enforcement agencies, local housing authorities, DRS, economic development entities and other community and faith-based organizations to ensure participants have access to all the services they need to be successful in training activities and find employment.
- WIOA Youth will be notified of opportunities to co-enroll in the TANF program and will also be referred to the Adult Education program as appropriate.
- The braiding of WIOA Title I-B funded programs with other youth-directed state and local entities allows comprehensive services to be offered to all eligible low-income populations under WIOA. Available TANF funding will continue to support WIOA year-round services and summer employment activities.
- Applicants for Title II funds are required to describe how they will align services with local workforce development plans and how they will coordinate with other
available education, training, and social services in the community. Alignment with LWDB’s goals is required for funding.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(b) The team shall consist of members from each agency subject to the reporting provisions of section five of this article. Each agency shall appoint two representatives to the team consisting of the chief official of the department or division and the official within that department or division who is directly responsible for overseeing the workforce investment program or activities at the state level. A designee may be selected to represent a member appointed to the team: Provided, that the designee has policy-making decision authority regarding workforce investment activities including program and fiscal issues. The team members have authority to make decisions on behalf of the agency at the level required for the team to address issues and advance system improvements.
(c) The team shall coordinate the development of a self-sufficiency standard study for the State of West Virginia. The self-sufficiency standard is to measure how much income is needed for a household of a given composition in a given place to adequately meet its basic needs without public or private assistance. Beginning on the first day of November, two thousand four, and every two years thereafter, this study is to be reported to the Speaker of the House of Delegates, the President of the Senate, the Workforce Development Board and the Legislative Oversight Commission on Workforce Investment for Economic Development.

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

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

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

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

Coordination of activities occurs at the state, regional, and local levels. The state-level Interagency Collaborative Team (ICT) meets monthly to share information and discuss past, present, and future activities among the partner agencies. At the regional level, WDB meetings are attended by core partner staff; these meetings are particularly beneficial to “front line” staff members. Staff receive cross-training to learn about other core programs and share examples of integrated service provision for consumers co-enrolled in more than one core WIOA program.

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

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

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

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

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

Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers

The state workforce development board is business-driven and provides much needed input into the direction of workforce programs. Falling directly in line are the local workforce development boards which are also business-driven but at the local level. The state board will implement a model to standardize the delivery of products and services to businesses. Regional business service teams will be developed to coordinate needs and provide contacts to local employers. The State realizes the importance of capacity building that supports the service to provide timely solutions and connections to available resources to meet business needs. Collected information can be tracked and shared on the statewide data system to minimize duplication.

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

WorkForce West Virginia is a one-stop center for workforce resources, including the state’s largest online database of job seekers, assistance with worker training, and unemployment processing.
Employers can post job listings, search for qualified employees, analyze labor market information, and locate business services.

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

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

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

In collaboration with WVDE Adult Education, providers of adult career and technical education (CTE) programs of study are working to align industry credentials to high-demand occupations in career pathways projects. Adult career and technical programs make appropriate credentials and micro-credentials available through end-of-program assessment.
Our goal is to strengthen West Virginia’s business climate by supporting employers and helping job seekers gain employment, remain employed, and advance in their careers.

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

All WVDE CTE programs at each school must have an advisory council in compliance with the federal Perkins Act. The majority of members must represent business/industry to identify local labor market demand, program curriculum and certification needs, and guide program improvements. Advisory employers also provided onsite clinical experiences for high school CTE students enrolled in health therapeutics and adult CTE students in Practical Nursing programs.

**CTE Simulated Workplaces** [http://wvde.state.wv.us/simulated-workplace/partners.php](http://wvde.state.wv.us/simulated-workplace/partners.php)

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

**Learn and Earn**

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

**Business Surveys**

West Virginia plans to design and conduct business surveys in order to gather information on business needs. West Virginia aims to make the statewide business survey a regular exercise in order to ensure that service and workforce training is relevant and responsive to the needs of the business community.
Consumers of One-Stop Centers, including those with disabilities, frequently require additional training in order to meet employer needs and reach their employment goal. Often, this training is provided by community colleges and vocational/technical training schools located throughout the state. West Virginia’s community and technical colleges have an excellent track record of training individuals to have the skills that employers need to fill high quality jobs.

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

**Employer Partnership Programs**

**Learn and Earn**

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

- 50/50 employer & CTC matching contribution
- Co-op experience must pay no less than $10/hr.
- Employer gains a highly-qualified employee and a future skilled labor pool
- Students earn valuable on-the-job training and a living wage while attending school

**Tech Scholars Program**

- Provides scholarships to students who enroll in high-demand, applied technology programs
- 50/50 employer & CTC matching contribution
• Must lead to a Certificate of Applied Science (CAS) or Associate of Applied Science (AAS)
• Employer benefits by investing in a skilled workforce
• Students gain much-needed financial assistance while attending school

**WV Advance Grant**

• A rapid-response grant for CTCs to help employers meet an immediate training need.
• Training can include skills upgrades, customized training, or pre-employment training

**HB 3009 Workforce Development Grant**

• A grant program to help CTCs deliver training to business and industry
• Company cash-match is required
• Business and CTC collaboration in training delivery

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

“These are good-paying jobs with great benefits,” Governor Tomblin said. “And P&G is a world-class company that’s committed to hiring skilled West Virginia workers. Through a partnership with Blue Ridge Community and Technical College, P&G is working hard to train its new employees and provide them with the skills they need to succeed in today’s jobs and those that will be available well into the future.” (http://www.governor.wv.gov/media/pressreleases/2015/Pages/Governor-Tomblin-Breaks-Ground-on-$500-Million-Procter-and-Gamble-Plant.aspx)
As described, the West Virginia WDS benefits greatly from its partnership with community colleges and technical schools. This partnership has enhanced access to WDS services and allowed more individuals and employers to reach their goals.

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

**Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions**

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

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

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

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

West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (specific)

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

- Job exploration counseling
- Work-based learning experiences, which may include in-school or after school opportunities or experience outside the traditional school setting (including internships), that is provided in an integrated environment to the maximum extent possible
- Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institution of higher education
- Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living
- Instruction in self-advocacy, which may include peer mentoring

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

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

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

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

1. To assist school districts in setting up community-based Work Exploration programs.
2. To develop statewide parent training network utilizing the Parent Community Resource Centers.
3. To develop a network of specialists to work with West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services, WorkForce West Virginia, and WVDOE staff.
4. To develop a statewide cross-sector outreach program with a strong emphasis on traditionally underserved populations.

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

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

(G) Partner Engagement with Other Education and Training Providers. Describe how the State’s Strategies will engage the State’s other education and training providers, including providers on the state’s eligible training provider list, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system.
Partner Engagement with Other Educational and Training Providers

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

In West Virginia, Secondary CTE is delivered through comprehensive high schools, county CTE centers, and multi-county CTE centers. Postsecondary CTE is delivered through the state’s community and technical colleges. County CTE centers also provide postsecondary CTE instruction. The West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education delegates to the West Virginia Board of Education responsibility for the administration of federal funds under the Perkins Act.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies**

Through its Employer Partnership Programs, West Virginia’s community and technical colleges provide the training that workers need while leveraging the company’s training dollars to achieve maximize worker productivity. In 2011, WV CTCS delivered training to more than 600 employers across the state.

(H) 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).

**Leveraging Resources to Increase Educational Access**

**Improving Access to Postsecondary Credentials**

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

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

In accordance with the federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006, West Virginia requires postsecondary institutions receiving Perkins funding, including the 9 community colleges, to articulate with secondary schools that offer WVDE-approved Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs of study. These articulation agreements allow qualified students enrolled in an approved career and technical Program of Study to receive college credit toward a diploma, certificate or degree in a similar program at a postsecondary institution. These programs serve as a seamless pathway from secondary to postsecondary education, and ensure students transition from one level to another without delays or duplication of learning.

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

- All training providers will be required to describe the credential(s) to be earned. All Perkins postsecondary recipients report on credential, certificate or degree earned as part of their required accountability measures.
- Business and industry partners encourage/collaborate trainings that result in a postsecondary credential by requiring all proposals to identify credentials/certifications to be obtained and making credentials a required outcome measure.
- DRS will continue to analyze labor market demand and model service delivery systems to identify opportunities for industry-recognized certificates that lead to increased and improved employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.
- Education programs, including secondary and postsecondary Perkins and adult basic education, will provide professional development opportunities to help providers understand and navigate the full credentialing spectrum and develop expertise in occupational counseling.
All postsecondary institutions with Perkins funding have advanced credit offerings aligned with at least one approved CTE program of study and offer additional advanced credit opportunities. Students can earn between two and 22 college credits for their secondary technical coursework, before high school graduation, as permitted in the specific CTE approved program of study and the Perkins IV Statewide Articulation Agreement.

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

- Job development counseling
- Work-based learning experiences, which may include in-school or after school opportunities or experience outside the traditional school setting (including internships), that is provided in an integrated environment to the maximum extent possible
- Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institution of higher education
- Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living
- Instruction in self-advocacy, which may include peer mentoring

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

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

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

(1) **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.

**Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies**

Economic development strategies are primarily developed and implemented by the West Virginia Development Office. The Development Office works closely with WorkForce West Virginia, CTCs, CTEs, and Higher Education in evaluating labor market resources to present to current and potential business entities.
West Virginia has local economic and community development offices throughout the state to work in local areas. The workforce system works closely with these local entities in an effort to promote economic development.

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

Additionally, the Secretary of Commerce, along with the Executive Director of WorkForce West Virginia serve on the Governor’s Workforce Planning Council.

(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—

**State Operating Systems and Policies**

**State Operating Systems**

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

This must include a description of—

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

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

West Virginia State Unified Plan  
Revised: March 7, 2016
Data Collection and Reporting Processes

- West Virginia has an integrated data collection and performance management system (MACC) that covers the following programs:
- WIOA Adult, Dislocated Workers, Youth
- National Dislocated Worker Grants
- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers
- Wagner-Peyser
- Trade Adjustment Assistance
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants
- West Virginia’s Unemployment Compensation MIS interfaces with MACC.

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

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

(2) The State policies that will support the implementation of the State’s strategies (e.g., co-enrollment policies and universal intake processes where appropriate). In addition, describe the State’s process for developing guidelines for State-administered one-stop partner programs’ contributions to a one-stop delivery system, including benchmarks, and its guidance to assist local boards, chief elected officials, and local one-stop partners in determining equitable and stable methods of funding infrastructure in accordance with sec. 121(h)(1)(B). Beginning with the state plan modification in 2018 and for subsequent state plans and state plan modifications, the State must also include such guidelines.
State Policies

The state workforce board is in the process of developing these policies over the course of the next year.

(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.

State Program and State Board Overview

State Agency Organization

WorkForce West Virginia is the state agency responsible for the administration and oversight of all of the WIOA programs under Title I and III. The West Virginia Department of Education & the Arts, through its Division of Rehabilitative Services (DRS), is the state agency responsible for the administration and oversight of WIOA programs under Title IV. Title II Adult Education is administered under West Virginia Department of Education.

All agencies work closely with the state workforce development board, referred to in West Virginia as the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB). The SWDB advises the Governor on workforce priorities and initiatives while also overseeing workforce activities managed regionally by Workforce Development Boards (WBD's). A few of the many responsibilities the SWDB is charged with includes: developing opportunities for West Virginians to gain employment and earn competitive wages, developing and implementing workforce solutions based on the input of representatives and local workforce development boards around the state, addressing West Virginia’s workforce needs through efficient workforce training and development programs. The SWDB also works with DOE and DRS in developing and implementing the federally mandated state plan under WIOA.
As to the Workforce Development Boards, West Virginia has a total of seven (7) designated local areas with a WDB in each. WDBs are responsible for the oversight of funds and activities, delivering career assessment, job search, and education and training related services through organizations identified and established by the board.

(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. *(Attachment—SWDB Membership Roster)*

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

**State Board**

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

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

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

Assessment and Evaluation of Programs and One-Stop Program Partners

Assessment of Core Programs

An assessment will be developed by the state board. The one stops will be assessed every two years by staff assigned by the state board.

Assessment of One-Stop Program Partner Programs

(B) Assessment of One-Stop Program Partner Programs. Describe how other one-stop delivery system partner program services and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan will be assessed each year. Such state assessments should take into account local and regional planning goals.

An assessment will be developed by the state board. The one stops will be assessed every two years by staff assigned by the state board.

An information system will be available to capture required performance information from the core programs.

Previous Assessment Results

(C) Previous Assessment Results. Beginning with the state plan modification in 2018 and for subsequent state plans and state plan modifications, provide the results of an assessment of the effectiveness of the core programs and other one-stop partner programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the Unified or Combined State plan during the preceding 2-year period (i.e. the 2-year period of the plan modification.
cycle). Describe how the State is adapting its strategies based on these assessments.

An information system will be available to capture required performance information from the core programs.

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

The state will assign a committee to develop and design an evaluation system to be used by all core programs at the state and local level. The evaluation system will be coordinated with the evaluations provided for by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education under WIOA.

Distribution of Funds for Core Programs

(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—

Title I Programs

Fiscal staff follows the guidelines set by WIOA in section 128 for allocating funds to the regions.

[i] Youth activities in accordance with WIOA section 128[b][2] or [b][3],

Once the TEGL has been issued and WorkForce West Virginia has received the Notice of Obligation (NOO) from the Department of Labor (DOL) information is gathered from our Research, Information,
and Analysis (RIA) to begin the allocation process. The data received from RIA breaks out the unemployment numbers and ‘economically disadvantaged youths’ by county and region.

Each region is guaranteed 90% of the prior year’s allocation based on the percentage of the allocation received in the prior year. Per the guidance in the TEGL and WIOA Regulations the remaining funds after the ‘hold harmless’ portion of the allocation has been calculated, the remaining funds are broke down by Unemployed, Excess, Unemployed, and Economically disadvantaged youth.

[ii] Adult and training activities in accordance with WIAO section 133[b][2] or [b][3]

WorkForce West Virginia follows the same guidelines for allocating Adult funds as used in Youth funds except for ‘economically disadvantaged adult’ versus ‘economically disadvantaged youth.’

[iii] Dislocated worker employment and training activities in accordance with WIOA sections 133 [b][2] and based on data and weights assigned.

The funds distributed for the Dislocated Worker (DLW) are based on different factors than utilized for Youth and Adult. The ‘hold harmless’ provision is not taken into account for the dollars distributed. The entirety of the DLW funds are distributed based on the categories and the percentages for each category as listed below:

1. Insured unemployment data 20.0%

2. Unemployment concentrations 20.0%
   a. Annual average count of unemployed
   b. Annual average unemployment rates
   c. Index to state rates
3. Plant Closings and mass layoff data: 15.0%
   a. Initial claims in MLS
   b. Exhaustees involved in MLS

4. Declining industries data: 5.0%

5. Farmer-rancher economic hardship data
   a. Percentage of delinquent loans to the estimated number of farms. Base data provided by FHA and US Department of Commerce Census of Agriculture.

6. Long-term unemployment data: 39%
   a. Last pays from UC 217 report

(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.
(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.

**Title II Competitive Grant Process**

A one-year open competition process will be conducted in the spring of 2016 by the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development under the WIOA timeframe covered by the state plan transition.

Eligible Providers
The following are eligible providers for grant funding:

1) Local education agency
2) Community-based organization with demonstrated effectiveness
3) Volunteer literacy organization with demonstrated effectiveness
4) Institution of higher education
5) Public or private nonprofit agency
6) Library
7) Public housing authority
8) Nonprofit institution that is not described in (1) through (7) and has the ability to provide literacy services to adults and families
9) Consortia of the agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described in 1 through 8.

Notice of Availability

West Virginia Department of Education will issue a press release through the West Virginia Department of Education Communications Office. The press release is sent to the media composed of radio and television stations, newspapers, educational organizations, State and Federal legislators, and other groups and individuals interested in adult education. Examples of the other organizations notified will include the volunteer literacy organizations, Regional Education Service Agencies, public libraries, community and technical colleges, and community-based organizations. These entities will be provided notice of the availability of funds and the need to submit an application. In addition, the application will be announced and posted on the West Virginia Department of Education website.

Process

In March of each year the ABE Application Packet will be available at http://wvde.state.wv.us/abe/. Current providers interested in applying for an extension of WVABE Adult Basic Education Funding will be required to:

1. Submit a fully completed extension proposal/application electronically to the WVABE through the Online Grant Management System by 11:59 pm PST by April 9, 2015.
2. Proposals will be reviewed by a team of experts from WVABE and/or other organizations.

Program applications will be considered for funding based on the following:
A. The ability of the program to develop career pathways for students

B. The appropriate use of technology in the program

C. The program design is learner-centered with active student participation

D. The ability of the program to provide standards-based curricula

The State agency shall give preference to those providers who can document their past effectiveness in improving the literacy skills of adults and families or to the extent to which Federal and State performance measures were met or exceeded. All ABE programs, which include family literacy programs, need to demonstrate that they can offer programs of sufficient intensity and duration to make changes in the lives of students.

Flowchart for Processing Adult Education Program Applications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Public notification of the availability of funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>Technical Assistance Workshops held</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Application deadline for submission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Applications are reviewed, scored and ranked by selected panel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>Successful applicants are notified of funding approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>Programs begin operation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Review of Applications
Review of proposals will be based on completion of the requested information in the extension application narrative as well as completion of required forms. Providers have been reviewed and scored on the following AEFLA requirements:

1. The degree to which the eligible provider will establish measurable goals;
2. The past effectiveness of an eligible provider in improving the literacy skills of adults and families and, after the 1-year period beginning with the adoption of an eligible agency’s performance measures under Sec. 212 of AEFLA, the success of an eligible provider receiving funding under this subtitle in meeting or exceeding such performance measures, especially with respect to those adults with lower levels of literacy;
3. The commitment of the eligible provider to serve individuals in the community most in need of literacy services, including individuals who are low-income or have minimal literacy skills;
4. Whether or not the program is of sufficient intensity and duration for participants to achieve substantial learning gains and uses research-based instructional practices, such as phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and reading comprehension;
5. Whether the activities are built on a strong foundation of research and effective educational practice;
6. Whether the activities effectively employ advances in technology, as appropriate, including the use of computers and blended learning resources;
7. Whether the activities provide learning in real life contexts to ensure that an individual has the skills needed to compete in the workplace and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship;
8. Whether the activities are staffed by well-trained instructors, counselors, and administrators;
9. Whether the activities coordinate with other available resources in the community, such as establishing strong links with elementary and secondary schools, postsecondary educational institutions, one-stop centers, job training programs, and social service agencies;
10. Whether the activities offer flexible schedules and support services (such as child care and transportation) as needed to enable all students, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs;
11. Whether the activities maintain a high-quality information management system that has the capacity to report participant outcomes and to monitor program performance against the eligible agency performance measures; and
12. Whether the local communities have a demonstrated need for additional English literacy programs.

To ensure that providers meet the WIOA requirements, proposals will be evaluated by teams from WVABE on their ability to:
• Implement and scale effective college and career pathways that accelerate student completion and foster economic growth
• Guide and support transformational instructional practices that accelerate student completion to diplomas, high school equivalency, certificates, and AA/BA degrees leading to family wage jobs. Plans must include:
  ▪ Implementing the CCR Standards in all programming;
  ▪ Integrating employability skills training and instruction in all courses at all levels;
  ▪ Beginning implementation of integrated employment and training activities into all EL Civics instruction to be fully implemented by July 1, 2016;
  ▪ Expanding the teaching of speaking and listening into all levels of both ABE and ESL programming; and
  ▪ Integrating problem solving in technology rich environments at all levels of instruction.
• Support one-stop centers through in-kind services/funding
• Support alignment of workforce investment, education, and economic development
• Improve labor market relevance
• Improve the structure of service delivery
• Increase prosperity; employment, retention, earnings, and the attainment of recognized postsecondary credentials programs.

Narrative Scoring

The narrative response will have a numerical score assigned to it. The checked items that must be assured by the applicant do not have numerical scores but rather must be assured to in the positive. For an applicant to be considered for funding, the application must be complete and signed by the chief executive officer in the organization. The applicant must agree to abide by all State and Federal laws and regulations.

Each application is evaluated on the following: Improving teaching and learning, improving safe and supportive school environments, improving organizational effectiveness, improving stakeholder engagement, and program performance. Applicants with a score of 70 or greater on the rating scale will be considered for funding. Those entities with scores less than 70 will be considered on a case-by-case basis with regard to available funding.
EL Civics applications will be evaluated by the same process as other ABE applications. EL Civics applications will be required to address the topics above and four special requirements of the program. All EL Civics programs must indicate in their application that they are providing a program of sufficient intensity in terms of hours and sufficient duration to make sustainable changes in English as a Second Language, and that integrate all of the following activities:

- Exploring concepts that are employment and work-focused in nature.
- Investigating career choices and in-demand job opportunities.
- Becoming aware of governmental and educational resources for employment and employment training.
- Seeking career pathway experiences.

Special Rule - State Imposed Requirement

The State is required to report any rule or policy relating to the administration of, or operation of, a program not imposed by Federal law. There are no State imposed rules or requirements that impact the activities of the administration or the operation of the ABE program.

Section 233 of the Act states that not less than 95% of the local funds will be expended for carrying out adult education and literacy activities. The remaining amount, not to exceed 5 percent, shall be used for planning, administration, personnel development and interagency coordination. West Virginia will allow up to 5 percent of the applicants Federal allocation to be used for administrative tasks related to inputting of student registration forms, and follow-up on students who complete the program or leave the program for unknown reasons, staff development expenses, and other related administrative functions approved by the State. Changes in prior approved administrative tasks to be completed with ABE Federal funds must be agreed upon mutually in writing by the local program and the West Virginia Department of Education.

A special rule in Section 233 (b) permits that in cases where the costs of planning, administration, personnel development and interagency coordination are too restrictive, the local provider and
State agency can negotiate an adequate level of funds to be used for non-instructional purposes. The West Virginia Department of Education will consider such written requests for greater than 5 percent Federal funds only for the administrative tasks cited in the previous paragraph.

(B) Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation

**Vocational Rehabilitation**

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

Not Applicable.

**Program Data**

(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.

**Data Alignment and Integration**

The State board is fully committed to the goal of aligning technology and data systems across required one-stop partner programs. The board will continue to make this a priority at its quarterly meetings to ensure progress is being made toward the governor's vision for data alignment.

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

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

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

Initially, common data elements will be shared among the partners through a regular file exchange; ultimately linkages will be put in place to allow partners to access the information in real time. Employment and wage data will be shared with partners to the extent allowed by the WRIS/WRIS2 agreement.
(ii) Describe the State’s plans to integrate data systems to facilitate streamlined intake and service delivery to track participation across all programs included in this plan.

The MACC is WorkForce West Virginia’s management information system that covers all US DOL programs we manage, except for the Unemployment Compensation systems where an interface allows for immediate transfer of registration data from the UC benefit payment system to the MACC. Going forward, partners will add interfaces to their information systems that will allow the real time exchange of information between all systems. Once those linkages are established, case managers will be able to see all programs that a participant is involved with, what services have been given, individual development plans, or any other information that would be pertinent.

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

WorkForce West Virginia, Rehabilitation Services, and Adult Education have already come to a general agreement on aligning technologies and data systems. The West Virginia State Workforce Development Board will continue to work within the framework of the WIOA legislation and federal guidance to improve service delivery.

(iv) Describe the State’s plans to develop and produce the reports required under section 116, performance accountability system. (WIOA section 116(d)(2)).
WorkForce West Virginia’s MACC system has always been able to produce the required reports for DOL programs in the past and we do not anticipate any difficulty in complying with the section 116 reports. While the requirement to produce reports on Training Provider performance is new, the MACC system has been able to track that performance for WIA, and now WIOA, participants for years. The MACC system has limited fiscal information available, which could be the basis of a fiscal management system once the requirements are established.

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

The WIOA core partners in West Virginia, including WorkForce West Virginia, WV Division of Rehabilitation Services, and WV Adult Education will implement a practical and effective system to fulfill the data alignment and integration requirements of WIOA. Each program has a unique system of data collection that is tailored to meet its unique needs. To maximize the efficient exchange of data to support assessment and evaluation, the core partners have collaborated to begin the development and implementation of a system for data sharing. Data will be uploaded to a data warehouse operated by WorkForce West Virginia and/or an IT contractor, and retrieved by each partner as needed and updated where appropriate based on consumers’ progress in the One-Stop Center system. This will allow all partners to track common consumer service delivery while minimizing duplication of service. This system operates as follows:
1. A data warehouse will be created to store mandated data collected/shared by the three partners. The three core partners are identifying data elements that represent common intake information in the One-Stop system.

2. Each consumer in the system on implementation will be assigned a unique participant identifier upon entering the system (Workforce West Virginia, Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Basic Ed). The date each consumer enters and exits each program is recorded. The unique participant identifier and program entry/exit dates will be used to identify common consumers across the core programs and provide access to the common data elements will be collected by other partners and stored in the One-Stop system.

3. To ensure effectiveness and efficiency in the One-Stop system, data collected by each program on new consumers are sent to the One-Stop data warehouse and are made available for each program to track service delivery of common consumers. This process will ensure that service delivery for each consumer can be tracked across all programs.

4. Data stored in the warehouse will be used to generate reports required under section 116, performance accountability system.

Alignment of each partner’s system of data collection will improve service delivery to job seekers at the One-Stop, including individuals with barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities, by providing the three core partners with more information about how consumers are being assisted across programs in the One-Stop system in West Virginia. This information enables the core partners to have a greater understanding of how the needs of their consumers are being met across programs, to track their progress, and to minimize duplication of service. Alignment and integration of data across programs in a data sharing system supports a consumer-focused approach to service delivery that will generate quality employment outcomes for consumers in the One-Stop system.

(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.

**Assessment of Participants’ Post-Secondary Success**

To the extent possible, the State will use data matches with other state systems to track participants’ entry and progress in post-secondary education or employment, for example using the WV Department of Education’s P20 system. In cases where a data match is not possible or is inadequate, case managers will work with participants, training providers, and employers to gather the needed information. The state’s technology committee will be instrumental in facilitating the creation of data matches.

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

**Use of Unemployment Insurance Wage Record Data**

WorkForce West Virginia is the state agency that houses the Unemployment Compensation programs in West Virginia and has access to Unemployment Compensation wage data. West Virginia is also a member of WRIS and plans to participate in WRIS2 once the state’s laws have been amended to allow participation. Wage records will be shared when possible and aggregated performance data shared when the actual wages records cannot be shared.
Privacy Safeguards

WORKFORCE WEST VIRGINIA PRIVACY NOTICE SUMMARY

Last Update: 09/23/15

SCOPE

WorkForce West Virginia is an agency within the West Virginia Department of Commerce. This Privacy Notice Summary is based on the West Virginia Department of Commerce Privacy Policy; however, it is specific to WorkForce West Virginia.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

- We need certain personal and non-personal information to assist you with your employment, unemployment and training needs.
- The Personally Identifiable Information (PII) we collect may include your name, address, social security number, date of birth and more.

USES OF INFORMATION

- By West Virginia law and the Privacy Act of 1974, we must collect certain PII to assist you. Without certain PII, we may not be able to determine the services for which you are eligible, such as Unemployment Insurance benefits.
- The information we collect may be combined with information obtained from other Executive Branch Departments’ websites and services.
- We use personal information for purposes that relate to the reason you provide it. If information is used for another purpose, we will obtain your permission.
- For purposes matching the reason you provided, we may share your information with other state and federal agencies for the limited purpose of data processing or storage.
- In certain cases, we may share your information when required by state or federal law.
- Your information may be shared with others we have hired to assist us; however, all staff and contractors are bound by a West Virginia Executive Branch Confidentiality Agreement.
• We do not sell or rent your PII to third parties for marketing purposes.
• We may share non-personal, aggregated, or de-identified data for purposes related to improving our business practices.

YOUR RIGHTS AND CHOICES

• You have the right to review the personal information you provide us and to update or correct that information.
• If you have consented to an electronic exchange of information, you may cancel that consent by following the instructions in the email you receive.
• If you provide any information to any of our agency websites, you may choose to remove it at any time, except where such information is required by state or federal regulation.

SECURITY

• WorkForce West Virginia computer systems are constructed and maintained by WorkForce West Virginia agency staff, the West Virginia Office of Technology, and/or WorkForce West Virginia and state approved contractors.
• Regardless of the system or personnel responsible for it, multiple techniques and technologies are used to protect your PII. This means we use industry standards and several in-house safeguards to protect your information.

HOW TO CONTACT US

• For more information on our privacy requirements and practices, please call 800-252-5627 and your call will be directed to the WorkForce West Virginia Privacy Officer for response.

Sharing Your Information

By enrolling with WorkForce West Virginia, you agree that WorkForce West Virginia and its mandated partners may access and use all of the information contained within your application in order to best assist you in obtaining employment and in determining your eligibility for training and other services. These services may include testing, assessment, placement services and career counseling, and we may share test scores and job eligibility data with our partners to best serve you. Personal information such as race, ethnicity, sex and
disability status is being requested for federal record keeping and reporting requirements and is kept confidential; however, it may be shared with the partners to determine your eligibility for specific programs.

WorkForce West Virginia Partner Agencies

- Adult Education and Literacy Services
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- Post-Secondary Carl Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Services
- Welfare-to-Work Funded Under Social Security Act
- Senior Community Service
- Veterans Workforce Programs
- Community Services Block Grant (Community Action)
- Housing & Urban Development (HUD) Employment & Training Programs
- Native American Programs
- Job Corps
- Migrant & Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) Services
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
- Food Stamp Employment & Training
- Navigator Program

Civil Rights Statement - Equal Opportunity is the Law!

It is against the law for this recipient of Federal financial assistance to discriminate on the following basis:

- Against any individual in the United States, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief; and
- Against any beneficiary of programs under Title I of the WorkForce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), on the basis of citizenship/lawful residence/work status or participation in any WIA Title I-financially assisted program or activity.

The recipient must not discriminate in any of the following areas:

Deciding who will be admitted, or have access, to any WIOA Title I-funded program or activity:
Providing opportunities in, or treating any person with regard to, such a program or activity;
or making employment decisions in the administration of, or in connection with, such a program or activity.
What to do if you believe you have experienced discrimination:

If you think that you have been subjected to discrimination under WIOA Title I-funded program or activity, you may file a complaint within 180 days from the date of the alleged violation with either the recipient: Equal Opportunity Officer, WorkForce West Virginia, 112 California Avenue, Charleston, WV 25305, 304-558-1600; 304-558-1549 (TDD) or The Director, Civil Rights Center, (CRC), U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Room N-4123, Washington, DC 20210, 202-693-6502; 202-693-6516/16 (TTY).

If you file a complaint with the recipient, you must wait either until the recipient issues a written Notice of Final Action, or until 90 days have passed (whichever is sooner), before filing with the Civil Rights Center (see address above). If the recipient does not give you a written Notice of Final Action within 90 days of the day on which you filed your complaint, you do not have to wait for the recipient to issue that Notice before filing a complaint with the CRC. However, you must file your CRC complaint within 30 days of the 90-day deadline (in other words, within 120 days after you filed your complaint with the recipient). If the recipient does give you a written Notice of Final Action on your complaint, but you are dissatisfied with the decision or resolution, you may file a complaint with CRC. You must file your CRC complaint within 30 days of the date on which you received the Notice of Final Action.

To apply for jobs you must be a United States citizen, a permanent resident alien, or be authorized to work in the United States.

West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services staff are required to complete a confidentiality agreement. The agreement is utilized to ensure that all West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services staff with access to protected information or any other information deemed confidential, fully understand their obligations to limit their use of such information and to protect such information from disclosure. The agreement also details special attention items, as well as definitions of different types of information including personal health information (PHI), personally identifiable information (PII), sensitive personally identifiable
information (SPII), and non-public personal information (NPII). The confidentiality agreement pertains to information in all forms, including electronic and paper.

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

**Priority of Service for Veterans**

Priority of Service for Veterans is implemented by WorkForce West Virginia in accordance with Title 38 part III Ch. 42. 4215 via One Stop Career Centers located throughout the state, by using clear and concise guidelines, and by trained staff familiar with state guidelines. To ensure access to services for veterans and veterans with significant barriers to employment, especially those with disabilities, the state has established formal guidance regarding priority of service for veterans that all Wagner Peyser and Workforce West Virginia staff must follow. WIOA guidance notice 4-16 referencing Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act of 2014 section 3(63) (A), 38 U.S.C 4215, and 20 CFR 1010 provides this guidance.

Veterans and eligible persons obtain information concerning priority of service through WorkForce West Virginia websites, flyers posted in One Stop Career Centers, banners, and/or in person from
WorkForce West Virginia staff in work groups, unemployment compensation groups, during the registration process, and during provision of services. WorkForce West Virginia provides staff information, training, and assistance regarding available employment programs, training opportunities, services, eligibility requirements, and veteran's priority.

WorkForce West Virginia provides veterans and covered person’s priority of service under all state and federally funded employment and training programs. "Veterans priority of service" means that an otherwise eligible veteran or covered person shall be given priority over non-veterans for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services provided under that program, notwithstanding any other provision of the law. When services are limited due to available funding, priority of service should be applied. For example, if there are only sufficient funds to provide services to one individual and a veteran is in the pool, the veteran must receive priority.

To effectively and efficiently facilitate the provision services to eligible veterans and eligible persons, a Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist (DVOPS) is assigned to each of the seven proposed One-Stop Centers located in West Virginia. However, most local areas exceed the minimum of one DVOPS staff depending on criteria involving necessity and population.

The WorkForce West Virginia registration process is utilized to identify and determine veterans' eligibility. All WorkForce West Virginia staff, including managers, are trained on implementation of priority of service and integrating it into the service delivery process. Veterans’ eligibility for priority of service is indicated within the database by symbols which indicate that an eligible veteran has been verified by staff or the veteran or eligible person has self-attested concerning eligibility status. These symbols serve to easily identify individuals that may be eligible for priority of service. Contact information and office locations are readily available on the WorkForce West Virginia website. Veterans seeking employment can receive information about programs, priority of service, and eligibility at any time during the assessment process, on the website, on banners, or posted on message boards in One-Stop Centers.

Implementation of Priority of Service is monitored by using quarterly manager’s reports, regional manager/field supervisor’s quarterly audits, and yearly audit performed by Department of Labor-
Veterans Employment and Training Services (DOL-VETS). The Manager’s Quarterly Report provides response on the provision of Priority of Service from each WorkForce West Virginia Office in the state. These reports are sent to and reviewed by WorkForce West Virginia supervisors to include the State Veterans Coordinator and DOL-VETS. The audits review work orders, services to veterans, and notification of job orders to veterans prior to release to the public. This ensures that management receives information and that they are made aware of the operations and actions taken to provide veterans Priority of Service as written by law.

Wagner-Peyser staff are the veteran’s and eligible person’s first point of contact in the One-Stop Centers. At this point, veterans are assessed and entered into the service delivery system where veterans and eligible persons receive priority of service and veterans that have a Significant Barrier to Employment of (SBE) and are in need of intensive services are referred to DVOPS staff.

DVOPS staff continue the assessment process to determine the veterans’ employment options, assist with the Veterans Employment Development Plan, and provides information to the veterans or eligible persons about a wide range of resources available.

(8) Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System for Individuals with Disabilities. Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners), will comply with section 188 of WIOA (if applicable) and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) with regard to the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. This also must include a description of compliance through providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. Describe the State’s One-Stop center certification policy, particularly the accessibility criteria.
Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System for Individuals with Disabilities

Section 188 of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act ensures nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for various categories of persons, including persons with disabilities, who apply for and participate in programs and activities operated by recipients of WIA Title I financial assistance. WorkForce West Virginia (WFWV) will use the "Promising Practices in Achieving Universal Access and Equal Opportunity: A Section 188 Disability Reference Guide” as a boilerplate in assuring compliance with Section 188 of WIOA. The Guide is designed to ensure meaningful participation of people with disabilities in programs and activities operated by recipients of financial assistance under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), including those that are part of the One-Stop Center Network.

The Guide outlines promising practices in the provision of universal access and equal opportunity to programs and activities under WIOA. WorkForce West Virginia will use the Guide to monitor its own compliance, and that of its recipients, with the aspects of Section 188 and its implementing regulations that pertain to persons with disabilities. Through the monitoring process, WorkForce West Virginia can identify the disability-related requirements imposed by Section 188 and 29 CFR Part 38, to ensure equal access to programs and services under WIOA for people with disabilities.

(9) Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System for Individuals with Limited English Proficiency. Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including One-Stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners) will ensure that each One-Stop center is able to meet the needs of limited English proficient individuals, such as through established procedures, staff training, resources, and other materials.
**Addressing Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System for Individuals with Limited English Proficiency**

The State will coordinate with One-Stop partners to meet the needs of the non-English speaking customers.

**IV. COORDINATION WITH STATE PLAN PROGRAMS.**

Describe the methods used for joint planning and coordination among the core programs, and with the required one-stop partner programs and other programs and activities included in the Unified or Combined State Plan.

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

The ICT continues to operate as a state interagency source for addressing issues or concerns related to building and maintaining the most effective and efficient implementation of the federal Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act and the overall workforce development system in West Virginia. The team’s focus is on how best to collaborate between and among the state agencies directly involved in workforce development activities. ICT serves as a forum for the WDBs to seek information or recommendations to fulfill their responsibilities. Workforce West Virginia convenes the team at least monthly and provides administrative and other services.
V. COMMON ASSURANCES (for all core programs)

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include assurances that:

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<td>1.</td>
<td>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; Attached Guidance Notice 1-16</td>
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| 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;  
Attachment Guidance Notice 2-16 |
| 3. | The lead State agencies with optimal policy-making authority and responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified or Combined State Plan, and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served by such programs;  
The lead State agencies reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified State Plan and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served. |
| 4. | (a) The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administering the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public;  
(b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board;  
The State obtained input into the development of the Unified State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan. |
5. The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities;

WorkForce West Virginia, along with the State of West Virginia, have policies and procedures in place to ensure that all funds are distributed and accounted for properly. The allocations are made based on WIOA law and guidance received through Training and Guidance Letters (TEGL) received from the Department of Labor. The funds are accounted for in the State Accounting System OASIS which accounts for each program and program period of funds individually. All funds distributed are distributed through a series of internal controls which ensures the integrity of all payments through West Virginia State Auditor’s Office.

6. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with uniform administrative requirements in this Act, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA section 184(a)(3);

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).

7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable;

(see pages 170-171 of this document)
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<td>8.</td>
<td>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; WorkForce West Virginia has policies in place to ensure that payments for expenditures related to section 116 are allocated properly. Costs for section 116 will be allocated to each program based on the state allocation of funds for each program. The amount to be expended for section 116 will be defined by the state board. WorkForce West Virginia has established internal controls to ensure that payments are comingled among funds. When a request for payment is made within WorkForce West Virginia a purchase or travel request is submitted for approval through the various chains of command. The requests are coded specifically to the proper funding streams. When the invoice or reimbursement form is received the accounting department compiles all the documents, request, receiving report, and approved for payment invoice and pays the invoice based on the coding providing in the request.</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>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; The State Workforce Development Board focus will be to develop an appropriate share policy for carrying out Section 116.</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>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); Attached Guidance Notice 3-16</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate; and</td>
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WorkForce West Virginia has provided service providers and partners information on the referral process of Veterans with SBEs to DVOPS services through outreach by JVSG staff, training provided by WorkForce West Virginia, and presentation to groups such as the ICT.

12. Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor.

Priority of Service for Veterans is implemented by WorkForce West Virginia in accordance with Title 38 part III Ch. 42. 4215 via One-Stop Career Centers located throughout the state, by using clear and concise guidelines, and by trained staff familiar with state guidelines. To ensure access to services for veterans and veterans with significant barriers to employment, the state has established formal guidance regarding priority of service for veterans that all Wagner Peyser and Workforce West Virginia staff must follow. WIOA guidance notice 4-16 referencing Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act of 2014 section 3(63) (A), 38 U.S.C 4215, and 20 CFR 1010 provides this guidance.
VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

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

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.

ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Local Areas:

The State of West Virginia is comprised of seven local workforce development regions. While the attached map shows the geographic breakdown of the seven areas/regions, a brief description of each follows. (See Local Area/Region map following this information.)
Area/Region One: The Region One Workforce Development Board, headquartered in Beckley, administers workforce activities in an eleven-county region covering the southeastern portion of the State.

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

Area/Region Three: The Workforce Development Board of Kanawha County oversees activities in the State’s only single-county workforce development region from its office in Charleston.

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

Area/Region Five: The Northern Panhandle Workforce Development Board provides services in six counties and is based in Wheeling.
Area/Region Six: The Region Six Workforce Development Board, located in Fairmont, provides services in a thirteen-county region in the north-central portion of the State.

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

(b) be the process used for designating local areas, including procedures for determining whether the local area met the criteria for “performed successfully” and “sustained fiscal integrity” in accordance with 106(b)(2) and (3) of WIOA. Describe the process used for identifying regions and planning regions under section 106(a) of WIOA. This must include a description of how the State consulted with the local boards and chief elected officials in identifying the regions.

The state issued the following Guidance Notice regarding Designation/Re-Designation

WIOA Guidance Notice No. 01-15

Designation/Re-Designation

TO: WorkForce Development Boards

FROM: Russell Fry, Acting Executive Director

WorkForce West Virginia

CATEGORY: WorkForce Innovation and Opportunity Act
SUBJECT: Designation/Re-Designation of Workforce Development Areas and the Appeals Process

SOURCE: Federal/State

DISTRIBUTION: Managers, Workforce Development Programs Staff, Workforce Region Directors and Staff

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2015

I. REFERENCE(S):

Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, WIOA Section 106.

II. PURPOSE:

To provide guidance and process for the designation and re-designation of Workforce Development Areas in West Virginia along with the process for appealing designation decisions.

III. BACKGROUND:

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) mandates that the West Virginia Workforce Development Board (SWDB) shall assist the Governor in
The Governor of the State shall designate local workforce development areas within the State:

(i) Through consultation with the State board; and
(ii) After consultation with chief elected officials and after consideration of comments received through the public comment process as described in section 102(b)(2)(E)(iii)(II).

WIOA further states that the considerations should include the following:

(i) The extent to which the areas are consistent with the labor market areas in the State;
(ii) The extent to which the areas are consistent with regional economic development areas in the State; and
(iii) The extent to which the areas have available the Federal and non-Federal resources necessary to effectively administer activities under subtitle B and other applicable provisions of this Act, including whether the areas have the appropriate education and training providers, such as institutions of higher education and area career and technical education schools.

WIOA states that a unit of general local government (including a combination of such units) or grant recipient that requests, but is not granted designation of an area as a local area, may submit an appeal to the State board under an appeal process established in the State plan.

IV. DEFINITIONS:

PERFORMED SUCCESSFULLY – The term “performed successfully”, used with respect to a local area, means the local area met or exceeded the adjusted levels of performance for primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) (or, if applicable, core indicators of performance described in section 136(b)(2)(A) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, or the Common Measures, as allowed by a USDOL approved waiver of the core indicators of performance, as in effect the day before the date of enactment of this Act) for each of the last 2 consecutive years for
which data are available preceding the determination of performance under this paragraph.

SUSTAINED FISCAL INTEGRITY – The term “sustained fiscal integrity”, used with respect to a local, means that the Secretary, or the State in place of the Secretary, has not made a formal determination, during either of the last 2 consecutive years preceding the determination regarding such integrity, that either the grant recipient or the administrative entity of the area misexpended funds provided under subtitle B (or, if applicable, title I of the workforce investment Act of 1998 as in effect prior to the effective date of such subtitle B) due to willful disregard of the requirements of the provision involved, gross negligence, or failure to comply with accepted standards of administration.

BUSINESS LEADER – A business member of the Local Workforce Development Board or representative of other business organization, such as a chamber of commerce.

COMMUNITY LEADER – An officer or director of an association, community, or civic organization whose focus or activities are related to the services provided by the one-stop delivery system.

V. DESIGNATION AND RE-DESIGNATION POLICY:

WIOA requires that existing federally recognized workforce areas are designated during the first two programs years, which is referred to as Initial Designation, and again after the first two program years, which is referred to as Subsequent Designation. Units of general local government that desire to become a new local workforce area should follow the New Area designation requirements in section B.

A. INITIAL WIOA DESIGNATION FOR EXISTING REGIONS: Existing workforce regions operating in accordance with the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 may request initial designation as a Local Workforce Development Area if they have performed successfully
B. **WIOA DESIGNATION FOR NEW AREAS:** Any unit of general local government may request designation as a Local Workforce Development Area under WIOA. New local area designations will only become effective on July 1 of the next program year. In order for designation to be approved for the start of the next program year, the following steps and timeline must be met.

1. A statement of intent to request designation must be submitted to the West Virginia SWDB no later than February 15th through email. The SWDB will work with the requesting area to determine the deadline for the full request. Submitted materials will be made available for public comment as a part of the review process. The full request for designation as Local Workforce Development Area (“local area”) must include the following components and steps: Submit the request in writing to the Chairperson of the West Virginia Workforce Development Board through email to Angela.M.Fry@wv.gov. Receipt of the request must be documented by electronic return confirmation. If the requestor does not receive confirmation, it is their responsibility to contact WorkForce West Virginia to ensure that the notice has been received.

2. This request must clearly state the circumstances for the request of designation.

3. The request must also address and explain how the following criteria are met:
   
   a. Consistency with natural labor market areas
   b. Consistency with regional economic development areas
   c. Existence of education and training providers, such as institutions of higher education and career and technical education schools in the area
   d. Submission of a service delivery plan that includes a description of resources that would be available to the area to provide services
e. Coordination of multiple resources within areas that are based on labor markets and natural travel patterns of local residents

f. Local support of the implementation strategies to provide quality services to employers and individuals by county commissioners, municipal elected officials including mayors and/or city council members where appropriate, and business or community leaders within the area as demonstrated by letters of support or a vote of support by a city council or other applicable board

g. Local ownership, exhibited by strong involvement of local elected officials and community leaders on the Local Workforce Development Board

h. Local capacity to manage funds, provide oversight of programs, and provide for the proper stewardship of public funds

i. Evidence that the area, in the two program years for which data is available prior to the request, met or exceeded the adjusted levels of performance for primary indicators of performance or the Common Measures and was not subject to the sanctions process resulting from missing the same measure two years in a row, if applicable.

j. Assurance that during the two program years prior to the request, the U.S. Secretary of Labor, or the State in place of the Secretary, has not made a formal determination that the grant recipient or administrative entity for the local area has misexpended funds due to willful disregard, gross negligence, or failure to comply with accepted standards of administration, if applicable.

4. The request must address how the proposed new area designation will impact those other workforce areas from which it is withdrawing. It should be understood by any unit of general local government or combination of such seeking designation, that the new area will only secure the formula allocated funds for each WIOA funding stream based on the formula factors as defined by WIOA. If the area in question becomes part of a consortium, the consortium will determine the distribution of WIOA funds with its region(s).
5. If opposition to the request is voiced by municipalities or counties within the area seeking designation, then the requesting entity will address their request at a public hearing. The requesting entity will have the opportunity to respond to the concerns and questions at the hearing, and all comments will be recorded and used to inform the SWDB’s action on the request. If a hearing is necessary, it will be held within 45 days of receipt of the request. Time and place is to be determined by the SWDB Chair.

6. The Chair will take the request and comments from the public as well as from a public hearing, if applicable and make a recommendation to the full SWDB.

7. The SWDB will submit its recommendation to the Governors within five (5) business days of the State board vote.

8. The final decision rests with the Governor and shall be made prior to May 29th, four weeks prior to the beginning of the fiscal and program year (July 1st).

VI. APPEALS PROCESS POLICY:

An area or areas seeking to be designated or re-designated, as a Local Workforce Development Area, which has requested but has been denied its request for designation or re-designation as a Local Area, may appeal the decision to the West Virginia Workforce Development Board.

1. An appeal must be in writing and filed with the West Virginia Workforce Development Board within fourteen (14) days after notification of the decision. Submit the appeal to the Chairperson of the West Virginia Workforce Development Board by sending an email to Angela.M.Fry@wv.gov.
2. The appeal must contain a specific statement of the grounds upon which the appeal is sought.

3. The State board will have 60 days to review the appeal and make a recommendation to the Governor. The review will take into account the information in the original request and supplemental information provided in the appeal to determine if the criteria set in this policy has been met.

4. The final decision rests with the Governor.

5. If the appeal is connected to a request for initial or subsequent designation under section V. A. or section V. B. of this policy, and if the appeal does not result in designation, the entity may request review by the Secretary of Labor to determine if procedural rights were granted or if the minimum criteria of WIOA Section 106(b)(2) or Section 106(b)(3) were met. This second level of appeal must be sent within 14 days to:

   Assistant Secretary of Employment and Training
   U.S. Department of Labor
   200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
   Washington, DC 20210

   A copy of the appeal must be simultaneously provided to the:

   ETA Regional Administrators
   U.S. Department of Labor
   The Curtis Center, Suite 825 East
   170 South Independence Mall West
In addition, a copy must be sent to WorkForce West Virginia at 112 California Avenue, Charleston, WV 25305.

6. If the final decision of any appeal reverses the prior decision, it will become effective July 1\textsuperscript{st} of the following year.

Definition: Where the term “days” appears, it shall be defined as calendar days, not working days.

VII. IMPLEMENTATION DATE:

Immediately upon receipt.

VIII. INQUIRIES:

Please direct all inquiries to: WorkForce West Virginia

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

**Addressed in preceding question**

(d) Provide the appeals process referred to in section 121(h)(2)(E) of WIOA relating to determinations for infrastructure funding.
The Governor will determine an infrastructure funding process. When such process is finalized, it will detail an appeals process that complies with WIOA.

**Statewide Activities**

(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.

See Appendix for state policies

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

Statewide Business Survey - West Virginia will use the increase in set-aside funding to conduct a statewide business survey, in conjunction with the state’s workforce partners agencies, to gather information on the needs of business in the state. West Virginia aims to make the statewide business survey a regular exercise in order to ensure that service and workforce training is relevant and responsive to the needs of the business community.

Staff will analyze the need and research for training providers. They would also provide and maintain our eligible training provider list. Continuous improvement to the process will allow for an efficient system to track future performance. We will enhance the system to track results of participants by training type and provider, and also provide cross-matches to employment outcomes. This information will allow potential training participants to make informed decisions about the best type of training and the best training providers to choose based on the employment indicator of a good paying job.

The partners will incorporate IT staff and equipment from the Unified Plan Core Partners to provide a Unified system to allow the sharing of and entering information on all participants in the system. Training would be provided to the Local Areas and one-stop Partners in carrying out data alignment.
A portion of the MACC IT system is currently funded through WIOA and this is the primary system that West Virginia will use.

The partners will assist local areas in developing Regional Plans. This would incorporate the use of industry and sector partnerships across existing boundaries.

The partners will develop Team-Base Case management for the customers at our one-stops. West Virginia will be moving toward team-based customer service as we work to develop a one-stop certification process. Training for one-stop partners and new tools will be needed to ensure consistency across West Virginia. A high priority will be placed on staff training in serving individuals with barriers to employment. A Workforce Achievement type of certification will be developed to deliver a comprehensive training program for all staff at each level of the workforce system. It will support consistency and quality of service across the state.

We will continue to monitor and provide oversight of WIOA Adult, DW, Youth and Adult Education programs as required by WIOA. Technical assistance will be provided to local areas on a regular basis and specialized technical assistance to any areas who fail to meet performance accountability measures.

**Developing a Workforce Readiness Certification:** Working with Governor Tomblin the Workforce Planning Council is exploring development of a workforce readiness certificate program that will be available to high school graduates (and adults) so they can obtain this new certification as a way to better prepare and position themselves for employment.

**Workforce Readiness Credential:** To prepare the future highly skilled employees for our state’s business and industry needs, the partners are developing a WV Governor Workforce Credential for high school seniors and adults to earn. Focus groups with employers identified specific criteria of value. Secondary Criteria included verification of drug-free certification, 95% attendance, State assessment passage, industry credential attainment, and completion of CTE program of study requirements. Adult Criteria include: drug-free certification, high school graduation or equivalency and industry credentials. Online surveys were distributed to business/industry members to rate the
proposed criteria. 80% of the business/industry respondents indicated that if an applicant presented this credential, it could favorably impact the hiring decision.

Statewide system building will be ongoing as we develop all the partnerships and data sharing in West Virginia. This will involve the development and improvement of IT systems, outreach through technology to areas without physical locations, enhancement of the mobile app so that case managers can use the app as a communication tool to provide employment guidance to their customers.

Expanding apprenticeship is another statewide goal for West Virginia to expand and extend apprenticeship and internship opportunities for current students as well as older unemployed and underemployed individuals.

West Virginia will also explore development of a program targeting those incarcerated youth serving their sentence in the state’s juvenile correctional facilities. The goal would be to reduce juvenile recidivism. The same could be said for the state’s incarcerated adult population to assist them back into the workforce.

WorkForce West Virginia coordinates with West Virginia Partnerships to Assure Student Success (WVPASS) as a state initiative of national and state partners that support West Virginia communities by providing them training, technical support and resources for youth and community development. They provide in person career exploration related information to students and parents at high schools and/or technical centers throughout the state.

West Virginia conducts rapid response activities to dislocated workers primarily through employer outreach which is coordinated as a joint Rapid Response Team approach between the State Dislocated Worker Services Unit and the Local Workforce Development Board. Employers are identified and contacted through WARN notices and other notifications of mass lay-offs. Because no two layoffs are identical, the needs of employers and dislocated workers will differ, as will the type and scale of needed services, the impact on the economy, and the availability of job opportunities.
While Rapid Response must be consistent across all layoffs with respect to the quality, effectiveness, and timeliness of service delivery, the response must be customized and responsive to each specific event. Therefore, additional Rapid Response team partners are added at the state and local level for Rapid Response Informational Meetings depending upon the needs of the dislocated workers. For example, if a dislocation has occurred and impacted workers do not receive paychecks, etc. then a representative from the State DOL may participate in the meeting to take statements from the impacted workers, etc. for taking steps for resolution of the problem.

The most common Rapid Response activity is to provide information to dislocated workers in the form of group settings or Rapid Response Informational Meetings. These meetings are held on site at the employer location, One-Stops, union halls, community centers and other locations within the community. On-site Rapid Response meetings are generally held when there are larger groups of dislocated workers in order to take group Unemployment Claims and sign-up for One Stop services and One-Stop orientation sessions. Critical Dislocated Worker Questionnaires are distributed to the dislocated workers to determine their training and reemployment needs so that services can be coordinated at the local and state level in order to meet the needs of the dislocated workers. For instance, if several of the impacted workers identified they were interested in starting their own business then these individuals would be linked to the technical assistance that could be provided through Bureau of Commerce’s Small Business Development Center.

Rapid Response provides a comprehensive array of services to offer transitional services in the form of community resource lists of available services and contact information and reemployment services available through the local On-Stops, such as job search and training opportunities, UI services to accelerate reemployment. Other Rapid Response activities may include Community Resource Fairs, Job Fairs, Training Provider Fairs, etc. that may be conducted in conjunction with Rapid Response Informational Meetings or separately. While most of the effort is usually expended in the early stages of a dislocation event or an impending dislocation, it is important to continue Rapid Response services until all worker and employer needs are met.

The State coordinates layoff aversion strategies through the direct and immediate efforts of the Governor’s Office in connection with the Bureau of Commerce’s WV Development Office Business
and Industrial Development Representatives who mobilize concentrated efforts to salvage any at-risk companies or entities through incumbent worker training through the Governor’s Guaranteed Workforce Program, etc. As companies often do advise the state they are experiencing any difficulties, there is timely sharing of any pertinent information of any at-risk companies between the State Dislocated Worker Services Unit and the Business and Industry Development Representatives so the layoff aversion strategies can be quickly implemented. In the event the layoff aversion strategies have not been shared at all local and state levels because of the sensitivity and confidentiality of some of the processes involved in averting a layoff, the State Dislocated Worker Services Unit communicates directly with the Secretary of the Bureau of Commerce with a notification of a need for the provision of Rapid Response services for the majority of dislocations occurring anywhere in the state and receives clearance to proceed with Rapid Response services. This assures that Rapid Response

(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.

West Virginia does not have specific policies or procedures relating to rapid response and natural disasters. Dislocated workers experiencing displacement due to a natural disaster, such as flooding, would be covered under the State’s Rapid Response coordination of services. Therefore, a State Rapid Response Team in conjunction with local Rapid Response Team members and partners could be deployed to the disaster site to conduct Rapid Response Informational Meetings and related Rapid Response activities if necessary. If a natural disaster occurred and following a FEMA disaster declaration, the State would immediately apply for a National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) for a disaster temporary work program for disaster clean-up activities which would be coordinated with FEMA and State Homeland Security and Office of Emergency Services. The availability of the temporary work program would also be highlighted at Rapid Response meetings. If the magnitude of the disaster resulted in mass layoffs/plant closures, and if there was not sufficient WIOA formula
funding or Governor’s Discretionary funding available at the state level, then the State would apply accordingly for a mass layoff NDWG. If the disaster lead to a sizeable mass layoff NDWG being awarded to the State, the Governor’s Office would take the lead in implementing a state emergency plan mobilizing a host of state and federal resources to meet the needs of the State, which include close coordination of the mass layoff NDWG with the efforts of FEMA and State Homeland Security and Office of Emergency Services as well as other State agencies.

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

The State’s early intervention to worker groups on whose behalf a TAA petition has been filed is in conjunction with our WIOA Rapid Response activities. In most cases, by the time a TAA petition is filed. WIOA rapid response activities have already taken place. One we learn a TAA petition has been filed, we provide the additional information specific to Trade, for example ensuring workers are aware of particular deadlines, through TAA/TRA Benefit Rights Informational Meeting (BRIM) to explain all of the services available through TAA. Since the impacted workers have already received critical information at a previous Rapid Response meeting, the BRIM Meeting focuses only on TAA benefits and services.

(b) Adult and Dislocated Worker Program Requirements
(2) **Work-Based Training Models** If the State is utilizing work-based training models (e.g. on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, transitional jobs, and customized training) as part of its training strategy and these strategies are not already discussed in other sections of the plan, describe the State’s strategies for how these models ensure high quality training for both the participant and the employer.

One-Stop Centers and WDBs will provide access to work-based training services that are aligned with sector strategies and demand occupations. Services include on-the-job training (OJT), incumbent worker training, transitional jobs, and customized training (CT) that will combine workforce training with related instruction, skill upgrading and retraining, entrepreneurial training, job readiness training, in combination with Adult Basic Education (ABE) activities, as appropriate.

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

The state will require the LWDBs to identify and reach out to the Registered Apprenticeship training program sponsors within their local areas. The State will verify with the Office of Apprenticeship the status of each sponsor.

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

**Training Provider Eligibility Procedures**

Initial Application and Eligibility Requirements
Training providers not currently on the ETPL who choose to apply for the ETPL will need to complete items 2(a) through 2(g) below. Current providers of training who wish to add a new program of study to the ETPL must complete items 2(d) through 2(f) below.

1. Submit a completed Providers of Training Services Initial Application for processing to WorkForce West Virginia at the following link:
   https://public.workforcewv.org/ServiceProvider/ServiceProviderEnrollment.asp

2. Training Providers must provide the following:

   a. Provider name, contact information, and Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN).

   b. Evidence of Provider accreditation and/or licensure with appropriate state or other governing entity.

   c. Student grievance and refund policy and procedure.

   d. Information pertaining to program including, CIP, performance, cost, partnership with business, and alignment of training with in-demand occupations.

   e. Evidence of Program accreditation and/or licensure with appropriate state or other governing entity.

   f. The provider agrees they will begin to gather student data and will submit student data by September 30th for the previous academic year defined as July 1 through June 30 (i.e. On September 30, 2016, data will be due for students who completed by June 30, 2015).

   g. Must provide all assurances, including but not limited to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
3. Upon receipt of completed application and program data, WorkForce West Virginia shall attempt to make an initial determination of statewide eligibility within 15 business days. Training providers will be contacted via email if the completed application and/or program data requires clarification.

4. The LWDB will then have 10 business days to review and make comments to the state prior to the official determination of eligibility and placement on the ETPL.

5. Upon successful initial eligibility determination by WorkForce West Virginia, the training program will be added to the ETPL. Training providers may check their provider/program status at: https://public.workforcewv.org/ForgotPassword.asp?

6. New providers will be continually added to the ETPL as they become eligible. Initial eligibility remains in effect for a maximum of one year. (All continuing eligibility applications must be received by September 30).

**Transitional Eligible Training Provider List July 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015**

Training providers who were on the ETPL as of the date WIOA was enacted, July 21, 2014, will remain on the ETPL until December 31, 2015. In order to remain on the ETPL after December 31, 2015, transitional training providers must apply for renewal following the renewal application and continuing eligibility requirements described below by September 30, 2015.

**Renewal Application and Continuing Eligibility Requirements**

Training providers, who currently have programs listed on the ETPL and want to have their programs remain on the ETPL, must follow the procedures for continuing eligibility determination as follows:

Training providers must apply for renewal by September 30th. The eligibility period will span the respective following two calendar years (January 1—December 31).
Submit a completed Providers of Training Services Renewal Application for processing to WorkForce West Virginia via https://public.workforcewv.org/ForgotPassword.asp?

Application must include:

- updated provider information;
- information on each program pertaining to alignment of training with in-demand occupations; and
- updated program data.

2. Submit student data as referenced in WIOA sections 116 and 122 for calculation of State Performance Information by September 30th for the previous academic year defined as July 1 through June 30 (i.e. on September 30, 2016, data will be due for students who completed by June 30, 2015). This data will be included on the ETPL for the upcoming calendar year (CY).

3. Upon receipt of completed application and student data, WorkForce West Virginia will make a determination of continuing statewide eligibility based on completeness of submitted information.

4. The Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) will then have 10 business days to review and make comments to the state prior to the official determination of continuing eligibility and placement on the ETPL.

5. The statewide ETPL will be published at: https://public.workforcewv.org/JobSeeker/TrainingCourseSearch.asp by December 15th for the upcoming calendar year.

6. Continued eligibility will be reviewed by the state biennially.

7. Minimum levels of training provider performance may be considered as a criterion for continued eligibility beginning 2018.
(5) Describe how the State will implement and monitor the priority for public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient in accordance with the requirements of WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(E), which applies to individualized career services and training services funded by the Adult Formula program.

Priority of Service will be as follows:

- **First Priority**: Veterans and eligible spouses (covered persons) who are low-income or recipients of public assistance or who are basic skills deficient.
- **Second Priority**: Individuals (non-covered persons) who are low-income or recipients of public assistance or individuals who are basic skills deficient.
- **Third Priority**: Veterans and eligible spouses who are not low-income and are not recipients of public assistance or basic skills deficient.
- **Fourth Priority**: Individuals who do not meet the above priorities.

Definitions:

**Low-income** – An individual who:

1. Receives, or is a member of a family that receives cash benefits under a federal, state or local income based public assistance program;
2. Received an income, or is a member of a family that received a total family income, for the 6-month period prior to application for the program involved (exclusive of unemployment compensation, child support payments, payments described in subparagraph (A), and old-age and survivors insurance benefits received under Section 202 of the Social Security Act that, in relation to family size, does not exceed the higher of-
3. The poverty line for an equivalent period; or
4. 70% of the lower living standard income level, for an equivalent period;
5. Is a member of a household that receives (or has been determined within the 6-month period prior to application for the program involved to eligible to receive) food stamps pursuant to the Food Stamp Act of 1977;
6. Qualifies as a homeless individual, as defined in subsection (a) and (c) of Section 103 of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act.

7. Is a foster child on behalf of whom State or local government payments are made; or

8. In cases permitted by regulations promulgated by the Secretary of Labor, is an individual with a disability whose own income meets the requirements of the program, but who is a member of a family whose income does not meet such requirements.

**Basic Skills Deficient** – An individual unable to compute or solve problems, read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual’s family, or in society. For WIOA purposes, the State further defines Basic Skills Deficient as an individual who:

- Lacks a high school diploma or high school equivalency and is not enrolled in secondary education.
- Enrolled in a Title II Adult Education/Literacy program.
- Reading and/or Math assessment at an 8.9 or below grade level.
- Determined to be Limited English Skills proficient through staff-documented observations.
- Other objective criteria determined to be appropriate by the local area and documented in its required policy.

The State will add this element to their monitoring tool for when the WDBs are reviewed.

(5) Describe the State’s criteria regarding local area transfer of funds between the adult and dislocated worker programs.

With the Governor’s approval, the LWDBs may transfer 100 percent of funds between Adult and Dislocated Worker programs.

(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.30

The local WDBs follow the State’s procurement policies when awarding grants for workforce investment activities, and take into consideration the ability of the providers to meet performance accountability measures.

(2) Describe the strategies the State will use to achieve improved outcomes for out-of-school youth as described in 129(a)(1)(B), including how it will leverage and align the core programs, any Combined State Plan partner programs included in this Plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and any other resources available.

Implement new WIOA regulations regarding youth.

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

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

Continue serving youth as a priority within the workforce development system.

30 Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(f)(V)
The State will support the development of transitional jobs, social enterprises and other work experience strategies to help OSY with limited work histories to develop the skills needed for workplace success.

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

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

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

The State will support LWDB collaboration with YouthBuild, JobCorps, and AmeriCorps sites and will encourage inclusion of those partnerships in local plans.

Offer youth a clear path to success.
To ensure that OSY have access to career pathways, the State will work with local boards to identify on-ramps, access points, and supports which enable participants to enter and successfully complete training and enter employment.

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

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

The State will use the Office of Apprenticeship to promote apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities to youth.
(3) Describe how the state will ensure that all 14 program elements described in WIOA section 129(c)(2) are made available and effectively implemented.12

(3) Describe how the state will ensure that all 14 program elements described in WIOA section a. 129(c)(2) are made available and effectively implemented.31

The State will contract with each of the WDBs to ensure that each of the 14 program elements are administered in their local area.

(4) Provide the language contained in the State policy for “requiring additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment” criterion for out-of-school youth specified in WIOA section 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VIII) and for “requiring additional assistance to complete an education program, or to secure and hold employment” criterion for in-school youth specified in WIOA section 129(a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII).

An individual must meet the following criteria in order to be identified as a youth who needs additional assistance:

1. Must be between the ages of 14 and 24, and
2. Require additional assistance to complete an educational program or secure and hold employment, and
3. Meet one or more of the following conditions:
   a. Youth at risk of dropping out of school.
   b. Immigrant Youth.
   c. Youth with limited English proficiency.

31 Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(I)
d. Youth deficient in occupational skills.

e. Youth who resides in areas with high rates of poverty, crime and/or unemployment.

f. Youth who has serious barriers to employment, including but not necessarily limited to, stated current or past substance abuse, truancy, absence of positive adult role models, and diagnosed emotional disorders.

By expanding the definition of “youth who needs additional assistance” WDBs will be able to serve at-risk youth in a more equitable manner. The following is a list of acceptable source documents required to support an eligibility staff person/case manager identifying a youth as needing additional assistance (clearly identifying which condition the youth met):

1. Individual Service Strategy (ISS).
2. Case Note.
3. WIA intake of registration form.
4. State MIS.
5. Self-Attestation

a. 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.

WV State Law does not define not attending or attending school.

b. If utilizing the portion of the basic skills deficient definition contained in WIOA Section 3(5)(B), include the specific State definition.
Basic Skills Deficient – An individual unable to compute or solve problems, read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual’s family, or in society. For WIOA purposes, the State further defines Basic Skills Deficient as an individual who:

- Lacks a high school diploma or high school equivalency and is not enrolled in secondary education.
- Enrolled in a Title II Adult Education/Literacy program.
- Reading and/or Math assessment at an 8.9 or below grade level.
- Determined to be Limited English Skills proficient through staff-documented observations.
- Other objective criteria determined to be appropriate by the local area and documented in its required policy.

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

Not Applicable

(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.

At this time West Virginia will not be requesting waivers

WIOA Partner Integration
To ensure alignment and integration, all WIOA core programs have mutual memorandums of understanding that help facilitate an integrated service delivery system. Staff members of each core partner will be cross-trained and knowledgeable about each core program in order to make appropriate customer referrals. The WIOA core partners will continue to maintain communication at the state and local levels on a regular basis. Common customer information and service provision data will be collected and stored in a data warehouse. This information will be shared among the partners in order to provide better and more efficient services to individuals enrolled in one or more programs and to employers served by the system.

SERVICES FOR YOUTH

With the enactment of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), special emphasis has been placed on services to youth, defined as individuals aged 24 years or younger. The WIOA core partners, comprised of WorkForce West Virginia, Adult Education, and the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (WVDRS) have long served this population. However, the new legislation requires a substantial re-allocation of funds to meet the new service provision expectations. Specifically, Workforce is now required to use 75 percent of its local area youth funds to be allocated to workforce investment activities for out-of-school youth and 20 percent of its local area youth funds to be allocated for work experiences. Additionally, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services is now required to reserve at least 15 percent of its budget for the provision of pre-employment transition services (PETS) to students with disabilities while they are in high school. With these requirements in mind, it can be said that the youth to be served fall into two separate groups, in-school and out-of-school, and that these two groups are served primarily by different WIOA core partners, though any individual served by the Workforce Development System
(WDS) might be served by all three WIOA core partners, perhaps simultaneously. Out-of-school youth are primarily served by WorkForce West Virginia and Adult Education, while in-school youth are primarily served by the State’s education system (a non-WIOA partner) and West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services, for those eligible students with disabilities. Adult Education is prohibited from providing direct services to in-school youth.

**In-School Youth**

Primary responsibility for services to in-school youth falls, in a general sense, to West Virginia’s education system. The primary workforce development need of all in-school youth is a quality, high school-level education, provided by the teachers in the public and private school systems. Because of this need’s precedence, the role of WorkForce West Virginia regarding in-school youth is diminished. Among the WIOA core partners, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services plays the largest role in the development of in-school youth, albeit only for students with disabilities. Students seeking employment who do not qualify for vocational rehabilitation (e.g., not disabled, does not meet Order of Selection requirements) are referred from West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services to WorkForce West Virginia as needed. WorkForce West Virginia distributes funding to each of the State’s local Workforce Development Boards, which are allowed to spend up to 25 percent of their youth funds on workforce investment activities for in-school youth.

West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services has had a long standing partnership with West Virginia’s education system, at both the State and local level. As such, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services has cooperative agreements with the State Education Agency and each of the 55 Local Education Agencies in West Virginia. These cooperative agreements between West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services and the Education Agencies, assure that each student with a disability in the state who needs special education, vocational education, and/or vocational rehabilitation services is identified and that the appropriate services, are made available to the individual.

West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services offices are located in some of the state’s largest schools. Counselors visit every high school in the state to initiate rehabilitation services needed for
transition from school to work. This allows the counselor to develop a collaborative relationship and assist the student in identifying goals, services, and service providers related to employment options prior to transition. A greater emphasis is now being placed for counselors to do outreach with these students and their parents/guardians during their sophomore year (rather than their junior year, as was formerly practiced) in order to maximize the counseling opportunities.

Since the enactment of WIOA, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services has begun to focus on providing services, particularly PETS, to high school students with disabilities starting in the 10th grade. To accomplish this, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services assigned 44 counselors to work solely with high school students with disabilities, including students enrolled at the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and Blind. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services’ school counselors specialize in providing PETS to students with disabilities. Of these 44 PETS counselors, 43 work solely with high school students and have no other assignments. Expected benefits include increased counselor presence in schools, increased Individualized Educational Program (IEP) meeting attendance, increased provision of PETS, and an increase in outreach and awareness of vocational rehabilitation (VR) services to high school students with disabilities. Counselors will also stay in contact with educators to discuss and attempt to resolve educational difficulties as they arise.

Pre-employment transition services are mandated under WIOA and include the following:

- Job exploration counseling
- Work-based learning experiences, which may include in-school or after school opportunities or experience outside the traditional school setting (including internships), that is provided in an integrated environment to the maximum extent possible
- Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institution of higher education
- Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living
- Instruction in self-advocacy, which may include peer mentoring
The 2015 West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) indicated that job exploration counseling was the most frequently reported pre-employment transition service need. In accordance with this, and per the requirements of WIOA, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services has recently restructured its field services unit, creating a subdivision of counselors that focus solely on providing services, including PETS, to students with disabilities. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services counselors in high schools will provide Pre-employment Transition Services to students with disabilities, especially job exploration counseling, in order to give students with disabilities and their parents/guardians a better understanding of labor market conditions, current and emerging career opportunities, and the necessary education and training requirements related to those opportunities. This information, provided to West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services by WorkForce West Virginia, affords students with disabilities the greatest opportunity for an informed decision regarding work and their potential careers.

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

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

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

PETS rehabilitation counselors are also invited to participate in IEP meetings. During these meetings the counselor describes West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services services, policies, and procedures as appropriate. The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services counselor determines the student’s eligibility and order of selection category utilizing information generated from the school, the student, and West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services. Prior to or shortly after the student’s IEP transition meeting occurs, Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) development begins so both the student and counselor have an idea of what rehabilitation services will be necessary to meet the student’s vocational goal. Therefore, if the student needs additional training or assessment prior to vocational goal determination, this information is already collected so that planned rehabilitation services may begin. IPE development and approval for students with disabilities, including those able to be served if West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services is on an order of selection, will begin as early as appropriate during the transition process, but before the student determined to be eligible leaves the school setting.

**Out-of-School Youth**

All of the WIOA core partners are able to serve out-of-school youth who qualify for services. Adult Education works exclusively with out-of-school populations, many of whom are ages 24 and under. The core partners work, in tandem, on many workforce development activities. The partners all have memorandums of understanding at the state and regional levels and also collaborate on specific projects at local levels. For example, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services and
Adult Education are collaborating with a university to assist adult education students in transitioning to post-secondary education through a curriculum that teaches time management, a basic math refresher, and any other identified needs for individuals with disabilities returning to post-secondary education. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services, WorkForce West Virginia, and Adult Education also collaborate in workforce development region 2 as part of WIOA One-Stop Management Partner meetings with local development groups to better identify and facilitate needed services for the local area. In West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services Districts 4 and 6, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services has partnered with Adult Education to increase efforts to reach potential VR consumers being served by Adult Education and the Strategic Planning in Occupational Knowledge for Employment and Success (SPOKES) program. SPOKES was created by WV Adult Education under a contract between the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDOE) Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development and the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR), and in collaboration with the Workforce Development Boards (WDBs).

West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services consumers who were served as students with disabilities receive continued VR services under the guidance of a West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services “Transition” counselor, upon graduation from high school. These transition counselors are responsible for the delivery of services to individuals with disabilities until those individuals’ cases are closed, regardless of the individuals’ ages at the time of closure. Frequently, these continued services include higher education. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services understands the importance of having a recognized postsecondary degree from the perspectives of both employers and job seekers. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services has always strived for quality, career-based employment outcomes for its consumers, when appropriate. In this aim, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services has a long history of providing its consumers with the necessary training that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential. In FY 2015, over $11 million, representing over half of all case services expenses went toward training. Of this amount, the majority was for four-year college/university and junior/community college tuition. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services also has a liaison with postsecondary institutions across the state including 44 colleges, universities, community and technical colleges.
For youth with disabilities who do not graduate from high school, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services will also work closely with Adult Ed, referring consumers as needed, to ensure that these individuals have an adequate opportunity to obtain a completed high school level education. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services will also provide assistance as needed to VR consumers in Adult Education programs to ensure that these consumers have the means to progress through and complete these programs if doing so requires the circumnavigation of functional limitations based on the consumers’ disabilities.

West Virginia’s adult basic education programs address the needs of adult learners as they strengthen local communities and businesses. Adults who lack the skills and knowledge to fully participate in, contribute to, and benefit from West Virginia’s postsecondary education system and economy are eligible to access adult education services in a variety of settings across the state. Core services are offered at all locations to adult learners who meet the federal eligibility requirements for enrollment. These learners:

- Have attained 16 years of age;
- Are not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under state law;
- Lack sufficient mastery of basic educational skills to function effectively in society;
- Do not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or have not achieved an equivalent level of education; and/or
- Are unable to speak, read, or write the English language.

Beginning in July 2015 under WIOA, adult education and literacy activities were expanded to include adult education, literacy, workplace adult education and literacy activities, family literacy activities, English language acquisition activities, integrated English literacy and civics education, workforce preparation activities, and integrated education and training.

Comprehensive interventions are designed to address skill and knowledge deficits across the levels defined in Title II of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. Building on policies and initiatives created through this comprehensive
system of advising, coordination, and support, providers leverage success using innovative processes. These processes unify and inform the delivery of Adult Basic Education (ABE) courses, English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction, and high school credential programs. Following are examples of research-based innovative practices that support the implementation and scaling of college and career pathways that accelerate student completion and foster economic growth.

1. **FastTrack Programs – Increasing Transitions from Levels 1, 2 and 3**

Funded providers will use key elements of research-based programs, e.g. contextualization, team teaching, and enhanced students services to increase the speed at which students’ master basic and ESL skills at federal levels 1, 2, and 3.

These condensed courses feature managed intake and managed enrollment and are typically a six to twelve week accelerated program. FastTrack options include, but are not limited to:

**Basic Skills FastTrack:**

- Programs focused on either English/Language Arts, Mathematics and Numeracy, Science or Writing in Response to Text

**Career Cluster FastTrack:**

- Programs focused on career immersion and career clusters
- Partnerships with Career and Technical Centers
- Partnership efforts between community colleges and community-based organizations and local WDBs
- Workplace projects that partner providers, employers and WDBs

**ESL FastTrack:**

- Flipped classroom models for ESL

FastTrack students acquire the skills needed to transition to basic skills education classes at federal levels 4-6 and/or Professional/Technical or Academic pathways.

2. **Professional/Technical Transitions– Moving Students from Levels 4, 5, and 6 to Postsecondary Success in Professional/Technical Programs**
Students who function primarily at federal levels 4 – 6 can be served in Professional/Technical Transition programs that result in recognized certificates leading to progression along a defined educational and career pathway. It is our hope to make these programs available at every West Virginia community and technical college, and to encourage partnerships with local community based organizations and as part of the education services at state correctional facilities.

- Programs focused on career immersion and career clusters
- Partnerships with Career and Technical Centers
- Partnership efforts between community colleges and community-based organizations and local WDBs
- Workplace projects that partner providers, employers and WDBs
- Flipped classroom models for ESL

3. **Developmental and Academic Transition Programs – Moving Students from Levels 4, 5, and 6 to Postsecondary Success in Academic Programs**

Developmental and Academic Transition programs will employ the same strategies as professional technical transition programs. They will apply these strategies to credit-bearing classes along 2-year degree pathways and ensure accelerated student progress through higher levels of adult education and precollege education and transition into 2-year degree programs.

**Expanding Options for High School Credentials – Certificates and Diplomas**

In light of changes to options for acquiring high school credentials made by the federal government and the growing importance of these certificates and high school diplomas, West Virginia has expanded the options available to adults. Our goal is to ensure that adult learners acquire the necessary credentials by gaining the knowledge and skills demanded in the workforce and required for postsecondary success. Toward that end, West Virginia will continue to award state certificates linked to the recognized high school equivalency state exam (TASC)

**Welfare Reform Initiative**
ABE has a successful history of collaboration with the State’s human services agency. Through a cooperative relationship built on trust and commitment to serving economically disadvantaged West Virginians, the two State agencies work together to respond to the mandates of welfare reform.

**SPOKES**

In 2003, an academic and job preparation skills program entitled SPOKES (Strategic Planning in Occupational Knowledge for Employment and Success) was created by WVABE under a contract between the WVDOE Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development and Department of Health and Human Resources, and in collaboration with some WDBs.

The SPOKES program model was also designed to provide intense daily activities that would address academic and soft skills necessary for adults to pursue gainful employment. Although the program is designed for participants functioning at or above the 4th grade level (FFL 3 and above), there is some flexibility about including participants who score at lower levels. This 4 to 10 week program allows WV WORKS participants to be referred to the program and receive services at the start of each work week. Referrals can be made for the start-up of any week.

The SPOKES program consists of:

- Assessment
- A six-week repeating cycle of modules related to the following components:
  - Employability Skills
  - Job Readiness
  - Work Process Skills
  - Technology Skills, which may include Internet and Computing Core Certification (IC3) work
  - Workplace Academic Skills
- Vocational Training starting Week 5 that may include the following:
  - Customer Service Part 1
  - Customer Service Part 2
  - Microsoft® Office Specialist (MOS)
  - Internet and Computing Core Certification (IC3)
- Work-based Academic Skills (if applicable in region)
  - An additional 2-4 week job readiness component, which includes intense job search. SPOKES participants prepare to take the WorkKeys® assessment.

A variety of certificates may be earned by participants who complete the program. Participants officially referred to and enrolled in SPOKES classes must have an identified need for instruction and/or enhancement in one or more of the module areas that prevents them from getting employment or advancing in a job. Individualized, computer-aided, small/whole group, and work-based/site instructional techniques are utilized within the program delivery of services.

In addition to having a certified full-time WVABE SPOKES instructor, and in some cases a part time WVABE SPOKES instructor, the SPOKES program may have access to a career development consultant (CDC) and share a blended classroom with an ABE instructor.

Programs are encouraged to pilot and implement additional evidence and research-based strategies for college and career pathways that meet the goals of this plan.

Pursuant to WIOA, WorkForce West Virginia is required to allocate 75% of its local area youth funds to out-of-school youth. These funds are used to carry out programs that provide the following elements:

a. tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
b. alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate;
c. paid and unpaid work experiences, including summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year; pre-apprenticeship programs; internships and job shadowing; and on-the-job training opportunities;
d. occupational skill training;
e. education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
f. leadership development opportunities;
g. supportive services;
h. adult mentoring;
i. follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate;
j. comprehensive guidance and counseling,
k. financial literacy education;
l. entrepreneurial skills training;
m. services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area; and
n. activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.

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**TITLE I-B ASSURANCES**

| 1. | The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients or basic skills deficient;  
| Attached Priority of Service Policy |

| 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;  
<p>| Priority of Service for Veterans is implemented by WorkForce West Virginia in accordance with Title 38 part III Ch. 42. 4215 via One Stop Career Centers located throughout the state, by using clear and concise guidelines, and by trained staff familiar with state guidelines. To ensure access to services for veterans and veterans with significant barriers to employment, the state has established formal guidance regarding priority of service for veterans that all Wagner Peyser and Workforce West Virginia staff must follow. WIOA guidance notice 4-16 referencing Workforce Innovation &amp; Opportunity Act of 2014 section 3(63) (A), 38 U.S.C 4215, and 20 CFR 1010 provides this guidance. |</p>
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| 3. | The State has established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce Development Board members;  
   | Attached Guidance Notice 2-15 |
| 4. | The State established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce Development Boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2);  
   | Attached Guidance Notice 2-15 |
| 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;  
   | Not Applicable |
| 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;  
   | A written policy is being developed 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);

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;

[i] Youth activities in accordance with WIOA section 128[b][2] or [b][3],
Fiscal staff follow the guidelines set by WIOA in section 128 for allocating funds to the regions.
Once the TEGL has been issued and WorkForce has received the Notice of Obligation (NOO) from the Department of Labor (DOL) information is gathered from our Research, Information, and Analysis (RIA) to begin the allocation process. The data received from RIA breaks out the unemployment numbers and ‘economically disadvantaged youths’ by county and region.
Each region is guaranteed 90% of the prior year’s allocation based on the percentage of the allocation received in the prior year. Per the guidance in the TEGL and WIOA Regulations the remaining funds after the ‘hold harmless’ portion of the allocation has been calculated, the remaining funds are broke down by Unemployed, Excess, Unemployed, and Economically disadvantaged youth.
[ii] Adult and training activities in accordance with WIOA section 133[b][2] or [b][3]
WorkForce follows the same guidelines for allocating Adult funds as used in Youth funds except for ‘economically disadvantaged adult’ versus ‘economically disadvantaged youth.’
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<td>9.</td>
<td>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; In the event a State WDB, department, or agencies administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that WDB, board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs under Title I.</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report. Not Applicable</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>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); 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).</td>
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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.

WorkForce West Virginia will work with the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) to establish a structure to upgrade the Workforce Development System staff skills so jobseekers and employers are provided a high quality service. WorkForce West Virginia will propose the use of a book developed by a Local Area in West Virginia focused on Employment and Sector Partnering to establish a certificate system that must be completed by all Employment Service staff. The use and development of the book will be accomplished through staff input and guidance from the WDC. This tool would strengthen staff knowledge of Employment Services and partner services which would allow for a well trained staff to assist the customer in obtaining the proper services needed for employment. This development would also give ES staff insight into industry and business in their Local Area and surrounding Local Areas.

WorkForce West Virginia will continue to use established professional development activities in order to meet goals, develop staff skills, and ensure a competent Employment Service staff. In addition, we will enhance training curricula that incorporates policies, processes, and input from Wagner-Peyser, UI, and/or core partner agency staff. Experts in the fields of UI, WIOA, Employment Service and core partner staff will recommend related topics. WorkForce West Virginia will continue to train employees on the pertinent skills needed in the AJC through peer and management direction.

(2) Describe strategies developed to support training and awareness across core programs and the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program and the training provided for Employment Services and WIOA staff on identification of UI eligibility issues and referral to UI staff for adjudication.
As training needs are identified, WorkForce West Virginia will develop curriculum and conduct instructional sessions. Self-paced UI process training tutorials are available via the intranet. These tutorials will be enhanced to incorporate the identification of eligibility issues and appropriate referral for UI adjudication. Training will also be available locally across partner agencies to ensure system cross-training objectives are met. Core partners will be utilizing the same management information system and trained to identify then record UI adjudication issues for further review by UI staff.

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

WorkForce West Virginia’s UI and ES staff are fully cross trained to assist individuals access a full range of services. The State maintains a UI presence in each Center to ensure that customers meet the eligibility requirements during the initial application process and to offer support throughout the entire claim cycle. Eligibility information and claimant rights and responsibilities is also available on the website in a mobile friendly environment. Claimants are provided an opportunity to gather information and apply timely for benefits in remote itinerant sites staffed by well trained staff.

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

West Virginia claimants are profiled at the time the initial claim is filed to determine the level of assistance and support necessary to return to work. New and additional claims are taken in-person where UI eligibility is reviewed, an orientation of center services and labor market information is presented, and labor exchange (ES) services are required. Every claimant must be able, available,
and actively seeking full time work for each week UI is claimed and must attest to the number of job contacts made during the week claimed. They are advised they must apply and accept suitable work, based on their work experience, training and claim duration. UI eligibility requirements and the consequences for failing to meet them are reviewed during benefit rights interviews and are available for review online or through handout materials.

In addition, those selected to participate in UI Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) will receive all of the mandatory program components to include the creation of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) and additional services such as job search workshops, job search assistance or referrals to other partner programs. The RESEA workshop is designed to motivate and encourage those likely to exhaust benefits by exploring previous work experience, accomplishments and unique skill sets and how to effectively use while job searching. During the workshop individuals identify strengths and skill sets, set short and long term goals, begin developing a job search plan, and effectively network both in person and using social media.

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

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

WorkForce West Virginia’s UI and ES staff are fully cross trained to assist individuals access a full range of services. Concentrated, individualized and group services including reemployment assessment, continuing eligibility and job placement are provided to claimants identified as either most or least likely to exhaust benefits. Regionalized claimant-centered labor market information is available through handouts or via workforcewv.org.

(2) Registration of UI claimants with the State’s employment service if required by State law;
WorkForce West Virginia applies an early-intervention approach to delivering services to unemployment compensation recipients. Claimants are dual enrolled from day one for Wagner-Peyser reemployment services and provided an orientation to all available One-Stop services. Common data is uploaded daily from the UI mainframe to the ES registration system.

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

The State administers the unemployment insurance work test as required. Claimants who fail to participate or report to suitable opportunities are held ineligible until issues are resolved. The UI management information system identifies potential eligibility issues by the claimant’s responses to weekly certification questions and by assessing the data entered by staff during eligibility assessments. Any job referral made is reconciled either by claimant or the employer or both. The management information system (MACC) generates a follow-up form to the employer every 10 days. When returned, the results are populated to the UI system and a stop placed on payments of claimants who failed to report.

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

WorkForce West Virginia ES/UI staff will coach and direct claimants to educational opportunities if training is advisable to the desired employment outcome. Income test information will be provided to assist the customer apply for available financial aid. Cost and performance data, when available, will be available for review so customers will be able to make informed decisions on schooling. Joint
partner staff training sessions will provide information and resource tools for staff to guide their referrals.

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

(1) Assessment of Need. Provide an assessment of the unique needs of farmworkers in the area based on past and projected agricultural and farmworker activity in the State. Such needs may include but are not limited to: employment, training, and housing.

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

West Virginia continues to have 95% or more of all farms located within the state designated as small family farms. In 2014 there were approximately 22,100 family-owned and operated farms totaling 3.62 acres with an average of 164 acres per farm. As a result of farm activities around the state, more than $560 million worth of crops and livestock were produced. Various state agencies are joining forces to teach citizens to utilize more of the state’s available land, to grow and sustain crops, to feed families and increase production for specialty crops that will lead to an increase in local and state revenue. There has been a noticeable increase in farm-to-school related programs, local community gardening projects, enhanced collaboration between colleges/universities and community groups such as volunteer organizations, churches, etc.

1) Identifying the top five labor-intensive crops, the months of heavy activity, and the geographic area of prime activity;

The top five (5) labor-intensive crops, the months of heavy activity, and the geographic area of prime activity are listed below:
Apples - August through October is the heaviest activity period in orchards located in Jefferson, Berkeley and Morgan Counties

- In 2013, NASS USDA government Statistics listed West Virginia ranked 9th in the nation for apple production

Peaches - July through August is the heaviest activity period in orchards located in Jefferson, Berkeley and Morgan Counties

- In 2013, the NASS USDA government Statistics indicated the state held a national ranking of 12th place for the production of peaches

Note: Some of the larger orchards are planting berries which have increased activity during Mid-May through September and these farms are located in Jefferson, Berkeley and Morgan Counties

Hay and other hay products - May through September is the heaviest activity period with locations in Jackson, Greenbrier, Preston, Hampshire and Mason Counties

Corn for grain - April through October is the heaviest activity period on farms located in Jefferson, Mason, Hardy, Preston, Pendleton, Wood, Randolph, Berkeley and Monroe Counties.

Soybeans - April through October is the heaviest activity period on farms located in Mason, Jefferson, Hardy and Berkeley Counties

2) Summarize the agricultural employers’ needs in the State (i.e. are they predominantly hiring local or foreign workers, are they expressing that there is a scarcity in the agricultural workforce); and

The Migrant and Seasonal farmworker (MSFW) population has changed over the years but their numbers of have stabilized. There are fewer families making the journey up the migrant trail from Florida through the Carolinas, Georgia, etc., before stopping in West Virginia (WV) to work. In the Eastern Panhandle once harvesting activities associated with the fruit and berry season decreases these migratory workers have already secured work or they will seek assistance from the MSFW Outreach staff to help them find work in another state north of WV. When farm workers arrive they may need assistance with food until they receive their first paycheck. Additionally, some workers do not wish to stay in employer provided dwellings; they may request help with finding temporary suitable and affordable housing. There are local resources available which are offered to them.
During the farm workers’ registration/orientation process the full array of services which a MSFW may choose to utilize are explained to him/her, as well as written materials regarding community services are distributed to everyone.

As previously reported, the majority of the WV farms are family farms and family members and friends generally, are able to complete required tasks related to farming activities. However, the medium to large farm owners depend upon securing local workers as well as foreign workers to ensure they have sufficient labor to meet their respective needs. In 2014 WV agricultural employers received certification for (37) H2-A workers and the state ranked 37th out of 50 states for certification of H2-A workers. Upon reviewing the state’s last four (4) years of foreign labor certification data, the number of H2-A agricultural employers in the state has more than doubled with a corresponding increase in foreign laborers working in the fields and orchards.

The agricultural employers in this state are experiencing serious problems locating, hiring and keeping local agricultural workers who are willing, able and available for work. The work is labor intensive and many farms are located in rural areas some distance away from public transportation. Many U. S. workers in WV have refused these farm jobs and informed employers they cannot work for the following reasons.

Agricultural jobs are not acceptable because-

a) the physically demanding work requires a worker to be outside in extreme temperatures  
b) the pay is too low  
c) they do not have transportation to the job site  
d) they do not have a valid driver’s license

Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFWs)

Farmworkers are unique because they have chosen to perform labor intensive work to help put food on the family table for themselves and others. Today, with the big corporate farms dominating specific food markets; independent farmers cannot compete with big farms in automation, marketing and distribution. Therefore, family farm owners generally pay minimum wage which may not be a “livable” wage for a person responsible for meeting the needs of his/her family members.
And in West Virginia farmworkers must have reliable transportation and a valid driver’s license to travel to the farms that are primarily located in the rural hills and hollows around this state. These obstacles exist and make farm work less attractive to them.

3) Identifying any economic, natural, or other factors that are affecting agriculture in the State or any projected factors that will affect agriculture in the State. In WV a new phenomenon has gained momentum from schools to community centers and churches. Tunnel farms are popping up everywhere. Tunnel farming, aquaculture and indoor tier farming are extending the vegetable crop season. These innovative alternative farm methods have a positive impact on agriculture because the harvest season is extended; the plants remain outdoors, generally grow larger than field plants, have a higher yield and produce better quality of fruits and vegetables with less disease and insect damage.

Additionally, the number of farms in the state continues to decrease. As farmers mature and they are not able to continue farming the land, the art of family farming seems to diminish. More families are electing to sell their land for economic development projects. Other factors impacting agriculture in the state are climate change and extreme weather conditions. For example, in 2013 the weather conditions were great for the fruit trees and vines in the Eastern Panhandle orchards. During 2014, a cold harsh winter and extra spring rains ruined the fruit hanging on the trees and vines.

But the weather conditions were near perfect in 2015 and the Eastern Panhandle had fruit trees and vines bud early in the season yielding enormous bushels of fruit. In the future, weather conditions will continue to be a major factor influencing agriculture in this state.

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

The MSFWs in WV may be classified into two (2) groups. Group “A” farmworkers who live and work in the state and enjoy performing farm work part of the year. They usually work part-time or seasonal on a farm that is located within daily commuting distance of their home. Group “B” farmworkers migrate into West Virginia, traveling to and through the state working on farms until the harvest time ends. These farmworkers follow the migrant stream from Florida to states north of WV. They have permanent homes in various states but choose to move from state to state to perform farm work. Many of the MSFWs who travel to the Eastern Panhandle have long established working relationships with orchard operators. There appears to be an unspoken gentlemen’s agreement between the workers and employer predicated on “see you same time next year”. These farmworkers, family members and friends have a history of migrating from state to state harvesting crops. Most of these workers are males between the ages of twenty and sixty-nine years of age. A quick review of the MSFWs served between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2015 revealed that 97% of the 1,189 workers fell into this age range. And a few of the workers operate under the direction of a farm labor contractor who brings his select group of workers to an employer.

During the peak seasons in the Eastern Panhandle region apple harvesting requires about 250 MSFWs, 200 workers are needed for peach harvesting activities and approximately 40 to 50 workers for harvesting berries and other fruit and small vegetables. During Program Year 2014, the MSFW Outreach Specialists in the Eastern Panhandle projected to contact 600 MSFWs and actually contacted 763 workers at their worksites. Also, partner agencies annually contact at least 200 MSFWs in the field or at the labor camps. Additionally, there are other areas of the state where MSFWs may be utilized for farm work but their work activity is not a matter of public record. There could be approximately 50 up to 200 MSFWs working in various locations around the state working on seasonal jobs.

(2) Outreach Activities. The local offices outreach activities must be designed to meet the needs of MSFWs in the State and to locate and contact MSFWs who are not being reached through normal intake activities. Describe the State agency’s proposed strategies for:
Outreach Activities- Contacting farmworkers who are not being reached by the normal intake activities conducted by the employment service offices staff.

Proposed Outreach Plan:

- AJC staff, MSFW Outreach Specialists and State Monitor Advocate will contact employers during the pre-harvest and post-harvest seasons to assess their farmworker needs.
- SWA staff will contact and provide services to over 600 MSFWs at the worksite and camps.
- Partner agencies will contact and provide services to approximately 250 MSFWs at their homes and labor camps.

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

Technical assistance is provided to outreach workers which may include trainings, conferences, additional resources, and increased collaboration with other organizations on topics such as one-stop center services (i.e. availability of referrals to training, supportive services, and career services, as well as specific employment opportunities), the employment service complaint system, information on other organizations serving MSFWs in the area, and a basic summary of farmworker rights, including their rights with respect to the terms and conditions of employment. Additionally, this information is shared among the MSFW Partnership group which meets quarterly and involves agencies that offer services to this special population. The MSFW Partners’ include representatives from the following organizations-NFJP-Telamon Corporation, Job Corps, Community Colleges and
Higher Education, Catholic Social Services, Shenandoah Valley Health Services, Occupational Health and Safety Agency, Department of Health and Human Resources and the State Workforce Agency.

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

Technical assistance and training is available for SWA merit staff at all AJCs for professional development activities to ensure they are able to provide high quality services to both jobseekers and employers. Such training may include information regarding the availability of core programs including the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program and training on identification of UI eligibility issues.

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

The State believes in continuous improvement and will strive to maintain quality services to agricultural employers. Therefore, we hope to pursue the following opportunities to work with our agricultural employers and partners

- implement workshops on utilization of the Agricultural Recruitment System.

- develop collaborative services through Workforce WV and Dept. of Agriculture

- promote an agricultural intern career path program

- strengthen the customer–friendly relationship between Wage & Hour and employers

- Utilize the MSFW Partnership group to educate and share in marketing the complaint system to farmworkers and advocacy groups.

The SWA has joined with other MSFW service providers including NFJP grantees and other service providers. In 2015 we started to meet on a quarterly schedule, it is our intent to expand our group. The SMA has been responsible for contacting other partners and she will continue to do so. Before December 31, 2017, we are looking forward to adding representatives from the WV Dept. of
Agriculture, Wage and Hour Division, WVU-Ag Dept., WVSU-Ag Dept. and Environmental Protection Agency.

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

The MSFW Partnership group was beneficial in facilitating coordination of outreach efforts with NFJP grantees as well as with the other public and private community service agencies and MSFW groups. For at least one (1) day a week, a bi-lingual bi-cultural staff member from Telamon Corporation has been stationed in the reception area of the AJC in Martinsburg to greet and assist all customers and to expedite access to the full array of services available for all, including the MSFWs. Mr. Juan Rosa Sanchez, Telamon staff, accompanied the MSFW Outreach Workers and State Monitor Advocate on field visits, field checks and housing inspections. Our partnership objectives were to enhance communication and strengthen collaboration to produce seamless services without duplication. The partner organizations have been identified as entities which provide critical service links to employment, medical, educational and social services for MSFWs. Therefore, it is imperative that all of our staff members work together to promote understanding, accountability and transparency of services for our customers.

(3) Services provided to farmworkers and agricultural employers through the one-stop delivery system. Describe the State agency’s proposed strategies for:

(A) Providing the full range of employment and training services to the agricultural community, both farmworkers and agricultural employers, through the one-stop delivery system. This includes:
   i. How career and training services required under WIOA Title I will be provided to MSFWs through the one-stop centers;

In the field MSFW Outreach staff utilize the following strategies to provide services via personal contact and/or translators to communicate with workers. At the One-Stop and in the field staff use written materials such as brochures and facts sheets printed in the language familiar to the workers in order to inform MSFWs about the core, intensive, training and career services available to them at no charge. Outreach workers have laptop computers and cellphones to complete orientation and
registration as well as aid them in meeting the customer’s needs for supportive services, counseling and job development. Additionally, there are computers which contain Spanish language registration instructions. Should any MSFW require or request career and training services which are available under WIOA Title I to enhance their skill level or to transfer into another career. Services would have to be adapted to meet the needs of that specific customer by outsourcing a staff person to assist him in the field or provide transportation into the One-Stop Center for assistance.

ii. ii. How the State serves agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such services.

Agricultural employers are given written information about the full array of services available to them through the local One-Stop and they are encouraged to visit the facility. Each year local One-Stop staff and Outreach workers are encouraged to add new agricultural employers to their visitation list. The SMA attends annual conferences sponsored by the college and universities agricultural departments, and agricultural associations to promote SWA services. The SMA, MSFW Outreach staff and local office staff attend local state fairs and special community events such as the Apple Harvest, Peach, Blackberry and Strawberry Festivals, etc. to inform the agricultural employers about the full range of employment and training services offered at the local One-Stop. Each year the agricultural associations, employers and public/private agencies involved with agriculture are invited to provide information for inclusion in the state Agricultural Outreach Plan. And if they submit comments the information is shared with Department of Labor.

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

All printed materials relative to the program include information on how to gain materials and include contact information for staff assistance to file Employment Service complaints.

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

Representatives of the AJC routinely make site visits to discuss a full array of services available to the employer. Information on services, program changes, and topics of interest are shared in a variety of means (visits, electronic, etc.)
The SWA has joined with other MSFW service providers including NFJP grantees and other service providers. In 2015 we started to meet on a quarterly schedule; it is our intent to expand our group. Agricultural employers will be encouraged to participate as we move forward.

(4) Other Requirements.

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

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

i. The AOP must include a statement confirming NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations have been given an opportunity to comment on the AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.

The SWA solicits information and suggestions from NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. These entities will be contacted via email and invited to review and comment on the AOP which will be posted on the state Workforce WV webpage. The list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments will be included in the final AOP.

All commenting parties will be informed in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore; and the comments and recommendations received and its responses will be submitted with the final AOP.
Based on the previous AOP, the following actions were accomplished

- State increased the number of new agricultural employers and MSFWs served
- Created the MSFW Partnership with the NFJP organization to unite entities serving MSFWs
- SWA developed a working relationship with two (2) college/university Agricultural Departmental staff
- SWA working with regional agricultural employers to develop a new agricultural economic resource
- SWA participates on the re-constructed federal/state Cross Agency Agricultural Safety Forum

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

A review of the previous four (4) years Wagner-Peyser data reports on performance reveal that the State has been consistent in meeting five (5) of five (5) Equity Ratio Indicators. However, meeting the Minimum Service Level Indicators has been a struggle but generally the state meets five (5) out of seven (7) indicators. During the last two (2) years the MSFW Outreach staff was able to convince agricultural employers of the need to collect this data and work with their payroll staff to capture wages paid $.50 above minimum wage to MSFWs. Now we are meeting that indicator of “Placed $.50 above minimum wage.” The final indicator the state has not been able to meet is “Placed in long term non-placement”. Although outreach staff continue to offer services related to training and career options, the men traveling through WV have not been interested in training or career services.

(D) Assessment of progress. The plan must include an explanation of what was achieved based on the previous AOP, what was not achieved and an explanation as to why the State believes the goals
were not achieved, and how the State intends to remedy the gaps of achievement in the coming year.

The State believes the goal which has not been achieved of placing MSFWs into long term non-agricultural employment may be attainable with assistance from our partners. Through joining with other agencies that serve MSFWs, we are hopeful that someone may help the workers understand the opportunities available to them for free training and career planning.

(E) State Monitor Advocate. The plan must contain a statement confirming the State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved the AOP.

The State Monitor Advocate drafted this plan and has requested comments from other partner agencies that serve MSFWs, agricultural employers, and other entities associated with agriculture in the state.
## WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:

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| 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));  
The Wagner-Peyser Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers in West Virginia. |
| 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;  
West Virginia is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111 in its Martinsburg, WV office. |
| 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  
State Board that administers vocational rehabilitation services fully cooperates with WorkForce West Virginia. |
| 4. | State agency merit-based public employees provide Wagner-Peyser Act-funded labor exchange activities in accordance with Department of Labor regulations. |
| **Wagner-Peyser Act-funded labor exchange activities are provided by state merit-based employees.** |
ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY

(a) Aligning of Content Standards. Describe how the eligible agency will, by July 1, 2017, 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)).

WVDE formally adopted the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education in 2012. Anticipating the adoption of the Common Core, WVAdultEd began work on a standards-based model in 2011. Rollout of the standards for WVAdultEd across the state was in 2012 with sustained professional development continuing in 2013 and 2014. State Leadership funds have paid for the professional development.

The overarching vision for WV Adult Education standards-based education was grounded in three crucial interlocking elements: the standards themselves, teaching to the standards, and accountability. Each of these elements is essential to the success of standards-based education, and “no one element can stand alone without the other two for stability and support.” This relationship is often referred to as the “three legged stool”. (U. S. Department of Education Office of Vocational and Adult Education, 2009)

The starting point and first leg of standards-based education is the standards themselves, which offer measurable objectives on which instructors can base their curricula. “Clear standards allow educators to understand where to direct their energies and give shape to the program as a whole.” The successful implementation of the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education was driven first and foremost by this need; by understanding the standards fully themselves, instructional staff would be better able to make them clear and explicit for students.

The structure of the WVAdultEd professional development encouraged instructors to address standards as part of a learning community. The materials and methods used by the teacher academy and in regional trainings unified learning-by-doing with finding the best ways to implement standards. Besides increasing
instructors’ understanding and ownership of the standards, these innovations resulted in a series of standards-based products that illuminated the standards further for instructors who were wrestling with ways to align their classroom instruction and assessments with standards.

The second leg of the stool, teaching to the standards, was the basis for the professional development designed to guide teachers in the process of using the standards to create curriculum and lessons. Teachers attended professional development where they created fully articulated lesson plans; designed classroom activities integrating research-based instructional practices; created engaging student-centered assignments, and created a range of formative and summative assessments; all explicitly designed to transfer the content of the standards to students. Implementation of these materials into instructional practice provided teachers with the tools to determine whether students were absorbing the essential skills and knowledge that standards-based education aims to impart.

The third and final leg of the stool is accountability. WV Adult Education believes it is essential that instructional staff and programs hold themselves accountable for the implementation of the standards-based instruction and student outcomes. As part of our grant application process in 2015, programs will be required to document how they have implemented the standards-based instructional model show evidence of improved student outcomes and measures according to the standards and, outline innovative solutions when performance falls short of the mark.

In addition, we are extending the work of the academy by asking regional coordinators and master teachers to observe classrooms—from conducting lessons to giving assessments—to identify the predominant standards-based teaching practices evident in practice and to target areas for improvement. When findings from visits to classrooms within the program are analyzed, a clear picture of standards-based instruction emerges allowing state leadership to address the professional development needs of instructional staff.
more effectively—potentially by moving full circle back through one or more of the professional development offerings or by offering one-on-one coaching and mentoring provided by master teachers.

(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 Unified State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of local activities.

Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Section 203 of WIOA) Adult education; Literacy; Workplace adult education and literacy activities; Family literacy activities; English language acquisition activities; Integrated English literacy and civics education; Workforce preparation activities; or Integrated education and training that—

1. Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and

2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

Special Rule. Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or

http://www.adultedcontentstandards.ed.gov/standardsInAction2.asp

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.

Scope of Services

In the past, adult education programs in West Virginia were sometimes viewed as only providing remedial education, a place where students went to achieve high school completion, or for basic skills if they were not college ready. Those times have changed and now our adult education programs are a powerful, life-changing educational experience for the one in six West Virginia adults who lack the basic skills needed to succeed as workers, parents, and citizens. Employers, if denied access to this future population of highly trained and credentialed workers, will lack the skilled workforce critically needed in high demand jobs to compete in a global market. We know we must find ways to continue providing more pathways to meaningful certificates and degrees for all under-trained adults. We can no longer leave anyone behind.

The transition from basic skills to workforce development will be guided by the following:

- Provide high-quality professional development
- Coordinate and align services with core partners
- Implement comprehensive career pathways statewide
Professional Development

While state level planning and leadership is essential, we understand that WIOA will be implemented, in its truest sense, at the local level by program providers. The success or failure of local programs is dependent upon the skills, knowledge and experience of the local education staff.

Career pathways offer an approach to education that links what happens in the classroom with opportunities in the real-world economy. Rather than simply preparing students for postsecondary education, pathways are designed to carry students through a planned series of educational experiences culminating in rewarding careers and a life-sustaining wage.

Effective and timely professional development is critical to program success during this transitional period. Programs will be challenged to develop and facilitate the most innovative and effective instructional approaches and student support systems possible. Program staff will be provided and required to attend comprehensive professional development.

The 2016 Adult Education Teacher Academy scheduled for late April, will focus on workforce preparation activities as they relate to service delivery. Topics include co-teaching, managing concurrent enrollment, accelerated learning, contextualized instruction and providing wrap-around student support services. As a follow-up to this training, technical assistance and coaching will be provided to local programs to ensure these innovations are implemented with fidelity in the classroom. Regularly scheduled classroom observations will provide on-going opportunities to develop and refine these instruction approaches and student supports. Data from these observations will inform professional development planning for FY 2017.

Coordination of programs with core partners

Adult education programs will identify partners within their region and establish relationships with local agencies: Vocational Rehabilitation, WorkForce West Virginia, Career and Technical Education, WVWEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES, Youth Workforce Investment Agencies,
Community and Technical Colleges, Goodwill Industries and mental health agencies. A comprehensive referral process is in place. For example, instructors are trained to refer adult with undiagnosed disabilities who desire to work to West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services for diagnosis and job placement services. Core programs are:

- Youth Workforce Investment Activities;
- Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities;
- Adult Education and Literacy Activities;
- Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Services; and,
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

**Memorandums of Understanding**

A primary tool for alignment of programs and for preventing duplication of services is the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

WV Adult Education has a cooperative MOU through the ICT and Memorandum of Understandings with each of the seven local Workforce Development Board regions in the State. WV Adult Education is represented within each local board by the Adult Education Regional Coordinators. The Chief of Career and Technical Education is represented on the State’s Workforce Development Board, which meets quarterly to assist in the development of a state plan that will enhance the capacity and performance of the WDS to align and improve the workforce programs and investments; and promote economic growth. A variety of MOUs exist between local and regional programs and community college systems.
In-Kind Services Offered/Negotiated Under MOUs for All Partners

Adult education memorandum of understandings with partners and college systems are individualized for the services provided.

(Note: For the purpose of the MOUs and collaboration with core partners, students are identified by their educational functioning levels. This identification is necessary since many of these partner programs have entrance exams or a required cut score (typically 9th grade level or above) on assessments. Students functioning below these levels are referred and served in basic skills classrooms, ramp-up remediation programs or a pre-bridge program.)

Available services may encompass the following:

1. Outreach, intake and orientation to the information, services, programs, tools and resources available through the Adult Education System, including Career Pathway Bridge and Pre-Bridge programs, developed with community partners;
2. Initial assessment of skill level(s), aptitudes, abilities and supportive service needs; TABE testing services;
3. On-site Classes that may include: academic support for adults at the Intermediate to Adult Secondary Education levels who are preparing for the HSE exam (TASC); academic support for adults at the Intermediate to Adult Secondary Education levels who are preparing for post-secondary transition; academic support for adults at the Intermediate to Adult Secondary Education levels who are preparing for other secondary level credential options; English for Speakers and Other Languages (ESOL) instructional services;
4. Customized Training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training;
5. Customized Training conducted in cooperation with an employer or group of employers to admit an individual to an employee training/post-secondary program upon successful completion of the training;
6. Customized Training conducted in cooperation with an employer or group of employers to upgrade skills of employees, including preparation for HSE.
7. Technology training programs that combine workplace training with related technology instruction which may include cooperative education and result in eligibility for an industry standard credential;

8. Adult Education Navigator Services, if applicable (See Job Description for detail);

9. Data collection and progress reporting to partners.

Alignment of Services with core partners

Overview

A process for coordinating the provision of academic skills and enrollment in core partner training programs will be developed.

- A process for administering and analyzing common assessments across the system for all core providers will be developed to reduce the time spent in assessment and target academic skills needed for further training or job attainment.

- Job seekers who have not attained a secondary credential or high school diploma will be provided with information on community adult education programs and given a referral to the appropriate program(s).

- Job seekers who have not attained employment after six months due to academic deficits will be referred to a Title II funded adult education program.

- The educational attainment of reentering offenders will be shared with DOL case managers upon consent of the learner.

- A process for the provision of education services by Title II adult education providers will be developed to reduce duplication of services and increase funding for specific skills training programs.
Youth Workforce Investment Activities

WV Adult Education, in partnership with WorkForce West Virginia will collaborate to provide the following services to out of school Youths- 16-24:

- Provision of basic skills and English language services, assessment of skills; bridge programs for preparation for postsecondary educational opportunities or unsubsidized employment (as appropriate);
- Academic support for individuals enrolled in occupational training based upon job market and employer needs;
- Other programs that include: tutoring, study skills training and instruction leading to completion of secondary school, paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing; occupational skills training; leadership development opportunities; supportive services; follow-up services for not less than 12 months as appropriate; and comprehensive guidance and counseling.

Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities

WV Adult Education will collaborate with WorkForce West Virginia to address the needs of dislocated workers by providing

- Educational programs or courses designed to develop competency in basic educational skills such as reading, comprehension, mathematics, writing, speaking and reasoning, and/or programs leading to educational credentials such as a TASC, high school diploma, or college degree. This may include English as a Second Language (ESL) training.
- Ongoing engagement with employers and workforce development system partners in the design, delivery, and evaluation of career pathways educational programs
- Integrated education and training, and workforce preparation activities that are responsive to regional and local labor market demands.
- Career pathways, integrated education and training, and workforce preparation activities that reflect the skill needs of high-demand jobs within the regional or local economy.
- Delivery of adult education and literacy activities in partnership with other core programs and eligible providers and local and regional employers.
- Opportunities to participate in externships job shadowing, internships with local employers who agree to interview and potentially hire program graduates.

**Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Services**

WV Adult Education in partnership with WorkForce West Virginia will provide the following services for participants under the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Services:

- Educational programs or courses designed to develop competency in basic educational skills such as reading, comprehension, mathematics, writing, speaking and reasoning, and/or programs leading to educational credentials such as a TASC, high school diploma, or college degree. This may include English as a Second Language (ESL) training and education.
- Ongoing engagement with employers and workforce development system partners in the design, delivery, and evaluation of career pathways educational programs
- Integrated education and training, and workforce preparation activities that are responsive to regional and local labor market demands.
- Career pathways, integrated education and training, and workforce preparation activities that reflect the skill needs of high-demand jobs within the regional or local economy.
- Delivery of adult education and literacy activities in partnership with other core programs and eligible providers and local and regional employers.
- Opportunities to participate in externships job shadowing, internships with local employers who agree to interview and potentially hire program graduates.

**Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

Adult Education has a Memorandum of Understanding with the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services to provide more integrated and effective services to individuals with disabilities. As with WorkForce West Virginia, Adult Education and West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services will work together to provide necessary accommodations for eligible individuals. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services will evaluate the disability or disabilities and provide specific recommendations regarding testing accommodations, recommendations for instructional accommodations, and recommendations for job accommodations.

Core programming for West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services consumers centers on individualized plans for employment for each consumer who uses Career Pathways counseling and assessments and business/educational partnerships. These allow for and support the employment of all eligible DRS consumers towards meaningful integrated employment. West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services is working with core partners to develop a single referral process so clients can access multiple support services simultaneously to assist in completing training and employment goals.

In order to increase the relevance of instruction, Adult Education providers will contextualize academic instruction and provide the worker with content for developing a career plan. All learners will develop career plans as part of their instructional plans. These plans will include researching job market information and developing timelines for attaining further training and education as needed.
Collection of data and reporting

WV Adult Education is partnering local programs with job training programs, adult literacy organizations, community colleges and career and technical education programs in order to help students get ready for their next step in life. Everyone wants success. But what does success look like?

There are many benchmarks for success, like getting a HSE, pursuing a graduate degree, or landing a good-paying job. The challenge is in tracking former students to see if they are hitting these milestones. Historically, our programs easily spent thousands of hours of staff time tracking them down with surveys or phone calls, only to end up with incomplete information.

Systems that link data across multiple programs, and include data over several years, can give educators easier access to reliable information about the long-term group outcomes of their students. This data can help educators adjust and improve their programs. WV Adult Education is partnering with the other WIOA core partners to establish the means for all education and workforce programs to access de-identified data about graduates’ long-term employment and education outcomes.

Partners are mandated to collect and report applicable data elements daily. Each partner obtains data with agency specific data management systems. Partners will share data for the purposes of monitoring and evaluation of statewide goals, while ensuring services are not duplicated. Individuals will be tracked by their social security number or unique identifier by the earliest entry date and the latest withdrawal date of all the partner agencies.

Coordination of services with secondary and post-secondary education programs

Across the state, West Virginia Adult Education programs, Career and Technical Centers (CTE) and the Community College System (CCS) are partnering to improve low skill adults’ transition into postsecondary education and training by developing integrated career pathway programs and, within these programs, bridge and pre-bridge programs.
Career Pathways Codified by WIOA

The term “career pathway” means a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that—

a. aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;
b. prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including registered apprenticeships;
c. includes counseling to support an individual in achieving education and career goals;
d. includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
e. organizes education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;
f. enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least one recognized postsecondary credential; and
g. helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

Bridge Programs to Support Post-Secondary Transition

Bridge programs, one of the first steps in a career pathway for low-skill adults, support the transition from adult education to the next step in an occupational pathway. By connecting adult education programs (including ABE, ESL, and adult secondary education [ASE]) to community college occupational programs, bridge programs seek to increase the rates at which low-skill adults move into college-level occupational programs, persist in these programs, and obtain postsecondary credentials in industries offering family-sustaining wages and career advancement.

Bridge programs target adults who meet the definitions for ABE, ASE, and ESL learners in the Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA). These are adults with assessed reading, writing, math, and English language skills below 12th-grade level, regardless of whether they have a high school credential. In practice, bridge programs help adult students identify career and education goals and develop the skills, content
knowledge, and learning strategies they need to enter and succeed in postsecondary education and employment. They combine basic skill instruction in reading, math, writing, and English language, including preparation for the TASC test, with occupational content, employment skills, and college success strategies.

WVAdultEd is partnering with the Community College System to develop and refine existing bridge programs that offer college credit and certificates, which will then provide the much needed first step toward a college degree for those most in need. State and local labor market information will be used to develop bridge program content focused on occupations or industry sectors with a high demand for employees under the Sector Strategies Project.

WV Adult Education Bridge programs, marketed as FastTRACKs, are being designed and implemented in every local program during FY 16. These FastTRACKs address the needs of students with various occupational interests and skill levels. Some FastTRACKs will focus on specific occupational fields and follow the i-BEST model. These programs are being developed in cooperation with the Career and Technical Education centers across the state and will target students with specific postsecondary or occupational goals in areas where high-demand jobs are available.

Other bridge models in development or the implementation phase will focus on broad introductory occupational content for students who are setting occupational goals. Each WV Adult Education grantee must provide a Career Exploration and Life and Employability Skills FastTRACK that will be the first stepping stone on the Career Pathway. These programs will provide fundamental skill foundations for the next steps.

Each model includes some form of contextualized or integrated instruction; support for career planning; and postsecondary success strategies (e.g., study skills, assistance with the college application and financial aid processes) that help students enter and succeed in college-level academic and occupational courses.

Navigators

A growing body of practice and data suggests that college/career navigation assistance programs are drivers of student retention, completion of training programs, and employment advancement for non-traditional
and adult students. This somewhat new specialized role is gaining attention across the country as a way to close the gap in helping low-income individuals access and succeed in postsecondary education, college programs, attain credentials, and ultimately pursue quality careers that provide a life-sustaining wage. The navigator role in WV Adult Education is evolving as we pilot career pathway programs around the state. Providing key wrap-around services to our adult students most at risk has eased the transition for adult learners and improved retention. In FY 17, WV Adult Education will be working with our partners to increase capacity of this vital resource.

**Accessibility**

WIOA supports access to services for all West Virginians and removes unnecessary barriers and hoops for customers in the process. To make services easier to access, WIOA requires co-location of the Wagner-Peyser Employment Service in American Job Centers (AJCs) and adds the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program as a mandatory partner. In addition to this requirement, WV Adult Education will be co-locating staff in the AJCs as well. WIOA establishes dedicated funding from AJC partner programs to support the costs of infrastructure and other shared costs that support access to services. Adult Education will negotiate an MOU with each of the Regional WDBs to share infrastructure costs based upon a recommended formula.

The Accountability and Data Collection team is also establishing a common identifier for the workforce system to help workers and employers find available services. In addition, WIOA allows local areas to award pay for performance contracts so providers of services get paid for results. It also allows direct contracts to higher education institutions to provide training.

**Collaboration between Core Partners (Operational Planning)**

WV Adult Education recognizes that it is only through the collective efforts of the various agencies that touch workforce development that optimal outcomes can be achieved. Coordination, communication,
leveraging of resources, and partnerships are stressed throughout the Plan and described in detail in the Operational Plan section.

Working collaboratively, the core partners will develop cross-training materials including PowerPoints, handouts and training curricula for workforce agency and program staff on the state’s new WIOA plan to include the specific roles and opportunities for cross-agency collaboration and how each program can help achieve overall success. One goal of these presentations and curricula will be to disseminate the vision guiding West Virginia’s new WIOA plan, based on the assumption that shared excitement around a common vision is a critical ingredient for breaking down agency silos. In partnership with the State WDB, the state will conduct a comprehensive assessment of programs in other states that promote the formal integration of workforce programs (such as those in New Jersey, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin) and/or deeper interagency cooperation. This assessment will lead to recommendations for West Virginia by the end of 2017.

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

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

Adult education is collaborating with our many workforce and social service partners to bring proven innovations into every classroom, helping to ensure that all students acquire the qualifications and access
the resources needed to secure a family sustaining career and live a life of contribution to their communities. Services provided under Titles I, II, III, and IV of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) will be integrated and aligned to the greatest extent possible to ensure the success of mutual students and job seekers. It is essential that Titles I-IV stakeholders work together to help students succeed. West Virginia Adult Education and workforce services have much to gain from such collaboration and aligning funding to help job seekers and students develop the skills they need to compete in the global economy.

Our programs offer adults innovative opportunities to reach their goals of high school completion and even more important postsecondary certificates and degrees in high demand career fields. These programs are designed to give students an opportunity to meet high school graduation requirements in a mature setting and (in some cases simultaneously), to earn a credential, to accumulate college credit, greatly reducing time to degree and high demand jobs—saving both time and money.

We know that in the 21st Century a high school diploma is not enough, that talent and skills determine the competitive edge in today’s economy. By 2018, 64 percent of all jobs will require workers with higher qualifications than just a high school diploma. (Source: Projection of Jobs and Education Requirements through 2018, Georgetown University, 2010) Currently in West Virginia, one out of every six people lacks the basic reading, writing, and math skills to get a living-wage job and meet the needs of employers. This segment of West Virginia’s population is growing quickly at the same time that more and more jobs are requiring industry credentials and/or college experience. By 2019, two-thirds of all new jobs in West Virginia will require at least one year of college education, and we know this is true across the nation. In order to move toward a more vibrant economy, employers will increasingly need access to more highly skilled, credentialed workers.

West Virginia’s adult education providers are partnering with regional agencies, organizations, institutions, and industry to build, scale and sustain demand-driven career pathways to meet the needs of our citizens and employers. These college and career readiness pathways are the building blocks to marketable, stackable, and credible credentials. These pathways connect education, training, and support services in new ways that foster success for all individuals.
Adult education in West Virginia has a proven track record leading to student success by design. It is time that we recognize the potential value that our English speakers of other languages & our adult basic skills students bring to our workforce and communities. This plan outlines our efforts toward self-efficacy for these students, effective 21st Century skills development, and an appreciation for the critical role played by adult basic education students in a vibrant economy and skilled workforce, an educated citizenry, and strong communities.

Content of Instruction

West Virginia has been on the forefront of innovation and support of student success in basic skills instruction, particularly due to our early implementation of the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education; our innovative professional development focusing on improving teaching and learning and our teacher-led project development teams. Our programs continue to evolve as the job market requires, and we are committed to creating an educational foundation that places our citizens on clearly articulated and accelerated pathway to success. The 2014-2019 West Virginia State Plan for Adult Education focuses on foundational practices enabling the design and implementation of exemplary basic skills college and career readiness pathways for the 21st Century.

This work is critical to creating the educational infrastructure that will help put our adults who are 16 and older, no longer in school, and functioning below the high school level onto clearly articulated pathways to a family sustaining career. West Virginia’s adult education programs are recognized for providing adult learners with innovative instruction in critical core skills that are essential for success in the 21st Century workforce. This plan outlines how West Virginia State plans to leverage that success in continuing to scale up these critical core practices.

In the past, adult education programs have been viewed as only providing remedial education, a place where students went to achieve high school completion, or for basic skills if they were not college ready. Those times have changed and now our adult education programs are a powerful, life-changing educational experience for the one in six West Virginia adults who lack the basic skills needed to succeed as workers,
parents, and citizens. Employers, if denied access to this future population of highly trained and credentialed workers, will lack the skilled workforce critically needed in high demand jobs to compete in a global market. We know we must find ways to continue providing more pathways to meaningful certificates and degrees for all under-trained adults. We can no longer leave anyone behind.

We also know that adult education is the solution. Our programs will continue to focus on developing and facilitating the most innovative and effective instructional approaches and student support systems possible. In our most forward-looking programs, instruction is delivered in classrooms and online in both distance learning and hybrid models providing synchronous and asynchronous access to education 24/7.

Adult education is collaborating with our many workforce and social service partners to bring proven innovations into every classroom, helping to ensure that all students acquire the qualifications and access the resources needed to secure a family sustaining career and live a life of contribution to their communities. Services provided under Titles I, II, III, and IV of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) should be integrated and aligned to the greatest extent possible to ensure the success of mutual students and job seekers. It is essential that Titles I-IV stakeholders work together to help students succeed. West Virginia Adult Education and workforce services have much to gain from such collaboration and aligning funding to help job seekers and students develop the skills they need to compete in the global economy.

Our programs offer adults innovative opportunities to reach their goals of high school completion and even more important postsecondary certificates and degrees in high demand career fields. These programs are designed to give students an opportunity to meet high school graduation requirements in a mature setting and (in some cases simultaneously) to accumulate college credit, greatly reducing time to degree and high demand jobs—saving both time and money.

West Virginia’s adult education providers are partnering with regional agencies, organizations, institutions, and industry to build, scale and sustain demand-driven career pathways to meet the needs of our citizens and employers. These college and career readiness pathways are the building blocks to marketable, stackable, and credible credentials. These pathways connect education, training, and support services in new ways that foster success for all individuals.
Organization of Local Activities

Adult education in West Virginia has a proven track record leading to student success by design. It is time that we recognize the potential value that our English speakers of other languages & our adult basic skills students bring to our workforce and communities. This plan outlines our efforts toward self-efficacy for these students, effective 21st Century skills development, and an appreciation for the critical role played by adult basic education students in a vibrant economy and skilled workforce, an educated citizenry, and strong communities.

All of the considerations for awarding grants and contracts under Title II Section 203 (2) will serve as the basis for establishing a state wide network of local adult education programs that meet the requirements of Title II. Some elements of the network will be funded with federal WIOA funds and others with State Adult Education funds.

It is anticipated that the network will include local programs administered by school districts, private not-for-profit organizations, local and state governmental agencies.

All thirteen of the considerations for awarding grants and contracts will be taken into account in the approval process established by the Office of Adult Education for the selection of grantees that will utilize federal WIOA Title II funding.

In the past, West Virginia Adult Education has served approximately 8,000 to 10,000 adults annually through funding from the Office of Adult Education. Three main delivery systems for programs have been developed over the years:

1. Adult Basic Education/ESOL Centers

2. Adult High Schools/ Preparatory Programs for High School Equivalency

3. Adult Learner Services programs

Two additional programs: EL/Civics and Transitions/FastTRACK programs are included in the delivery systems mentioned above.
Adult Basic Education/ESOL Centers are located in most of the larger communities in the state. Many offer multi-level classes for ABE and ESOL both during the day and in the evening. Other programs in smaller communities operate primarily in the evenings. Most of these programs also provide TASC preparation classes for those individuals focusing on the West Virginia High School Equivalency Diploma and need this credential in order to access other postsecondary programs.

Adult High School Programs allow adults to complete a high school curriculum that leads to an Adult High School Equivalency Diploma issued by the state. All of these programs provide classes during the day and evenings.

The Adult Learner Services programs provide one on one instruction with volunteers or instruction in very small classes. These programs are located in many of the rural areas of the state.

Transitions/FastTRACK programs are designed to provide adults with the skills to transition to post-secondary education with skill levels that will allow them to bypass developmental education courses and keep pace academically with technical training programs.

Taken together these systems/programs provide instruction to adults ranging from basic literacy services through high school completion and transition to careers and college. Over the years the unified efforts of West Virginia’s adult education programs have enabled the state to help many adults who would not have achieved their goals otherwise.

All services provided under this plan accelerate the progress of adults along well-defined pathways to college and career readiness that lead to postsecondary certificates/degrees and family-wage jobs and support vital families, communities, and economies across West Virginia.
Description of Allowable Activities

Overview

West Virginia’s adult basic education programs address the needs of adult learners as they strengthen local communities and businesses. Adults who lack the skills and knowledge to fully participate in, contribute to, and benefit from West Virginia’s postsecondary education system and economy are eligible to access adult education services in a variety of settings across the state. Core services are offered at all locations to adult learners who meet the federal eligibility requirements for enrollment. These learners:

- Have attained 16 years of age;
- Are not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under state law;
- Lack sufficient mastery of basic educational skills to function effectively in society;
- Do not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or have not achieved an equivalent level of education; and/or
- Are unable to speak, read, or write the English language.

Beginning in July 2015 under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), adult education and literacy activities were expanded to include adult education, literacy, workplace adult education and literacy activities, family literacy activities, English language acquisition activities, integrated English literacy and civics education, workforce preparation activities, and integrated education and training.

Comprehensive interventions are designed to address skill and knowledge deficits across the levels defined in Title II of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014.

Building on policies and initiatives created through this comprehensive system of advising, coordination and support, providers leverage success using innovative processes. These processes unify and inform the delivery of Adult Basic Education (ABE) courses, English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction, and high school credential programs. Following are examples of research-based innovative practices that support the
implementation and scaling of college and career pathways that accelerate student completion and foster economic growth.

1. **FastTrack Programs** – Increasing Transitions from Levels 1, 2 and 3

Funded providers will use key elements of research based programs, e.g. contextualization, team teaching, and enhanced students services to increase the speed at which students’ master basic and ESL skills at federal levels 1, 2 and 3. These condensed courses feature managed intake and managed enrollment and are typically a six to twelve week accelerated program. FastTrack options include, but are not limited to:

**Basic Skills FastTrack:**

- Programs focused on either English/Language Arts, Mathematics and Numeracy, Science or Writing in Response to Text

**Career Cluster FastTrack:**

- programs focused on career immersion and career clusters
- partnerships with Career and Technical Centers
- partnership efforts between community colleges and community-based organizations and local workforce development councils (WDBs)
- workplace projects that partner providers, employers and WDBs

**ESL FastTrack**

- flipped classroom models for ESL

FastTrack students acquire the skills needed to transition to basic skills education classes at federal levels 4-6 and/or Professional/Technical or Academic pathways.

2. **Professional/Technical Transitions**– Moving Students from Levels 4, 5 and 6 to Postsecondary Success in Professional/Technical Programs
Students who function primarily at federal levels 4 – 6 can be served in Professional/Technical Transition programs that result in recognized certificates and credentials leading to progression along a defined educational and career pathway. It is our hope to make these programs available at every West Virginia community and technical college, and to encourage partnerships with local community based organizations and as part of the education services at state correctional facilities.

- programs focused on career immersion and career clusters
- partnerships with Career and Technical Centers
- partnership efforts between community colleges and community-based organizations and local workforce development councils (WDBs)
- workplace projects that partner providers, employers and WDBs
- flipped classroom models for ESL

3. **Developmental and Academic Transition Programs** – Moving Students from Levels 4, 5, and 6 to Postsecondary Success in Academic Programs

Developmental and Academic Transition programs will employ the same strategies as professional technical transition programs. They will apply these strategies to credit-bearing classes along 2-year degree pathways and ensure accelerated student progress through higher levels of adult education and precollege education and transition into 2-year degree programs.

**Expanding Options for High School Credentials – Certificates and Diplomas**

In light of changes to options for acquiring high school credentials made by the federal government and the growing importance of these certificates and high school diplomas, West Virginia has expanded the options available to adults. Our goal is to ensure that adult learners acquire the necessary credentials by gaining the knowledge and skills demanded in the workforce and required for postsecondary success.

Toward that end, West Virginia will continue to award state certificates linked to the recognized high school equivalency state exam (TASC)
Welfare Reform Initiative

WV Adult Education has a successful history of collaboration with the State’s human services agency. Through a cooperative relationship built on trust and commitment to serving economically disadvantaged West Virginians, the two State agencies work together to respond to the mandates of welfare reform.

SPOKES

In 2003, an academic and job preparation skills program entitled SPOKES (Strategic Planning in Occupational Knowledge for Employment and Success) was created by WVAdultEd under a contract between the WVDE, Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development and Department of Health and Human Resources, and in collaboration with some WDBs. The SPOKES program model was also designed to provide intense daily activities that would address academic and soft skills necessary for adults to pursue gainful employment. Although the program is designed for participants functioning at or above the 4th grade level (FFL 3 and above), there is some flexibility about including participants who score at lower levels. This 4 to 10 week program allows WV WORKS participants to be referred to the program and receive services at the start of each work week. Referrals can be made for the start-up of any week.

The SPOKES program consists of:

- Assessment
- A four-week repeating cycle of modules related to the following components:
  - Employability Skills
  - Job Readiness
  - Work Process Skills
  - Technology Skills,--which may include Internet and Computing Core Certification (IC3 )
  - Workplace Academic Skills
- Vocational Training starting Week 5 that may include the following:
  - Customer Service Part 1
  - Customer Service Part 2
  - Microsoft® Office Specialist (MOS)
  - Internet and Computing Core Certification (IC3 )
  - Work-based Academic Skills (if applicable in region)
- An additional 2-4 week job readiness component, which includes intense job search. SPOKES participants prepare to take the WorkKeys® assessment.
A variety of certificates may be earned by participants who complete the program. Participants officially referred to and enrolled in SPOKES classes must have an identified need for instruction and/or enhancement in one or more of the module areas that prevents them from getting employment or advancing in a job. Individualized, computer-aided, small/whole group, and work-based/site instructional techniques are utilized within the program delivery of services.

In addition to having a certified full-time WVAdultEd SPOKES instructor, and in some cases a part time WVAdultEd SPOKES instructor, the SPOKES program may have access to a career development consultant (CDC) and share a blended classroom with an ABE instructor.

Programs are encouraged to pilot and implement additional evidence and research-based strategies for college and career pathways that meet the goals of this plan.

**Implementation of WIOA Activities**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) implementation offers the opportunity to create the workforce development system that will serve West Virginia’s employers and job seekers for decades to come. WIOA further defines and expands targeted services that accelerate the progress of adults along well-defined pathways to college and career readiness that lead to postsecondary certificates/degrees and family-wage jobs and support vital families, communities, and economies across West Virginia. All Adult Basic Education providers are required to develop a 2016-2017 transition plan to fully implement WIOA.

To guide this work, WVAdultEd is partnering with the Workforce West Virginia, Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR), and the Division of Rehabilitation Services; for the development of a unified/unified state plan and implementation of WIOA across the four core programs. This work will be led by the Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development and the State Workforce Development Board (WDB) at the state level and the Local Workforce Development Boards at the local level with representation from all core programs. Business & Industry will co-chair the state’s implementation committees consisting of a steering committee, Sector Strategies to Close Skill Gaps in the Workplace Committee, the Performance Accountability Committee, and the Education and Career Pathways through Integrated Service Delivery Models Committee.
Under their guidance, transition efforts for Title II, Adult Basic Education in West Virginia will begin to implement the requirements of WIOA. In June 2014, West Virginia State officially adopted the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCR) for all Adult Basic Education programming funded under WIOA. The implementation of the CCR Standards provides clear expectations for students and the guidance needed to improve curriculum and instruction. It also identifies the professional development required to help staff develop expertise to implement the standards. The CCR Standards strategically link Adult Basic Education, postsecondary education, and the world of work. The standards require the implementation of the critical skills and knowledge expected by employers and required for success in workforce training, postsecondary education, and employment in the 21st Century.

Under the transition plan every provider is required to submit a grant extension transition plan that details how the provider is implementing and/or planning to implement WIOA activities in 2015-16. The plan must include as a minimum the scope, content, organization of the local activities listed below and provide assurance of alignment with local Workforce Development Boards’ regional plan and goals.

- Implement and scale effective college and career pathways that accelerate student completion and foster economic growth
- Guide and support transformational instructional practices that accelerate student completion to diplomas, high school equivalency, certificates, and AA/BA degrees leading to family wage jobs.

Plans must include:
  - Implementing the CCR Standards in all programming.
  - Integrating employability skills training and instruction in all courses at all levels
  - Beginning implementation of integrated employment and training activities into all EL Civics instruction.
  - Integrated reading strategies instruction at all levels in all courses.
  - Expanding the teaching of speaking and listening into all levels of both ABE and ESL programming.
  - Integrating problem solving in technology-rich environments at all levels of instruction.

- Support one-stop centers through in-kind services/funding;
- Support alignment of workforce investment, education, and economic development;
- Improve labor market relevance;
- Improve the structure of service delivery;
- Increase prosperity; employment, retention, earnings, and the attainment of recognized postsecondary credentials.

To support implementation of local transition plans, all providers will have access to system-wide professional development. They will also provide a plan to engage faculty and staff in system-wide program and professional development leadership activities that provide guidance for critical implementation of the requirements of WIOA over the next two years. The following professional and program development activities and trainings will be offered during FY17:

2016-2017

Teacher Training for all programs to support integrated employment and training activities

- Contextualized instruction training centered on the CCR Standards, integrated employability skills, and reading strategies
- Technology in flipped classroom instruction to integrate technology and employability skills development at all levels
- Math Design Collaborative and Numeracy Training
- Literacy Design Collaborative Training
- Innovation in EL Civics supporting the development of co-enrolled integrated employment and training activities as well as math at all levels
- Literacy Design Collaborative training to prepare students for college-level instruction
- Contextualized integrated employability skills training

Special Rule (Use of Funds for Family Literacy)

Family literacy in West Virginia, consistent with the definition in the Act, includes the following four components:
• Interactive literacy activities between parents and their children;
• Training for parents to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children;
• Parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency; and
• Age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences.

These components must be fully integrated into a program with sufficient intensity (focused, planned and frequent program activities within each of the four components) and appropriate duration to achieve substantial participant outcomes.

Key elements of each of the components include the following:
• Interactive literacy activities between parents and their children
• Child-initiated activity
• Opportunity for positive parent/child interaction
• Opportunity to practice newly acquired skills
• Staff in supportive role
• Activities to support transfer at home.

Training for parents to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children

• Content driven by self-identified needs of parents
• Information for family growth
• Mutual peer support
• Advocacy and referral services/single point of referral
• Coping and problem solving strategies
• Community collaboration efforts
Parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency

- Attention to non-educational and educational needs
- Joint parent/teacher initiated approach
- Balance of group and individual instruction
- Interdisciplinary curriculum
- Cooperative learning strategies
- Critical and creative thinking mode
- Prevocational training

Age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences

- Attention to non-educational and educational needs
- Research-based and developmentally appropriate curriculum
- Appropriate teacher/child ratio
- Parental involvement

WV Adult Education works collaboratively with the Governor’s Council on Literacy, the Governor’s Cabinet on Children and Families, and Title I Head Start programs to provide family literacy programs. WV Adult Education always attempts to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this subtitle prior to using funds for adult education and literacy in this context. Planned activities to promote family literacy in West Virginia are outlined in the goals and objectives developed for the Act. The goals, objectives and benchmarks reflect the need for family literacy as well as the latest information on brain research and its impact upon adults and the children of the state.
Descriptions of New Organizational Arrangements

In preparation for the State Plan for Title I, the West Virginia Human Resource Investment Council (HRIC) is presently developing systemic changes at the State and local levels regarding one-stop delivery systems, memorandums of understanding, performance reporting, etc. Adult Basic Education is represented on the HRIC by the Assistant Superintendent for the Division of Technical and Adult Education Services and the chair of the Governor’s Council on Literacy. The Title II (Adult Education and Family Literacy) State Plan will include references to new organizational arrangements after they are finalized by the HRIC.

The current alignment of programs includes seventeen Adult Basic Education/ESOL Centers, fourteen Adult Learner Services Programs, seven EL/Civics programs, ten transition programs and twenty eight Adult High School Programs. It is anticipated that the current delivery system for services will continue.

In addition to academic skills most of the programs listed above, with the exception of the Adult High Schools, provide some level of workforce preparation activities for all participants, particularly in the area of soft skills that are needed for success in any occupation. The Office of Adult Education also includes the achievement of a high school credential as the most important first step in workforce preparation activity carried out by all programs. Without that credential students cannot enter the workforce with a livable wage or start on most career pathways.

(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:

Criminal Offenders in Correctional Institutions

In the West Virginia correctional system, there are currently 4,276 inmates over the age of 18 who are serving time within regional jails and state correctional facilities. Data collected from the West Virginia
Division of Corrections states that 1,699 (40 percent) of these inmates do not possess a high school credential. We currently have adult basic education (ABE) programs in 17 correctional institutions, but with the growing number of inmates and with additional federal facilities being built in the state, this growing population creates a need for specialized teacher training.

The Day Report Program for those with minor offenses is in place statewide to offer these offenders a choice between incarceration and going to an ABE class to obtain a TASC. These programs are growing very rapidly and creating the need for more classes.

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.

It is anticipated that these programs will take place, at a minimum, in State Prisons and County Jails. All of the funded programs will provide adult education and literacy activities, and transition to re-entry initiatives. Priority will be given to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

(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.

Projects funded under this title will focus on the following goals:

- Educational services for English Language Learners, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enables them to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers and citizens in the United States. These services shall include instruction in literacy and English acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation.

- Workforce training that will enable students to begin or continue careers in their chosen fields, including preparation for post-secondary education. A high priority will be to provide English skills so that individuals with degree and credentials in their native countries will qualify for employment in the fields for which they have been trained. The desired outcome from the workforce training under this title will be unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

- All students in the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Programs, as well as students from all other Title II funded programs may be (1) co-enrolled in other workforce development system programs or (2) receive services concurrently from several partners.
Funding under this title will be awarded based upon the criteria for evaluation of programs applications contained in Section 231 (e) of WIOA.

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

West Virginia State’s unified plan will address the activities that will be undertaken to meet the requirements of Section 233 of WIOA to promote transitions from adult education to postsecondary education and training through career pathways. Under the new unified plan, all Adult Basic Education providers will use funds made available under section 222(a) (2) for the adult education and literacy required WIOA activities including the four new required national leadership activities to develop or enhance the adult education system across the state.

All funded providers will be required to detail the process that will be used to collaborate with all stakeholders and align Adult Basic Education programming in their 2016-2017 extension plan with all partners named in the unified state plan. Eligible providers will provide services in alignment with local plans detailing how they will promote concurrent enrollment with Title I programs and activities in order to meet the state adjusted levels of performance and collect data to report on performance indicators. In addition, all providers will describe how they will fulfill one-stop responsibilities in their region. As members of local Workforce Development Boards, local providers will participate in ongoing plan development and implementation of WIOA.

The following leadership activities are underway in West Virginia to meet the four new required state leadership activities requirements of WIOA:

1. The alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other core programs and one-stop partners, including eligible providers, to implement the strategy identified in the unified state plan under section 103, including the development of career pathways to provide access to employment and training services for individuals in adult education and literacy activities. The following activities have been completed or are underway in support:
a. The West Virginia State Workforce Board will establish a highly inclusive committee structure to identify key areas of work and implementation planning. Adult Basic Education will be represented on each of the committees with local providers being engaged as needed. The committees are:

i. **Steering Committee:** members will include Workforce, Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Health and Human Resources, Business, Labor, all core programs, TANF, and the WVAdultEd. This committee’s work will include creating the WIOA vision and goals, state and local plan development, state policies and guidance to facilitate integrated services development, funding formula guidance, One Stop certification and evaluation criteria, oversight of work plans and timelines, facilitation of communication state-to-state, local-to-state, local-to-local, and among WIOA implementation committees, and state legislative issues.

ii. **Committee for Sector Strategies to Close Skill Gaps in the Workplace:** members include WorkForce West Virginia, Regional Education Service Agencies (RESA), Business, Labor, all core programs, West Virginia Workforce Association (WWA), Department of Commerce, WVADULTED, and the Office of the Superintendent, WVDE. This committee’s work includes regional designation and governance, data analysis, local workforce development council designations, local board configuration, and sector strategy and industry engagement.

iii. **Committee for Performance Accountability and Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) Committee:** members include WorkForce West Virginia, DVR, and Department of Services for the Blind (DSB), business, labor, and all core programs. This committee’s work includes alignment of current systems to WIOA for all core programs, establishment of procedures for WIOA performance target setting, alignment of ETPL with WIOA, and the development of performance criteria for Youth and On the Job Training (OJT) programming.

iv. **Committee for Education and Career Pathways through Integrated Service Delivery Models:** members include WorkForce West Virginia, Business, Labor, all core programs, all relevant WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES divisions, Commerce, OIEP, WVADULTED, apprenticeships, business, labor, local and state stakeholders, and other industry partnerships.
In addition to West Virginia’s WIOA committee structure the following activities will be conducted to meet the alignment requirement. They include:

- **ABE/SPOKES** system wide, three-day teacher academy on developing college and career pathways to be completed summer 2017. This was developed to support WIOA and the state plan requirement to implement college and career readiness pathways for all basic skills students.
- **On-going WIOA Collaborate sessions** (Moving Pathways Forward) to update providers on all planning, development, and implementation requirements, strategies, and trainings. These sessions include guest presenters from all core programs. The first of these sessions provided an overview by WVAdultEd. Providers were given a listing of contacts in their local regions to begin alignment planning and discussions.
- **WVAdultEd facilitated work sessions** with regional core program partners. Monthly sessions are scheduled.

2. The establishment or operation of high quality professional development programs to improve the instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under section 231(b), including instruction incorporating the essential components of reading instruction as such components relate to adults, instruction related to the specific needs of adult learners, instruction provided by volunteers or by personnel of a state or outlying area, and dissemination of information about models and promising practices related to such programs.

West Virginia implements quality programs and professional development to support all state initiatives through various means. Federal leadership dollars are granted to providers in support of professional and program development initiatives that include:

**2016-2017:**

- Team teacher/co-teaching training for all programming (ABE, ESL, SPOKES, OIEP) to support integrated employment and training activities
• Contextualized instruction training centered on the CCR Standards, integrated employability skills, and reading strategies
• Technology in flipped classroom instruction to integrate technology and employability skills development at all levels
• LINCS Adult Numeracy Training
• MDC Training
• Innovation in EL Civics supporting the development of co-enrolled integrated employment and training activities as well as math at all levels

3. The provision of technical assistance to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities receiving funds under this title, including:
   (a) the development and dissemination of instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous or scientifically valid research available and appropriate, in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition programs, distance education, and staff training. Current initiatives include:

• West Virginia’s adoption in June of 2014 of the College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards as the basis for all instruction. 2012-13 was the transition year the West Virginia State Adult Learning Standards to CCR Standards with full implementation in 2013-14 with system wide professional development provided.
• Literacy Design Collaborative training and implementation, which will continue in West Virginia State as a strategic instructional model throughout Adult Basic Education and college programming, incorporating the essential components of reading and responding to text specific to adult learners’ needs.
• LINCS Adult Numeracy Training and MDC training, which will be conducted throughout 2015-16 in support of mathematics instruction for increased rigor of programming in order to prepare students for college and career pathways.
• Technology and the flipped classroom model training which will begin in 2017 to enhance faculty skills in the use of instructional technology for distance education and student skill development in solving problems in technology rich environments.
(f) Assessing Quality. Describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II and take actions to improve such quality, including providing the activities described in section 223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA.

Framework for Program Assessment

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

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

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

Developing the capacity for tracking employment related to training and education programs of study will require the study and development of an operational plan for collecting the relevant information. The State Board will work with Local Boards to build this capacity.
The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of, and improvement in, adult education and literacy activities and the dissemination of information about models and proven or promising practices within the State.

Current efforts in West Virginia include:

- Desk monitoring by WVADULTED to identify coding issues, system reporting and program outcomes
- Bi-annual Data for Program Improvement projects by each provider with the results being shared at various venues, e.g. State staff meetings, committee meetings, trainings etc. In 2016-2017, providers will be required to include local WorkForce and one-stop partners in Data research.

WVADULTED also conducts program monitoring visits for each provider every four years and provides ongoing technical assistance. In addition, regular fiscal reviews are done for all funded programs.

1. The establishment or operation of professional development programs to improve the quality of instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under Section 231 (b). These programs include contextualization of instruction, student self-efficacy, English language and numeracy fluency, and reading comprehension. Instruction must be provided by qualified, faculty, staff, trained volunteers or personnel of approved providers. All leadership activities are aligned to the Office of Adult Education’s State plan, Strategic Issues, and Goals.
   a. WVADULTED-Adult Education has an extensive range of opportunities for program development for all Adult Education funded programs to improve the quality of instruction.
      - Over a period of 4 years, Adult Education has provided professional development for faculty and staff on developing and delivering lessons and curricula based on the West Virginia Next Generation Standards and the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adults.
      - Teacher Academies and conference workshops have been provided that incorporate training on the shifts defined in the College and Career Readiness Standards; active learning strategies, UDL, Depth of Knowledge and contextualizing and integrating instruction in classroom lessons.
      - Team-teaching workshops will be developed and delivered to clarify for instructors the steps to develop unified course outcomes and to develop integrated lessons in the context of both Adult Education and academic or vocational subject matter.
b. Every year, The West Virginia Adult Education Association sponsors a state-wide conference. Faculty and staff present creative and innovative research-based practices that they have implemented in their programs.

c. Several online courses (Schoology) offer instructors new to Adult Education the grounding to understand the system and to build their instruction based on current practices.

d. WVADULTED-Adult Education built and maintains a database to track participation in all trainings, meetings, and other activities.

2. Provision of program improvement and support to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities:

   a. According to the plan set forth in Program Monitoring, Adult Education has long supported ongoing local program improvement through workshops where provider teams read and analyze data, develop a question based on the data, explore the question, and create and implement a solution to the question raised. At the end of the project cycle, each program shares the project results.

3. Provision of technology assistance, including staff training, to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities to enable the eligible providers to improve the quality of such activities:

   a. Adult Education works collaboratively with WVADULTED-eLearning to provide all faculty full access to technologies on campuses that include AEMIS, Schoology, and Moodle. Faculty are encouraged to incorporate these and other technologies in class and in out-of-class activities for students.

   b. WVADULTED provides all funded providers options for online learning to enhance technology skills.

   c. Funded providers are eligible to apply for grants that support local staff participation in mandatory leadership trainings, request funds to support participation in other state and national trainings, and to create innovative program improvement projects that:
      
      • **Increase Student Progression** by providing opportunities for students to move further and faster through the continuum of basics skills and college and career readiness pathways.
• **Improve Transition** by offering opportunities for students to progress into college level training and be prepared to attain adequate levels of skills and knowledge.

• **Engage Communities** through outreach efforts to stakeholders and potential students to increase participation in and support for adult basic education.

• **Support Innovations** that present opportunities for students to move further and faster along their educational pathway.

Support of state or regional networks of literacy resource centers:

a. Adult Education is an active partner in LINCS and staff participate in Regional Partner meetings. On an ongoing basis, staff monitor and participate in LINCS Community forums.

4. Monitoring and evaluation of quality and improvement in adult education and literacy activities:

a. WVADULTED staff conduct on-site reviews of approximately 20% of funded programs to identify strengths and/or weaknesses and to provide technical assistance appropriate to increase program effectiveness and program compliance with federal and state requirements.

b. WVADULTED staff are available for targeted technical assistance. This assistance may be requested by a provider in the form of training, a site visit, or other type of support. The assistance may also be initiated by WVADULTED staff based on a review of data or other factors.

c. In support of federal requirements, leadership funds promote high data quality, professional development on NRS Data Monitoring, the West Virginia Adult Education Management Information System (AEMIS) and standardized assessment testing tools. Funds also support ongoing Using Data for Program Improvement workshops where provider teams develop and implement plans that improve service to students by increasing student progression, transition, retention, etc.

d. Adult Education staff deliver workshops on topics that increase the quality of data collected and reported on adult students. These include training on NRS, AEMIS, and use of assessment tools.

5. Incentives for program coordination and integration and performance awards:

6. Developing and disseminating curricula, including curricula incorporating phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, and fluency and reading comprehension:

a. Building on 4 years of implementation work with the Next Generation Standards, Adult Education now offers training on contextualized and integrated instruction. A resource Website is available
to faculty, and it will provide continuous resources and updates, as well as a place for faculty to share curriculum and ideas.

7. Additional significant statewide leadership activities:
   a. Participation in West Virginia State Next Generation Standards and College and Career Readiness Standards cadre trainings
   b. Contextualization implementation workshops
   c. Training in messaging/marketing adult education to all stakeholders and funders.

8. Coordination with existing support services, such as transportation, childcare, and other assistance designed to increase rates of enrollment in, and successful completion of, adult education and literacy programs.

9. Integration of adult education instruction and occupational skill training and promoting linkages with employers.

10. Pathway linkages with postsecondary educational institutions.

Further activities toward recruitment and retention of qualified personnel, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities, are identified within the Personnel Standards and Staff Development sections below.
# ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

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<td>1.</td>
<td>The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>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;</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;</td>
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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;

4. The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities;
5. The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to (1) prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency and (2) integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program; and

6. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.

1. SF424B - Assurances – Non-Construction Programs
   (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)

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

(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.

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) received input from the West Virginia State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) members and chairman regarding the Unified State Plan to be submitted by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act partners in 2016. The input and the agency responses are reported below.

**Observation 1:** The agency should strive to educate the general public regarding the WV DRS office locations to ensure knowledge and the continuum of agency services and programs. The agency has utilized newspaper inserts, community events and public broadcasting as a means to assure awareness of the available services within WV DRS in all areas of the state.

**Recommendation:** The WV SRC recommends this practice be continued with a continuing emphasis directed into underserved areas of the State.

**DRS Response:** DRS agrees with the recommendation to continue efforts to inform the general public about the availability of DRS services. In recent years, the agency has focused on reaching out to stakeholders of
vocational rehabilitation (VR) services, including potentially underserved/unserved consumers with disabilities from minority backgrounds. DRS utilizes the latest technology for this purpose, including a web map that includes turn-by-turn directions to each office to help potential consumers more easily find DRS field offices. Additional activities include the sponsoring of community events and statewide radio advertisements. In 2016, DRS plans to continue to identify effective ways to reach out to consumers with disabilities, including potentially underserved/unserved populations using various methods. Additionally, with the ongoing implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), an additional focus for DRS is to reach out to high school students, including their parents and service providers in the community. These new outreach activities are discussed below in later responses.

Observation 2: Reaching students prior to their junior and senior years is imperative in establishing an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) outlining available options and securing those programs and services are in place as the student transitions into their next phase of life is a priority for WV DRS. The agency currently has VR counselors with offices physically located in high schools in West Virginia – Cabell Midland, Huntington High, Parkersburg South, Brooke High School, Wheeling Park High School and John Marshall High School.

Uncertainties continue that once students are preparing to leave the secondary school system and move forward into higher education that students, parents and their advisors/counselors, the students may not be fully aware of services available through DRS.

Recommendation: The WV SRC recommends working with four (4) to six (6) additional high schools and/or vocational schools to establish VR offices to be physically located on the campus of those selected schools. This would provide more assistance to those students and their families in an effort to gain applicants for services at an earlier age.
**DRS Response:** DRS agrees that it is important for transitioning youth (TY) with disabilities to begin the vocational rehabilitation process as early as appropriate. DRS is open to the recommendation and has requested that counselors identify any possible opportunities for embedded VR offices within high schools. If opportunities arise, DRS will move forward to establish offices, where appropriate and agreed upon by both parties.

In support of this aim, DRS currently has seventy-three (73) vocational rehabilitation counselors assigned to serve TY, including a counselor assigned to each high school in the state. Prior to the start of the 2015-2016 school year, DRS created two different types of territory assignments for counselors serving TY. There are now forty-five (45) pre-employment transition services (PETS) territories assigned to serve high school students and twenty-eight (28) territories assigned to serve transitioning youth that have exited high school. Thirty-six (36) counselors are assigned exclusively to PETS territories, allowing for more time and resources to provide outreach and services to high school students. PETS counselors are also beginning outreach to students in the tenth grade to ensure sufficient time to provide PETS and develop and implement a plan for the student’s transition from high school to post-secondary employment or training.

**Observation 3:** With the demographics and cultural backgrounds of West Virginia, effective communication must be innovative. Finding the most efficient avenue to educate students and their families regarding available WV DRS services and programs is a continuing challenge. Effective, good communication is a key factor.

**Recommendation:** The WV SRC recommends that WV DRS:

- submit articles for school newsletters for educating individuals on services and programs that are available;
- design a one page handout to be included with registration packets disseminated to students at the beginning of each school year; and,
- prepare articles for the distribution in state newspapers when highlighting special areas, such as Education, Business, Employment and other sections or avenues of interest for WV DRS to illustrate services and programs offered by the agency.

**DRS Response:** DRS agrees that effective, good communication is a key factor in making sure that students and their families are aware of DRS services and programs that are available for eligible individuals as they begin preparing for post-secondary school goals. DRS engages in a variety of outreach activities to ensure widespread information dissemination that is beneficial for students with disabilities preparing to leave the school setting. These activities include sponsoring community events, attending job fairs, passing out brochures, student-focused radio advertisements, and speaking to classrooms.

Prior to the 2015-2016 school year, the DRS Director sent letters to each high school principal and special education director in West Virginia. The letter detailed changes in vocational rehabilitation service provision to high school students with disabilities since the enactment of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The most significant change relates to providing pre-employment transition services to high school students with disabilities. The letter described these services and the further collaboration between DRS and school staff to better serve students with disabilities.

DRS is also collaborating with the West Virginia Department of Education to develop and provide students and parents with resource guides. The guides serve as a marketing/recruiting tool for DRS in addition to providing valuable resource information to students and parents. DRS has also collaborated with the Mid-Ohio Valley Workforce Board to assist in developing and disseminating an employment guide to each high school guidance counselor and DRS counselor working with high school students in the region’s 9 counties.
Additionally, the agency has a counselor assigned to each high school in West Virginia as well as liaisons assigned to institutions of higher education around the state. This on-site presence assists the agency in developing and maintaining working relationships, on a personal level, with students and school staff. Counselors provide outreach materials, including a specialized brochure for transition students. The brochure highlights the DRS Transition program, including eligibility requirements and available services. The brochure has the agency’s website address where additional information about the DRS Transition program is available. DRS will continue to explore new, effective methods of information dissemination to secondary schools and institutions of higher education. Furthermore, DRS will continue to consult with state and local education officials regarding the use of newsletters and registration packets to inform students and their families about DRS services.

**Observation 4:** Ahead of the national trend, WV DRS has made and continues a concerted effort on making transition a priority. Establishing and maintaining partnerships within the secondary school system and institutions of higher education is essential.

The formation of a committee to assist in the development of a plan to educate institutions of higher education throughout West Virginia could strengthen these relationships. This committee comprised of WV DRS staff, WV SRC members, educators and other pertinent parties should survey those bodies for their awareness and then provide assistance in enhancing communication and relationships so that students needing the services can be better served.

**Recommendation:** In this continuing quest to assure that students with disabilities, parents and their advisors/counselors, are cognizant of the services and programs offered through WV DRS, the Council recommends this committee be implemented to enhance the relationship with the institutions of higher education to assure students are knowledgeable of all services, programs, technology and adaptations to reach their employment outcomes upon completing their education.
**DRS Response:** DRS agrees with the importance of quality relationships with higher education institutions in better serving TY with disabilities. Several strategies to improve strategies to TY have been developed and utilized to establish and maintain working relationships with key stakeholders, including institutions of higher education. DRS works with secondary schools and institutions of higher education in many ways to form partnerships and better serve TY with disabilities. In addition to covering all high schools in the state, DRS has liaison counselors assigned to institutions of higher education including colleges, universities, and vocational/technical centers across the state. DRS staff members also attend and present at the annual West Virginia Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators Conference to increase awareness and knowledge of DRS services to higher education staff members statewide. To ensure DRS transition counselors are aware of changes in higher education, a representative from the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission presented at the annual DRS Transition Conference. DRS will continue to explore this recommendation to assess the potential benefits and impact of a committee comprised of DRS staff, SRC members, educators, and other pertinent parties. DRS will also explore additional methods of information dissemination such as the use of its higher education liaisons and email list-servs.

**Observation 5:** To assist in providing continuing education to WV DRS counselors and school personnel, the agency has partnered with the Department of Education to establish a strong link between WV DRS and the school system. This link will continue to serve as a vital component in the referring of students at a younger age having an informed understanding of community based services offered by WV DRS.

**Recommendation:** The WV SRC recommends this component be continued to strengthen knowledge of policies, referral processes as well as emerging trends and practices on an annual basis.
**DRS Response:** DRS agrees with the Council’s recommendation to continue to strengthen the link between the agency and the public school system, as this link is considered vital to the continued referral of TY with disabilities. DRS continues to maintain a strong connection and working relationship with the West Virginia Department of Education, as well as the county-level Boards of Education, maintaining Memorandums of Understanding with each. With the implementation of WIOA, DRS has increased collaborative efforts with school staff at the state and local level, particularly regarding the provision of pre-employment transition services to high school students with disabilities beginning in the tenth grade.

The agency has a strong, dedicated, and active TY community of practice with the public school system and community rehabilitation programs. The community reviews the coordination of services, DRS and Department of Education policies, appropriate VR referrals, and services available to TY within the various districts. Additionally, DRS has a Transition Advisory Committee, comprised of the Program Specialist over the School Transition Program and a DRS TY counselor from each district. This committee assists in the development of transition-related policy and training activities. The counselors also act as liaisons between the state and district offices to provide feedback and possible emerging practices.

**Observation 6:** Transportation issues continue to be a state and national concern. The lack of personal and public transportation has been a repeated challenge. WV DRS offers varying opportunities for instruction in learning to drive when barriers are present. All high schools currently offer their students driver’s education classes.

**Recommendation:** Considering the long term goal for all students is to be employed, the Council suggests that VR counselors stress the IPE include driver’s education training for students with disabilities. This may require occupational and/or developmental visual evaluations may be beneficial. The driver education instructors working need to be supplied with the WV DRS driving program for technical and adaptive support or training.
**DRS Response:** DRS agrees that driving and transportation in general are often a barrier to employment for West Virginians with disabilities of all ages. DRS continues to seek solutions to transportation issues and maintains this as an agency goal and priority. During the initial phase of the vocational rehabilitation process, DRS counselors discuss transportation-related issues with consumers. Counselors work with consumers to address and resolve any identified disability-related employment barriers; services to circumvent barriers are included in Individualized Plans for Employment and may include transportation services. In FY 2014, DRS provided transportation services to 1,330 consumers with the goal of increasing the number of consumers year after year. DRS also emphasizes individualized transportation services, including driver training, bioptic training, vehicle modification, and vehicle purchase, when necessary.

**Observation 7:** In looking toward the future, the agency expects an influx in the next few years of youth having drug and/or alcohol related issues and needing services. This will be an area to have specialized programs and skills.

**Recommendation:** The WV SRC recommends that the Agency provide staff with the training and technical assistance needed to expand their knowledge of drug addiction related diseases.

**DRS Response:** DRS agrees with the issues raised by the SRC regarding the potential increase in the number of consumers having drug and/or alcohol related issues. In addition to the implementation of a Behavioral Health and Correction Specialist at the state level, DRS has been proactive in this area in recent years by providing training to counselors. Training has occurred at the State Training Conference in the past and will continue to take place at future conferences, as appropriate. This training will assist counselors in enhancing their service provision to individuals with addiction by providing an overview of the disease of addiction and an examination of historic, current, and future treatment modalities.
**Observation 8:** With the national trend focusing to work more closely with individuals who are within the corrections system who have disabilities, WV DRS has implemented a position for a Behavioral Health and Corrections Specialist. This Specialist will focus on youth with mental illness, ADD and learning disabilities to name a few who do not get along in society.

Although the agency already works with the juvenile detention programs, providing more in depth early intervention services to this underserved group of individuals will be of benefit.

**Recommendation:** The WVSRC recommends that the Agency continue to establish relationships with the Behavioral Health and Corrections communities in order to expand services to those individuals with disabilities being served by these Agencies.

**DRS Response:** DRS agrees with the SRC about the importance of working with organizations and individuals with behavioral health issues and previous incarcerations, including individuals in juvenile detention programs. As mentioned, the agency has implemented a Behavioral Health and Corrections Specialist to focus on outreach and comprehensive service provision to these individuals. The specialist will develop and maintain working relationships with related national and state organizations, assist in the training of counselors in these specialized areas, and ensure that the agency is providing quality and timely services to these individuals. Furthermore, DRS field staff were provided training from a national expert in employment for ex-offenders. Additional intensive training has been scheduled for employment specialists to enable improved services to ex-offenders.

**Observation 9:** The agency is constantly striving to compensate for the growing numbers of staff reaching retirement age and the void left in not only the job vacancy, but the knowledge lost as these individuals
leave. During the past several years, select employees have been chosen to attend the National Rehabilitation Leadership Institute ~ *Executive Leadership Seminar Series* year long experience.

The mission of this leadership program is to enrich the leadership vision, knowledge and skills of rehabilitation leaders, through a powerful organizational learning experience that reinforces passion, learning, creativity, and strategic thinking in the public program of vocational rehabilitation. The Institute offers the opportunity for rehabilitation leaders in public programs of vocational rehabilitation across the nation to enrich their knowledge, skills, and understanding to meet the constantly changing needs and expectations of their consumers, employers and community partners.

This national program provided the opportunity for those individuals to work in teams with staff from other states on assignments and tasks to broaden their learning curve, to make a blueprint of potential programs or services and bring new or critiqued philosophies to West Virginia.

**Recommendation:** The Council strongly recommends the agency continue sending staff to this invaluable training opportunity to help strengthen the evolution of staff and future leadership of the agency.

**DRS Response:** DRS agrees with the SRC regarding the value of the Executive Leadership Seminar Series. Employees that have completed the program bring increased knowledge and skills back to DRS and help improve the agency overall. DRS will continue to send selected staff to the Executive Leadership Seminar Series, as appropriate.
**Observation 10:** WV DRS conducts a VR State Conference annually. Speakers from a myriad of areas are brought to this conference to expand the knowledge and bring new creative ideas for program and service delivery. This conference provides the opportunity for the VR staff from throughout the state to spend three (3) days sharing experiences, issues and talking with guest speakers and administrative staff.

**Recommendation:** Promoting team building and giving the opportunity for an educational experience enhancing job performance is vital to the continuing success of the agency and enriching staff development. The Council strongly encourages the agency to continue this means of edification and reinforcement for staff.

**DRS Response:** DRS agrees that the Annual State Training Conference is extremely valuable for agency staff members. The conference provides expert speakers, training sessions, and networking opportunities for field staff from across the state. Additionally, it is an enriching experience for staff members to meet others from across the state. The conference promotes cohesiveness among VR staff, as well as promoting team building, in order to serve consumers with disabilities statewide.

**Observation 11:** In the past, the agency conducted an interagency Emerging Leaders Program designed to help staff who were interested in management positions to become better informed in all facets of the day to day operations of DRS. This program was intended to give in depth training in all management areas to prepare interested staff as job opportunities became available.

**Recommendation:** The Council highly recommends the Emerging Leaders Program training be reinstated to assure qualified individuals are prepared to assume these positions as seasoned staff retire or leave the agency.
**DRS Response:** DRS agrees that the Emerging Leaders Program was beneficial for participants, and the agency as a whole. The agency has also utilized an established, national vocational rehabilitation leadership program, namely the Executive Leadership Seminar Series provided by San Diego State University. DRS continues to utilize this program and seek additional leadership training programs that would be beneficial for selected employees. Due to limited personnel, the in-house Emerging Leaders Program will not be offered in the upcoming fiscal year. However, the program remains an option, if and when resources allow.

**CONSUMER SATISFACTION**

As part of its program improvement efforts, DRS continues to support the implementation of consumer satisfaction surveys of its clients to ensure quality services for DRS consumers. WVSRC conducts the consumer satisfaction surveys (with full DRS assistance and cooperation). WVSRC is primarily responsible for completion of the consumer satisfaction survey for VR consumers. DRS continues to provide and supplement fiscal and human resources needed for its successful completion.

WVSRC members selected a survey method that allows former DRS clients and individuals who were not accepted for VR services to be contacted via mail surveys as soon as they exit DRS from various VR statuses throughout the fiscal year.

Selected Highlights of the 2015 Consumer Satisfaction Survey of DRS Clients as reported by WVSRC are presented below.

The latest consumer satisfaction report, entitled, Consumer Satisfaction: Report of Survey Findings, was prepared by the WVSRC in January 2015. The findings were based on consumer satisfaction information gathered from 488 responses across the six DRS districts.

Respondents to the consumer satisfaction survey were asked to rate their agreement with statements about their interactions with DRS. The ratings were "strongly agree," "agree," "neutral," "disagree," and "strongly
disagree.” Respondents were provided an option to indicate replies that were neutral or that the survey item was not applicable.

Overall, the level of satisfaction remains high despite a slight decrease from the previous results. This may be due to a 35% reduction in the number of respondents coupled with a larger number of respondents with unsuccessful case closures. Most often, consumers whose cases were closed successfully report higher levels of satisfaction than those who were closed as unsuccessful. Major findings of the consumer satisfaction survey include: respondents felt that their rehabilitation counselor treated them with respect (92%), their questions were answered clearly by DRS (89%), they were involved in their plan development (76%), their counselor stayed in contact so they knew what was happening (85%), and they received the services they needed (84%). Respondents also reported that they knew what each step of their IPE would be (83%), and their counselors told them about job opportunities (74%).

Consumers also reported high ratings for accessibility of local offices (92% gave an "Above Average" or "Excellent" rating), their counselors (90%), and the overall experience with DRS (86%).

The consumers were asked to recall which (client’s) rights information had been explained to them. There were 409 individuals who responded that at least one right had been explained (84% of the sample). Most individuals indicated that they had received several rights explanations. The most commonly explained rights to consumers were (1) their participation in developing the rehabilitation plan (88%) and (2) choice of how services were provided (74%).

When asked about needs that were not met by rehabilitation services, 271 of the 364 consumers who responded to this question reported that they had no additional needs (74%). Consumers who did report additional needs most commonly requested education/training, employment-related services, medical services, and transportation-related services.

The survey participants were asked for comments on their experience with DRS. A total of 331 people provided feedback to this question. Of these, 183 expressed praise or gratitude for DRS services, 30 made other statements of explanation or inquiry, and 42 offered criticism.
Overall, the level of satisfaction reported for the period continues to be high, though the overall satisfaction decreased from 92% to 86%. To maintain high quality of services and promote a greater satisfaction level for our consumers, DRS welcomes and considers compliments, complaints, suggestions, and recommendations that our clients reported in the consumer satisfaction survey.

The WVSRC and DRS were also interested in examining the pattern of responses for transitioning youth (clients who were age 24 or younger). Youth surveys were color-coded so the participants could be isolated. Their responses formed a subset of 86 returned surveys. Overall, youth satisfaction remained lower than the responses of the whole group.

Transitioning youth respondents felt that their rehabilitation counselor treated them with respect (86%), their questions were answered clearly by DRS (79%), their counselor stayed in contact so they knew what was happening (73%), and they received the services they needed (71%). Youth respondents also reported that they knew what each step of their IPE would be (76%), DRS counselors helped them develop a plan to get a job (69%), and their counselors told them about job opportunities (66%). Transitioning youth also reported high ratings for accessibility of local offices (80% gave an "Above Average" or "Excellent" rating), their counselors (79%), and the overall experience with DRS (74%).

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strategic planning discussions occur on a monthly basis at DRS Executive Management Group meetings, which include representatives of the SRC and Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC). Needs assessment results are shared with the SRC and SILC. DRS Goals and Priorities were presented at meetings of the SRC, where the SRC has opportunities for input. The SRC meetings include a variety of stakeholders, including representatives from the Client Assistance Program, SILC, and other state agencies.

In January 2016, DRS held public “Q and A” Sessions in Morgantown, WV and Charleston, WV to receive comments and questions from VR stakeholders pertaining to the Vocational Rehabilitation section of the Unified State Plan. There were a total of 27 attendees at the sessions. Several questions and comments were posed during the meetings. These included questions regarding changes due to the implementation of
the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), outreach and marketing efforts by DRS, and how DRS is serving high school students with disabilities under WIOA.

To ensure transparency and public awareness regarding the Program Year (PY) 2016/FY 2017 VR section of the Unified State Plan, DRS posted a draft version on the agency’s website for review.

(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 agency has not requested a waiver of statewideness.
(c) **Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Development System.** Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system with respect to:

1. Federal, State, and local agencies and programs;
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. Non-educational agencies serving out-of-school youth; and
5. State use contracting programs.

**Cooperation with Agencies That Are Not in the Statewide Workforce Development System and With Other Entities**

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) maintains cooperation and coordination with various agencies and entities. This section describes DRS association with agencies or entities that are not in the statewide workforce development system, education officials, private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers, and supported employment and extended services providers for individuals with the most significant disabilities.
DRS continues relationships with many agencies and organizations that are not in the statewide workforce development system and whose functions, in some capacity, involve the provision of services to individuals with disabilities. The association with other organizations occurs with varying degrees of involvement depending upon joint initiatives that may be planned and/or that may occur within any given year. Generally, DRS representatives may be included in advisory functions for other agencies, as are other agencies with the strategic planning that occurs within DRS. At present, examples of some DRS collaborative efforts are:

- With respect to state programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, DRS has a memorandum of understanding with the West Virginia Assistive Technology System of the West Virginia University Center for Excellence in Disabilities. The purpose of this MOU is to delineate the working relationship between DRS and the CED in order to provide effective services to individuals with disabilities, ensuring statewide coverage of assistive technology needs.

- A DRS representative is actively involved with the West Virginia Behavioral Health Planning Council in the monitoring and oversight of behavioral health services in the state. The DRS representative participates in quarterly Council meetings and serves on various sub-committees.

- DRS representatives participate with the West Virginia Developmental Disabilities Council. DRS maintains a close working relationship with the staff and members of this Council and has provided support and received effective feedback for its work.

- DRS is represented on the State’s Interagency Collaborative Team (ICT), a group (including agencies not under the state workforce development system) centered around WorkForce West Virginia to provide ongoing attention to addressing issues that will build and continually improve the overall Workforce Development System (WDS). The team is the single State-level interagency group for addressing issues or concerns regarding building and maintaining the most effective and efficient implementation of the overall WDS in WV. DRS participates in regular, monthly meetings of the ICT, and is one of the signatories of the ICT Memorandum of Understanding, which is drafted annually. The ICT membership includes:

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

- DRS has a good working relationship with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) at the district level, which allows direct referrals of appropriate veterans from VA facilities to its rehabilitation technology unit for assistive technology and rehabilitation engineering services. Furthermore, DRS maintains liaisons for all VA offices in WV.

- Although DRS does not maintain a formal agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) through the office of the Under Secretary for Rural Development, it provides rehabilitation services as necessary to eligible migrant and seasonal farm workers with disabilities. Another available resource is the WV AgrAbility Project, a USDA-funded program established to assist farmers and farm families who need to find ways to accommodate their disabilities in order to remain active in agriculture.
(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.

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) has cooperative agreements with the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDOE) Office of Special Programs, the WVDOE Division of Technical and Adult Education, Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development, local education agencies, and the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind. The cooperative agreements between DRS and WVDOE, both at the state and the local levels, assure that each student with a disability in the state who needs special education, vocational education, and/or vocational rehabilitation services is identified and that the appropriate services, including pre-employment transition services, are made available to the individual.

The cooperative agreements cover:

1. Determination of DRS responsibility;

2. Student/consumer referrals;
3. Joint development of the Individualized Educational Program (IEP) and the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE);

4. Services;

5. Coordinated planning and payment of services;

6. Confidentiality of information;

7. Subminimum wage employment (per the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act);

8. Local agreements;

9. General supervision; and

10. Dispute resolution.

Prior to the 2015-2016 school year, the DRS director sent letters to each high school principal and special education director in West Virginia. The letter detailed changes in vocational rehabilitation service provision to high school students with disabilities since the enactment of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The most significant change relates to providing pre-employment transition services to high school students with disabilities. The letter described these services and the further collaboration between DRS and school staff to better serve students with disabilities.

DRS offices are located in some of the state’s largest schools. Counselors visit every high school in the state to initiate rehabilitation services needed for transition from school to work. This allows the counselor to develop a collaborative relationship and assist the student in identifying goals, services, and service providers related to employment options prior to transition. In FY 2015, DRS re-structured its counselor assignments to increase service availability to students with disabilities. There are now 44 rehabilitation counselors assigned to work with the state’s 55 local education agencies and the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and Blind. DRS’ school counselors specialize in providing pre-employment transition services
(PETS) to students with disabilities. Of these 44 PETS counselors, 43 work solely with high school students and have no other assignments. Expected benefits include increased counselor presence in schools, increased IEP meeting attendance, increased provision of PETS, and an increase in outreach and awareness of VR services to high school students with disabilities.

School (PETS) rehabilitation counselors also are invited to participate in IEP meetings. During these meetings the counselor describes DRS services, policies, and procedures as appropriate. The DRS counselor determines the student’s eligibility and order of selection category utilizing information generated from the school, the student, and DRS. Prior to or shortly after the student’s IEP transition meeting occurs, IPE development begins so both the student and counselor have an idea of what rehabilitation services will be necessary to meet the student’s vocational goal. Therefore, if the student needs additional training or assessment prior to vocational goal determination, this information is already collected so that planned rehabilitation services may begin. IPE development and approval for students with disabilities, including those able to be served if DRS is on an order of selection, will begin as early as appropriate during the transition process, but before the student, determined to be eligible, leaves the school setting.

In 2016, DRS will partner with Community Access, Incorporated to implement a program to support the design and implementation of programming and outreach while addressing the new direction mandated by WIOA. Specifically, the program will address the five mandated PETS for high school students with disabilities through an expansion of the Student Transition to Employment (STEP) program. The project will assist school districts by offering training and technical assistance in setting up community-based work experience programs for students with disabilities. The project will help level the playing field between resource-rich metropolitan areas and isolated rural settings that often have few services available. In addition, a strong statewide outreach to teachers, parents, students, and other VR stakeholders will be a component of the project. A concerted effort will be made to include historically under-served groups including students in the foster care system, those returning from out-of-state placements, and those students on the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) track. The project has the following goals:

1. To assist school districts in setting up community-based work exploration programs.
2. To develop statewide parent training network utilizing the Parent Community Resource Centers.
(3) To develop a network of specialists to work with DRS, WorkForce West Virginia, and WVDOE staff.
(4) To develop a statewide cross-sector outreach program with a strong emphasis on traditionally underserved populations.

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

Information about the DRS school program is widely disseminated to education professionals, as well as students and their parents. An updated fact sheet and new brochure explaining DRS transition services is available. DRS has negotiated an agreement with the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission for its consumers who attend in-state public colleges and universities. The agreement describes the financial responsibility of DRS and the appropriate public institution of higher education, provides procedures to resolve interagency disputes, and coordinates policies and procedures to ensure timely delivery of vocational rehabilitation services. To better serve individuals in post-secondary school, DRS has liaisons assigned to 43 post-secondary community/technical colleges, 4-year colleges, and universities across the state.

DRS also coordinates with the WVDOE Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development, a WIOA core partner, to better serve individuals receiving adult education. The agencies have a formal MOU and collaborate at the state and local level. The MOU includes screening students for potential disabilities, including learning disabilities, and the collaboration between WVDOE and DRS to provide necessary accommodations (e.g., assistive technology, interpreters) for eligible individuals. DRS will evaluate the disability or disabilities and provide specific recommendations regarding testing accommodations, recommendations for instructional accommodations and recommendations for job accommodations. If it is found that the student requires assistive technology (which includes information technology products such
as software application, operating systems, web-based information applications, web accessibility, video equipment, multimedia products, and office equipment) then WVDOE and DRS will share, as appropriate, the cost for this technology. If it is determined that the person has a hearing disability and it is deemed necessary that an interpreter, CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation), note-taker or other appropriate accommodations be provided, then WVDOE and DRS will share the cost. WVDOE will only hire qualified interpreters who are registered through the West Virginia Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.)

While the MOU covers the partnership statewide, there are numerous collaborative activities at the local level. DRS and Adult Education are collaborating with a university to assist adult education students in transitioning to post-secondary education through a curriculum that teaches time management, a basic math refresher, and any other identified needs for individuals with disabilities returning to post-secondary education. DRS, WorkForce West Virginia, and Adult Education also collaborate in workforce development region 2 as part of WIOA One-Stop Management Partner meetings with local development groups to better identify and facilitate needed services for the local area. In DRS Districts 4 and 6, DRS has partnered with Adult Education to increase efforts to reach potential VR consumers being served by Adult Education and the SPOKES program. SPOKES (Strategic Planning in Occupational Knowledge for Employment and Success) was created by WV Adult Education under a contract between the WVDOE, Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development and the WV Department of Health and Human Resources, and in collaboration with the Workforce Development Boards.

(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.

Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-Profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers

The state network of Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) is critical to the effective and efficient delivery of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with significant disabilities. As of November 2015,
there are 68 DRS-acknowledged parent company CRPs in West Virginia located at 97 service sites. There are also an additional 29 Student Transition to Employment Project vendors that focus on serving students with disabilities.

DRS maintains working relationships with non-profit CRPs in West Virginia that provide supported and direct employment, community-based assessment, and/or work skills assessment. CRPs also provide employment readiness services such as life skills and work adjustment, job site training, and extended employment assessment. While respecting freedom of choice, DRS encourages work center programs to expand community-based programs for these individuals.

Any CRP meeting the DRS acknowledgment process will be permitted under a written Vendor Acknowledgment to bill for services provided to DRS consumers. In order to become a DRS-acknowledged vendor, an applicant must request, complete, and return a Vendor Acknowledgment Packet. Upon receipt of the completed packet, a recommendation to acknowledge or not acknowledge will be made to the DRS Director.

The Vendor Acknowledgment Packet contains an application for Vendor Acknowledgment to provide supported employment services, an annual data summary that provides the agency’s name, address, contact information, a checklist of those DRS services they will be providing, and a Vendor Acknowledgment form addressing conditions of and payment for services rendered to DRS consumers.

A signed Vendor Acknowledgment indicates that the vendor agrees to follow conditions set forth regarding standards, anti-discrimination, indemnification, and conditions/standards of operation. The acknowledgment is good for one year.

CRPs also provide services, including pre-employment transition services (PETS), to students with disabilities. CRPs can also supplement work exploration activities and provide opportunities for VR consumers, especially students, statewide. DRS also utilizes school personnel as CRP vendors as part of the Student Transition to Employment Program (STEP). These teacher/vendors work with students outside of school hours to provide them with CRP services such as community based assessment, work skills assessment, work adjustment training, job placement, and job coaching. The students benefit from working
with a trusted adult who is already familiar with the student’s strengths and weaknesses. This eliminates the need for new and/or additional assessment by the service provider. Furthermore, this program allows DRS to ensure services are available in rural areas. DRS has made it an agency goal and priority to expand CRP service availability.

(f) Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services.

Describe the designated State agency’s efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide supported employment services and extended employment services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) continues to concentrate efforts on educating interested parties regarding the process of becoming a non-traditional provider source for supported employment services. A variety of supported employment provider choices are needed, particularly due to the rural nature of the state.

DRS continues to focus on providing technical assistance and coordinating training for vendors of supported employment services, DRS staff members, and staff members of other public and private agencies. DRS keeps current on changes and advances in supported employment through documented research, literature, and reviews of best practices.

Other agencies with which DRS collaborates for the provision of time-limited supported employment services are:

1. West Virginia Developmental Disabilities Council funds;

2. West Virginia Title XIX--Home and Community-Based Waiver Program for intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD) recipients; and

3. Social Security Administration work incentives programs.
In implementing school-to-work transition services for individuals exiting the school system, DRS also collaborates with family resource networks.

Through a combined effort with other disability organizations, $100,000 was appropriated by the West Virginia Legislature for supported employment follow-along services (extended supported employment services). DRS serves as the fiscal agent for these funds. DRS has created program guidelines governing the use of state-appropriated funds for extended services under the supported employment program created by state statute in 1993. The sole use of the state funds attached to this program is to provide extended services for individuals not eligible from any other funding source. All providers of supported employment services may access these funds for individuals who are eligible under the guidelines. At the end of FY 2015, DRS had sponsored 67 individuals in the extended supported employment program so they could maintain and retain their jobs within the community. This figure represents the cooperative efforts of 13 CRPs.

Agreements between DRS and all acknowledged providers of supported employment services document collaboration for extended services. Each agreement details the time-limited and extended services that DRS will secure through the vendor.

Extended services specified in the agreement will be provided by the vendor and include, at minimum, monitoring two hours per month, no more than eight at the job site of each individual unless the individual can be better served through off-site monitoring. If off-site monitoring is determined to be appropriate, it must, at a minimum, consist of two hours per month with the individual and at least one contact with the employer during those hours. The vendor also agrees to provide other support services as needed and specified in the Individualized Plan for Employment.

In addition to the basic vendor agreement identifying the time-limited and extended services to be mutually provided by DRS and the vendor, DRS has attempted to collaborate with other agencies and organizations to provide funding for extended services.

These sources of extended supported employment services are:

1. West Virginia Title XIX--Homes and Community-Based Waiver Program for I/DD recipients;
2. DRS program funds for persons receiving extended services at DRS-acknowledged CRP work centers; and

3. Social Security Administration programs such as Impairment Related Work Experience and Plan for Achieving Self Support for approved Social Security recipients.

DRS continues its efforts to expand the number of acknowledged vendors of supported employment services, particularly in areas underserved and unserved within the current system. As of November 2015, the number of supported employment service providers was 68, an increase of 30 providers since FY 2006.

(g) Coordination with Employers. 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 West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) believes that coordination with employers is integral to improving the workforce development system. Gathering/collection information about employer needs, which will also be shared with other Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) partners, allows DRS to provide training and other services to vocational rehabilitation (VR) consumers in order to meet business needs and expectations of current and future workers. To optimize its coordination with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities for consumers with disabilities, DRS takes a multi-faceted approach. DRS utilizes its own personnel in addition to partnering with WorkForce West Virginia to coordinate with employers across the state. Additionally, DRS has specific programs/strategies to identify employment and career exploration opportunities for students with disabilities, including the provision of pre-employment transition services. The strategies that DRS uses are described below.
DRS has an in-house Employer Services Section that specializes in providing employers with disability-related information, services, and pre-screened job seekers. The DRS Employer Services Section has 12 employment specialists that cover all 55 counties in West Virginia. DRS’ team of employment specialists provide business owners and employers with critical business options and assistance in staffing, employee retention strategies, education on disability-related issues, job accommodations, and information about financial incentives for employers who hire individuals with disabilities. In the previous fiscal year, employment specialists contacted 1,575 employers, attended 25 job fairs, coordinated with WorkForce West Virginia, participated in rapid response events, attended local workforce development board (formerly known as workforce Development Board, or WDB) meetings, and provided Job Clubs for students with disabilities.

Sample of services provided to employers:

- Pre-screened qualified applicants to reduce employers’ cost of recruitment and hiring.
- Consultation, recommendation, and training for retention of employees who acquire a disability.
- Technical assistance on the Americans with Disability Act (ADA).
- Accessibility options and solutions.
- Employer on-site disability awareness training.
- Information on tax credits available to employers.

Direct contact with employers is a key strategy to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities for VR consumers, including students with disabilities. Employment specialists contact employers to identify current and future job openings. To complement this, DRS utilizes labor market information provided by WorkForce West Virginia to identify the top employers in each county; contact is always made with the top ten employers in each county. When meeting with employers, employment specialists provide valuable information, including the DRS Employer Resource Guide. The resource guide provides the following information:
• Staffing services
• Training programs and incentives for hiring people with disabilities
• Financial incentives
• Accessibility assessments
• Accommodating employees with disabilities
• Basic disability etiquette
• Attitudinal barriers
• Americans with Disabilities Act
• Locating a DRS office
• Where to find additional resources

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

The Employer Services Section also works with employers to better serve transitioning youth with disabilities, including providing career exploration opportunities for students with disabilities. In 2015, DRS debuted the POWER (Positive Outcomes within Education and Rehabilitation) program. POWER is a job shadowing program that offers transitioning students, who may be having a difficult time choosing a career path, the opportunity to experience an occupation by spending time with a professional working in the students’ vocational goal/career field of interest. The POWER program allows the student the opportunity to experience an occupation prior to committing to training. It guides the student to take a serious, realistic look at the occupation, allowing the student to make a more informed choice.

Employment specialist services, including PETS, provided to students with disabilities:
• POWER job shadowing program
• Transition Fairs
• Job Readiness Workshops
• Job Clubs
  o Interviewing
  o Resume Preparation
  o Application Assistance
  o Dressing for an Interview/Employment
  o Job Retention and Good Work Habits
• Job search and employer contacts
  o Assist students in locating employment opportunities and assisting with applying to openings
  o Advocating on the student’s behalf to employers when requested by the student

DRS also coordinates with employers through participation and membership in various community and regional organizations. These activities range from employer-specific organizations to public-private partnerships and allow DRS to better understand the needs of employers while jointly developing employment-related activities. Some of these partnerships include:

• Regional WDBs
• Beckley-Raleigh Chamber of Commerce
• Fayette County Chamber of Commerce
• Weirton Area Chamber of Commerce
• Employer engagement and worksite tours for VR consumers through partnerships with community colleges such as Mountwest and Bridge Valley
• Employer tours through partnerships with high school and adult vocational/technical centers including South Branch Career and Technical Center and James Rumsey Technical Institute

To raise awareness of DRS’ services available to employers and potential VR consumers, the agency engages in a statewide marketing campaign. To directly target business professionals, DRS has full-page advertisements in West Virginia Executive Magazine, West Virginia’s premier business publication. The agency also purchases radio advertisements across the state. Several of these ads are specifically directed towards businesses and outline the previously detailed employer services that DRS can provide. DRS also sponsors community events to ensure awareness among the general public.
Another key strategy to coordinate with employers is through collaboration with WorkForce West Virginia, a WIOA core partner. WorkForce West Virginia is the state agency that oversees numerous U.S. Department of Labor programs. This partnership takes place at all levels, including local offices, regional workforce development boards, and state level Interagency Collaboration Team meetings. These partnerships have been of great benefit for West Virginians with disabilities seeking training and employment.

Because of the services it provides, WorkForce West Virginia has the largest database of both job seekers and job openings in the state. DRS is able to tap into these resources to identify current employment opportunities for VR consumers, identify needs of employers across the state, and utilize detailed labor market information to assist individuals (including students) with disabilities in identifying future career opportunities. This allows VR consumers to identify potential employment opportunities and any training or other VR services that are required for the job. Additionally, job-ready VR consumers can create an account with WorkForce West Virginia to match with employers seeking workers with specific skills they already possess.

(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.

DRS maintains a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau for Medical Services (BMS), the state agency responsible for the State Medicaid plan under the title XIX of the Social Security Act; this is also known as the Waiver program. An advisory group for the program is constituted with the WV Developmental Disability Council (WVDDC). DRS has a position on the council. DRS and BMS interact as part of this advisory group through the WVDDC. The primary involvement of the XIX Medicaid Waiver program in fostering competitive, integrated employment outcomes through vocational rehabilitation is by mandating referral to DRS and providing ongoing support funding for those cases closed by DRS in Supported Employment. The WVDDC also advises BMS on policy development and meeting unmet needs of those participating in the XIX Medicaid Waiver program.

In addition to interacting with XIX Medicaid Waiver staff as part of the WVDDC meetings, DRS participates in two subcommittees, Employment First and Medley Management. The Employment First committee focuses on promoting employment for intellectually/developmentally disabled (IDD) individuals as a first option among services providers, legislators, state policy makers, and the community at large. The Medley Management committee provides oversight and advice to the Bureau for Behavioral Health on the state’s Medley program, which serves a specific group of IDD individuals that are at risk of institutionalization. These are often individuals that are also XIX Medicaid Waiver eligible. On both of these committees, DRS promotes a focus on competitive, integrated employment outcomes.
DRS counselors will, at the time of application, gather information regarding an individual’s third party resources, including Medicaid. If it is determined that the individual receives Medicaid benefits, BMS will provide all Medicaid-covered services to the individual, regardless of that individual’s continued status with DRS. If an individual is approved to receive services from DRS, and begins to receive Medicaid benefits at a later time, BMS will provide all Medicaid-covered services to the individual from that time forward.

Individuals receiving services from BMS will receive information on the eligibility requirements for DRS and the services DRS provides. If an individual receiving services from BMS expresses a desire to work, he or she will be referred to DRS at that time. Similarly, DRS consumers who are Medicaid-eligible will be referred to BMS.

DRS also maintains an MOU with the Division of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD), within the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities (BBHHF), the State agency with primary responsibility for providing services and supports for individuals with intellectual disabilities and individuals with developmental disabilities. DRS interacts with both BBHHF and its subsidiary, DIDD.

DRS, BBHHF, and DIDD agree to interact in the following ways to facilitate delivery of services, including extended services, to individuals with the most significant disabilities:

- The DIDD program manager and DRS will interact regularly as part of the WV Developmental Disability Council (WVDDC) meetings, as well as the Employment First and Medley Management committees. The Employment First committee focuses on promoting employment for IDD individuals as a first option among
services providers, legislators, state policy makers, and the community at large. The Medley Management committee provides oversight and advice to the BBHHF on the state’s Medley program, which serves a specific group of IDD individuals that are at risk of institutionalization. On both of these committees, DRS promotes a focus on competitive, integrated employment outcomes.

- The BBHHF administers several Customized Employment grants with vendors of DRS. BBHHF and DRS will jointly train the Community Rehabilitation Programs receiving these grants as well as DRS staff working with these programs.

- BBHHF and DRS will work together in mediating problems in cases being served jointly in the programs.

- DRS will meet monthly with BBHHF staff to review applicants for an Unmet Needs funding program to foster assistance to IDD individuals where traditional funding sources do not provide needed supports.

- Individuals receiving services from BBHHF or DIDD will receive information on the eligibility requirements for DRS and the services DRS provides. If an individual receiving services from BBHHF or DIDD expresses a desire to work, he or she will be referred to DRS at that time.

In order to provide quality and timely vocational rehabilitation services to West Virginians with behavioral health conditions who qualify, DRS collaborates with the West Virginia Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities (BBHHF) and its partners. BBHHF is the federally designated Single State Authority for mental health and substance use disorders and operates under the auspices of the West Virginia
Department of Health and Human Resources. The primary programs within BBHHF and their partners that DRS works with are as follows:

-The Office of Consumer Affairs and Community Outreach (CACO), is charged with providing collaborative support to the clinical section of the Office of Programs through the provision of legislative tracking, disaster coordination and response, development and operation of a Consumer Advisory Council, coordination of BBHHF training activities, researching and circulating information on evidence-based and emerging best practices, development of health promotion and wellness campaigns, researching and applying for high priority discretionary grants, and by providing a centralized response to requests for assistance and patient grievances. DRS maintains a relationship with this office and has worked together on anti-stigma campaigns, supporting recovery coaching and peer support, and training in the area of mental health first aid and medication assisted treatment.

-The Division of Adult Behavioral Health assures and provides access to services and supports to meet the mental health and co-occurring needs of adults and transitional age youth, enabling them to live, learn, work, and participate actively in their communities. The Division establishes standards to ensure effective and culturally competent care to promote recovery. The Division sets policy, promotes self-determination, protects human rights, and supports mental health training and research. DRS maintains a relationship with this office and has teamed up with them on several efforts such as having them present on “Behavioral Health Connections” at the DRS 2014 Statewide Training Conference, assisting them in the planning of their 2015 Integrated Behavioral Health Care Conference and exhibiting at that conference whereby information regarding DRS was disseminated to approximately 700 behavioral health professionals, and serving as a subject matter expert on their Clinical Adult Review Process (CARP), which looks at the needs of individuals transitioning out of state psychiatric facilities.
The Division of Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health is the Single State Authority for Children's Mental Health charged with monitoring and improving the children's behavioral health service delivery system. The Division is responsible for overseeing the implementation and evaluation of the federal block grant. The Division works collaboratively across all child serving systems, at both the state and local level, to ensure access to quality behavioral health services and supports for children and adolescents with and/or at risk for serious emotional disturbances. The Division provides leadership and technical assistance to facilitate an effective system of care for children and their families. DRS continues a working relationship with this office and their partners and for example has been working with the Expanded School Mental Health Steering Team Initiative. DRS has also worked together with The Family Advocacy, Support, & Training (FAST) program which is a statewide parent and youth network that engages families in the planning, management, and evaluation of their child's mental health treatment and service needs.

The Division on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, an operating division of BBHHF within the West Virginia Division of Health and Human Services, is charged in code with being the Single State Authority primarily responsible for prevention, control, treatment, rehabilitation, educational research, and planning for substance abuse related services. DRS cooperates with this office to share resources and circulate information that comes from attending the Governor’s Regional Substance Abuse Task Force meetings, such as the WV Substance Abuse Services Directory and 844-HELP4WV, the first statewide 24-hour substance abuse call line.

The Olmstead Coordinator is a part of the WV Department of Health & Human Resources & Office of the Inspector General. Olmstead v. L.C. (1999) is a landmark United States Supreme Court decision upholding the civil rights of people with disabilities (including those with behavioral health conditions that result in disability) to receive services and supports in the most integrated setting in the community. DRS is one of the required state agencies to participate in quarterly Olmstead Council meetings. Currently the DRS Program Specialist for Behavioral Health and Corrections is the designated representative to communicate information regarding the agency’s activities.
The West Virginia Behavioral Health Planning Council (WVBHPC) is a unified voice that promotes wellness, recovery, and resiliency for all West Virginians. The primary purpose of the WVBHPC is to advocate for and evaluate the provision of community-based behavioral health services. BBHHF and DRS are two of the principal state agencies that must have membership on the council and attend quarterly meetings working together and with others to accomplish the goals of the WVBHPC.

(i) Comprehensive System of Personnel Development; Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development. 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.

      (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.

(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.

(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, in accordance with section 101(a)(7)(B)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act, to ensure that the personnel have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities.

(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

procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.

(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.

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

DRS is committed to providing a comprehensive system of personnel development (CSPD) that complies with Section 101(a)(7)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 and Section 721(a)(7)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014. Members of the State Rehabilitation Council are afforded the opportunity to review and comment upon this entire
section, particularly the DRS plan for recruitment, preparation, and retention of qualified personnel, DRS personnel standards, and staff development needs and activities.

Provisions of this section should assist in recruiting and retaining qualified staff members to ensure skilled personnel are available to provide rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities. Furthermore, these endeavors will help ensure an improved level of competence and expand and improve vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities, especially those with significant disabilities, allowing them to reach employment.

The Human Resources Unit is primarily responsible for performing DRS personnel administration activities in keeping with guidance from the West Virginia Division of Personnel (WVDOP), Rehabilitation Services Administration, Social Security Administration, and other appropriate bodies. The DRS Staff Development Unit administers the in-service training grant program. The Quality Assurance (QA) Unit also works closely with the Field Services Unit to ensure quality and timely training for new field counselors and rehabilitation services associates (RSAs).

The following narrative describes the DRS CSPD and policies, procedures, and activities relating to the establishment and maintenance of standards to ensure that personnel needed within DRS are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained for DRS operations.

DRS Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development Needs

Statistics and information utilized for personnel planning are maintained in several databases within the Human Resources Unit. Staffing and salary information is available from the State of West Virginia Financial Information Management System (FIMS) and wvOASIS. These databases allow DRS administrators to review salary, pay grade, job title, reporting unit, and personal employee information. Such information is available to DRS Assistant Directors and District Managers who use it for planning, hiring negotiations, and pay equity. Information about DRS retirees also may be obtained from these databases.

The Human Resources Senior Manager periodically (at least monthly) maintains and provides statistical data to the DRS Director. The data are a list of the number of individuals under various classifications who are employed by DRS in the provision of rehabilitation services. This includes a ratio of the number of
counselors to the number of consumers served each year. DRS estimates the ratio of consumers served (13,551) to the number of counselors (102) will be 133 in Federal Fiscal Year (FY) 2017.

Each year the DRS Director receives a summary report that estimates and projects the number of such personnel that will be needed during the next five-year period. In November 2015, DRS had 102 counselors in various offices across the state. Of the 102 counselors, DRS had 64 Rehabilitation Counselors, 26 Senior Rehabilitation Counselors, and 12 Certified Rehabilitation Counselors. The DRS believes its existing counselors and field staff members are needed to provide services to consumers who are currently in the DRS system.

DRS had several unfilled positions as of November 2015: 12 Rehabilitation Counseling positions, 5 Senior Rehabilitation Counselor positions, and 8 Certified Rehabilitation Counselor positions. Each unfilled position is being used to expand the number of field counselors when needed.

DRS expects to see an increase in the number of consumers in its caseload system, from 13,209 individuals in FY 2015 to a projected 14,500 individuals in FY 2020. DRS administrators believe that the expected future caseload size will be managed by existing counseling personnel and the gradual filling of the 25 vacant counselor positions over the next five years. Additionally, DRS employs 48 RSAs to assist Counselors with their caseloads, in order to more efficiently meet the needs of the increasing numbers of consumers.

The following information presents a range of the number of counselors and other agency personnel projected to leave DRS employment after becoming eligible for early retirement under the West Virginia Public Employees Retirement System by FY 2020. Of the 27 counselors who will be eligible, there will be 10 Rehabilitation Counselors, 12 Senior Rehabilitation Counselors, and 5 Certified Rehabilitation Counselors. DRS continues to experience a gradual retirement of counselors and other personnel. The agency expects this trend will continue over the coming years.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row</th>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Total positions</th>
<th>Current vacancies</th>
<th>Projected vacancies over the next 5 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rehabilitation Counselors</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Senior Rehabilitation Counselors</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Certified Rehabilitation Counselors</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Fiscal</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Administrative Services</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Field Services</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Support Services (e.g., HR, rehab. tech unit)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Information Technology (IT)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Information from Institutions of Higher Education

DRS annually collects information from higher education institutions that provide training to prospective rehabilitation personnel. Based on information provided by West Virginia University (WVU) and Marshall University, WVU reports 38 students enrolled in the Rehabilitation Counseling graduate program and 16 graduates in the 2015-2016 period. For the Counseling graduate program, WVU reports 60 enrolled students and 22 graduates in the 2015-2016 period. For the Social Work graduate program, WVU reports an enrollment of 161 students and 91 graduates in the 2015-2016 period.

The report from Marshall University shows 161 students and 37 graduates in Counseling graduate programs. It also reports 114 students and 43 graduates in Psychology graduate programs.

DRS has not sponsored any counselors or staff members to pursue a graduate degree since 2004. However, DRS has sponsored rehabilitation counselors in graduate level rehabilitation counseling courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Students enrolled</th>
<th>Employees sponsored by agency and/or RSA</th>
<th>Graduates sponsored by agency and/or RSA</th>
<th>Graduates from the previous year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Other (e.g., voc. instructors, tech. analysts)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Program Name</td>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>--------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2015-2016 WVU Rehabilitation Couns. Grad. Prog.</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2015-2016 WVU-Counseling Grad. Program</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2015-2016 Marshall U. Counseling Grad. Program</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>37</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2015-2016 WVU Social Work Grad. Prog.</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2015-2016 Marshall U.-Psychology Grad. Prog.</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DRS Recruitment Efforts**

DRS will continue its efforts to recruit and advance employees of traditionally under-represented groups such as people with disabilities, seniors, women, and members of racial or ethnic minority groups.

**DRS Re-training Efforts for Existing Rehabilitation Professionals**
DRS is in full compliance with the CSPD requirement and its standard to employ only rehabilitation counselors who (1) possess a master’s degree in rehabilitation counseling or a counseling-related field, or (2) are employees who have two years of full-time or equivalent part-time paid experience in the position of Rehabilitation Counselor Trainee. As stated above, DRS makes no exceptions to the state standard when hiring new rehabilitation counselors. Therefore, the agency provides for existing personnel to receive the training necessary to meet requirements of the state standard.

As part of its non-discriminatory employment practices, DRS ensures that all personnel are selected for employment without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. The DRS affirmative action plan is updated annually and the agency has formally adopted this policy of non-discriminatory employment practices.

DRS Standards for Qualified Rehabilitation Professionals

To ensure a high standard of competency and credentials for its qualified rehabilitation professionals, DRS has established job classifications. The lowest standard for Rehabilitation Counselors requires a master’s degree in rehabilitation counseling, counseling and guidance, social work, or closely related behavioral science field; or two years of experience as a Rehabilitation Counselor Trainee. Senior Rehabilitation Counselors require: (1) a master’s degree in rehabilitation counseling or counseling-related field; and (2) two years of full-time or equivalent part-time paid professional experience in vocational rehabilitation counseling. Certified Rehabilitation Counselors require: (1) a master’s degree in rehabilitation counseling or counseling-related field; (2) current national certification as a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor or Certified Vocational Evaluator or current West Virginia licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor; and (3) at least three years of full-time or equivalent part-time paid professional experience as a rehabilitation counselor.

DRS has established the position of Rehabilitation Counselor Trainee. An employee in this position is under direct supervision and performs work at the entry level in a probationary, training capacity which is intended to qualify the employee for specific duties for this position. The employee may become eligible for the position of Rehabilitation Counselor after two years of full-time or equivalent part-time paid experience in the position of Rehabilitation Counselor Trainee. Minimum qualifications for the Rehabilitation Counselor Trainee position are a bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited college or university in counseling and...
guidance, social work, nursing, special education, or related behavioral science or human service field; or a bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited college or university with three years of full-time or equivalent part-time experience in the position of Rehabilitation Services Associate.

DRS strives to recruit graduates of accredited master’s degree programs in rehabilitation like the one at WVU, but it does not require the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) credential as the minimum qualification for a new counselor. Graduates of accredited master’s degree programs in rehabilitation counseling are eligible for certification by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC), which sets the national standards for quality rehabilitation counseling services in the U.S. DRS encourages the achievement of CRC by existing counselors and gives special preference to applicants with the CRC credential and qualified applicants with disabilities and from minority backgrounds.

The DRS standard is specific to rehabilitation counselors only and is consistent with registration requirements of WVDOP—the DRS state hiring authority. WVDOP administers and scores unassembled examinations to potential rehabilitation counselor candidates.

To ensure that counselors and other personnel remain up-to-date with evolving labor force needs and the needs of individuals with disabilities, DRS provides ongoing training opportunities for its field staff in group and individual settings. This occurs through educational activities such as the annual training conference, periodic district-level training sessions, continuing education credit opportunities (Certified Rehabilitation Counselor), and training sessions by DRS Quality Assurance Specialists and DRS Employment Specialists. In FY 2015, DRS held its annual training conference and provided training in each district on accessing and utilizing labor market information. These activities allow DRS counselors and field staff to enhance their knowledge of labor force needs and ultimately better serve individuals with disabilities.

Hiring Qualified Rehabilitation Professionals

Individuals not meeting the above personnel standards for rehabilitation professionals are ineligible to interview for vacant rehabilitation counseling positions. Classification specifications for each position utilized by DRS are available through the WVDOP website:

When employing new rehabilitation counselors, DRS makes no exceptions to its standard and provides the training necessary to meet requirements of the state standard only to existing personnel. These efforts are described later in this section.

Should qualified candidates be unavailable, the DRS Director, Assistant Directors, Human Resources Manager, and the Unit Manager or District Manager may re-assess staffing/consumer needs and re-assign qualified employees to assume duties of the vacant position. Qualified DRS retirees may also be re-hired on a contractual/intermittent basis until permanent qualified employees can be hired.

The career ladder for advancement within the rehabilitation counseling ranks requires additional experience and credentials as well as increased responsibilities.

**DRS Requirements for Qualified Rehabilitation Paraprofessionals**

In order to more efficiently meet the needs of its consumers, DRS upgraded several clerical positions to paraprofessional status. A Rehabilitation Services Associate must be a high school (or equivalent) graduate and have at least four years of full-time or equivalent part-time paid experience in paraprofessional or responsible clerical office support work, which requires familiarity with casework procedures and delivery of direct consumer services in a state vocational rehabilitation services agency. A bachelor’s degree from an accredited four year college or university may be substituted for the required experience. The WVDOP specification for the Rehabilitation Services Associate position may be accessed at [http://www.personnel.wv.gov/job_seekers/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.personnel.wv.gov/job_seekers/Pages/default.aspx).

A Rehabilitation Services Associate assists qualified rehabilitation counselors in several ways: providing information about the rehabilitation process and services available to interested applicants and members of the general public; obtaining information needed to complete the application process; initiating vocational diagnostic interviews; arranging medical, psychological, and vocational evaluations for DRS consumers; and assisting consumers in applying for student financial aid.

DRS employed 48 Rehabilitation Services Associates as of November 2015. These paraprofessionals are assigned to DRS offices throughout West Virginia. To ensure statewide coverage, at least one is located within each DRS district.
System of Staff Evaluation

DRS requires that each permanent employee receive an annual job performance evaluation. Work performance of probationary employees is reviewed upon completion of the third and sixth (and for certain job classifications, twelfth) months during a probationary period. This evaluation system enables DRS to monitor the job performance of all staff members and identify areas of weakness and skill deficiencies that need training or remediation, as well as areas of strong performance. The evaluation also provides a systematic method of determining training needs for all staff members.

Staff Development and Training Activities

The selection of DRS participants for training activities is based upon documented organizational, unit, or individual training needs. Training programs will be provided for all classes and types of staff members on an internally-assessed priority basis. Particular emphasis is placed on programs addressing assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, policy and procedure, ethics, and rehabilitation technology. DRS does not discriminate in the selection of trainees for these programs based on age, sex, religion, disability, and national or ethnic origin.

DRS is committed to utilizing only institutions or training facilities that are accessible programmatically and architecturally free of other barriers with respect to trainees with disabilities. In addition, DRS will ensure that program materials are accessible in the most appropriate format for all participants with disabilities (assistive communication devices, interpreters, large print, audio tapes, Braille material, etc.). The technology to ensure these accommodations is available through various support units within DRS. Moreover, to promote equal access for individuals with disabilities in facilities of higher education, DRS houses a rehabilitation counselor on campus at Marshall University.

The majority of the training needs are met through local training and the agency’s annual State Training Conference. DRS also maintains strong cooperative and collaborative relationships with institutions of higher education, particularly those receiving funds from the Rehabilitation Services Administration to train rehabilitation professionals. This is to ensure that personnel needed within DRS are appropriately and adequately prepared for employment.
Throughout FY 2015, DRS continued to utilize a group training approach for newly hired counselors and RSAs. The training is led by QA Unit staff members and consists of three two-day sessions over the course of three months. The first session is titled “New Counselor/RSA Training” and provides introductory materials as well as training on case management and agency policies and procedures. The second and third sessions cover Decision Tree Training, detailing appropriate case work practices from referral to closure. In addition to the training, a CRP services overview is provided by the DRS Manager for CRP Services. While staff members are on location in Nitro, WV, they receive a Rehabilitation Services Program overview and a tour of the DRS Rehabilitation Technology Unit.

This approach ensures that all rehabilitation counselors and paraprofessionals receive standardized and accurate training. QA Unit staff members conduct regular case record reviews to ensure compliance with federal, state, and agency casework standards. Any deficiencies identified from the reviews are addressed through appropriate training.

All Staff Development Unit-sponsored programs provide continuing education credits that assist DRS CRCs, Licensed Professional Counselors, and members of other certified groups to maintain or obtain their certification. DRS has received approval authority from the CRCC to provide CRC continuing education credits for training programs meeting CRCC criteria.

In FY 2015, 20 DRS managers and supervisors attended management training events to meet the requirements for the West Virginia Division of Personnel Policy 18, which mandates specialized training for all supervisors and managers. New managers and supervisors are required to take eight classes in the first two years. All appropriate DRS staff members attended these required courses.

In order to meet the ongoing leadership needs of the agency, selected DRS staff members will attend training series at the National Rehabilitation Leadership Institute offered through San Diego State University. The training consists of four one-week sessions over the course of 14 to 16 months. The mission of the institute is, “To enrich the leadership, knowledge, skills, and perceptions of rehabilitation leaders through a powerful organizational learning experience that reinforces learning, creativity, strategic thinking, and passion for the public program of vocational rehabilitation.” Further information can be found at the institute’s website, http://interwork.sdsu.edu/main/nrli/.
In May 2015, 163 rehabilitation staff members participated in the agency’s annual State Training Conference. To address the specific needs of certain positions, concurrent pre-conference sessions were held for field managers, counselors for the blind, counselors for the deaf, and employment specialists. The full conference provided an overview of the latest Statewide Quality Assurance Review results, a review of services provided by the DRS Rehabilitation Programs Unit, and presentations on various VR-related topics. The topics covered included ethics, substance abuse treatment, career counseling, and behavioral health connections. This conference helps ensure that all staff members are connected to the overall mission and vision of the agency.

In 2015, 8 different training sessions were approved for CRC credits totaling 35.50 clock hours.

DRS staff confront the challenge of refining and improving their skills and knowledge while dealing with the current explosion of knowledge, technology, and treatment modalities. The agency will continue to make intensive efforts to provide ongoing information that will ensure the skills of DRS employees are responsive to the needs of the people they serve.

With respect to training implemented in coordination with entities carrying out State programs under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, DRS maintains a working relationship and a formal memorandum of understanding with the West Virginia Assistive Technology System (WVATS). In West Virginia, the WVATS, under the Center for Excellence in Disabilities at West Virginia University, is the administrator of the assistive technology grant. DRS is also represented on the West Virginia Assistive Technology Board and works with WVATS in a number of ways, including:

- Maintain an updated resource database for Assistive Technology services in West Virginia;
- Participate in special projects (i.e., finding and advocating for accessible recreational resources);
- Provide information resources, awareness and training for consumers and professionals in assistive technology services and devices;
- Provide information to WVATS partners regarding DRS and other disability related subjects; and,
- Participate as a member on an interagency team, PATHS, (Partnerships in Assistive Technologies) with a focus of interagency collaboration for the provision of Assistive Technology training and conferences.

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

Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs

West Virginia does not have large populations of ethnic groups who speak a language other than English. Consequently, DRS has not experienced difficulties making its programs accessible and available statewide. The agency’s main language accessibility needs concern people who are deaf, and each DRS district is staffed with a specialist counselor providing full access to programs and services for people who have deafness or hearing impairments.

DRS continues to work with the West Virginia Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing to train and certify interpreters in order to strengthen the network of providers for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind. Numerous workshops and seminars are conducted to increase the number of interpreters, improve their communication skills, and provide better statewide coverage. These coordinated efforts will continue as needed.

DRS also ensures that its employees and consumers with blindness or visual impairments receive information and materials in their preferred mode of communication through various accommodations. Upon request, various DRS support units provide such services as assistive communication devices, large print and/or Braille materials, audiotapes, and electronic (computer) copies.

DRS will continue to coordinate its system of personnel development with the West Virginia Department of Education’s (WVDOE) personnel development under IDEA/No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. This coordination will include collaborative efforts to share information, liaison activities, and cooperative training endeavors for DRS school counselors, teachers, and WVDOE employees, particularly those assigned to the Office of Special Education.

The DRS state level liaison attends WVDOE training functions related to special education and disseminates information about education policy or law changes to DRS school counselors as needed. DRS school counselors also receive information during their annual meeting. DRS school counselors also participate in cross-training efforts that occur on the local level through Regional Education Services Agencies. In some
areas of the state, DRS school counselors and managers participate in local interagency planning groups where training issues are discussed and planned.

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.

RESULTS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT OF THE REHABILITATION NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AND THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

To comply with provisions of Title I, Section 101, State Plans, of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 and Section 721, State Plans, of the Rehabilitation Act as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) and the West Virginia State Rehabilitation Council (WVSRC) conducted a three-year comprehensive statewide assessment of the vocational rehabilitation (VR) services needs of individuals with disabilities in West Virginia. The WVSRC-DRS Joint Committee on Needs Assessment was established in Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 to oversee the needs assessment activity. Joint committee members including those selected by WVSRC and DRS personnel were fully committed to the needs assessment study and want to ensure successful completion of its objectives.
Four major objectives of the comprehensive statewide needs assessment study included examination of the rehabilitation needs of: (1) individuals with significant and most significant disabilities, including their needs for supported employment services; (2) individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program; (3) individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce development system; and (4) youth with disabilities, and students with disabilities, including their need for pre-employment transition services or other transition services. The role of community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) as service providers was reviewed to address the need to establish, develop, or improve CRPs in West Virginia.

To maintain effective and comprehensive service delivery programs for West Virginians with disabilities, the needs assessment identified various service needs of individuals with significant and most significant disabilities. Some needed services such as transportation, housing, and personal assistance are beyond the scope of the state VR program and thus, require coordination and cooperation among a diverse range of public and private agencies and other organizations serving West Virginians with disabilities. The needs assessment recognized the service providers’ perceptions of the needs of consumers with disabilities, including rehabilitation services associates, counselors, supervisors and managers of DRS, CRPs, Consumer Affairs Conference attendees, and Workforce Development Board members throughout West Virginia.

As part of the WVSRC-DRS Joint Committee on Needs Assessment, the State Plan and Program Evaluation (SPPE) Unit conducted the needs assessment study for the agency in conjunction with WVSRC, which was fully involved from inception to the reporting of the results.

As part of the intake process for VR services, a question regarding service needs was posed to potential DRS consumers at the time of application. The reported service needs were then recorded in the DRS electronic case management system. In 2014, SPPE staff members conducted a qualitative analysis of the reported service needs of 2,863 persons with disabilities of various age and disability groups statewide. Included in these active cases with expressed VR service needs across the state were 235 persons with significant disabilities from minority backgrounds, 70 individuals aged 65 or older, and 1,551 transitioning youth. The findings of this analysis are presented below.

THE STATEWIDE NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF CONSUMERS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES
Results of the Analysis of the Reported Service Needs of Persons with Significant Disabilities

In 2014, SPPE staff members, under guidance of the WVSRC-DRS Joint Committee on Needs Assessment, conducted a qualitative analysis of the reported service needs of 2,863 persons with significant disabilities of various age and disability groups statewide. These individuals represent a good sample of consumers with significant disabilities that will continue to seek assistance from agencies in coming years, ceteris paribus. All 55 counties in West Virginia were represented in the sample. The demographic profile of these individuals with significant disabilities consists of the following characteristics:

Gender: 54.5% male, 45.5% female;

Race: 91.3% White, 8.2% Other (African American/Hispanic/American Indian/Native Hawaiian/Asian), 0.5% Unknown;

Age: 45.0% under 20 years old, 21.9% 20-34 years, 10.5% 35-44 years, 20.2% 45-64 years, 2.4% 65 years or older;

Primary Impairment: 13.0% Sensory/Communicative Impairments, 23.2% Physical Impairments, 63.7% Mental Impairments, 0.1% Unknown.

Comments from the 2,863 DRS case management records were analyzed and grouped into one or more of five general service themes: education, training, health, employment, and support. More specific service themes, within each general theme, were then determined for each comment.

As part of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, DRS identified the following as the most frequently reported service needs in each of the categories of Education, Training, Health, Employment, and Support, based on the qualitative analysis of the reported service needs of 2,863 consumers with significant disabilities. The approximate percentage of consumers with significant disabilities reporting each service need is also listed below.

EDUCATION (21.7%): College (14.8%); Non-Specific Education (4.9%); Testing for Accommodations/LD (1.4%); GED (1.1%). TRAINING (30.1%): Vocational Training (26.0%); Driving (2.3%). HEALTH (17.1%): Hearing (9.8%); Treatments (3.8%); Vision (1.6%); Ailment (1.6%); Surgeries (1.3%). EMPLOYMENT (72.5%): Finding a
Job (29.5%); Placement (19.8%); Career Counseling (8.7%); Career (7.5%); Job Retention (6.1%); Transition from High School (6.0%). SUPPORT (16.4%): Financial Aid for College (6.5%); General Financial (2.9%); Accommodations (2.2%); Other (1.2%); Assistive Technology (1.1%); Miscellaneous Support (1.0%); Financial Aid for School (1.0%); Transportation (0.9%).

Of the statewide total of 2,863 persons with significant disabilities at the time of their DRS application, 1,551 persons were determined to be of transition status (age 24 and under). The demographic profile of this subset of transition status individuals with significant disabilities consists of the following characteristics:

Gender: 56.1% male, 43.9% female;
Race: 92.3% White, 7.2% Other (African American/Hispanic/American Indian/Native Hawaiian/Asian), 0.5% Unknown;
Age: 82.9% under 20 years old, 17.1% 20-34 years;
Primary Impairment: 5.2% Sensory/Communicative Impairments, 16.0% Physical Impairments, 78.8% Mental Impairments, 0.1% Unknown.

As part of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, DRS identified the following as the most frequently reported service needs in each of the categories of Education, Training, Health, Employment, and Support, based on the qualitative analysis of the reported service needs of 1,551 transitioning youth with significant disabilities. The approximate percentage of transitioning youth with significant disabilities reporting each service need is also listed below.

EDUCATION (30.6%): College (22.8%); Non-Specific Education (5.5%); Testing for Accommodations/LD (1.6%). TRAINING (34.2%): Vocational Training (30.7%); Driving (3.0%); HEALTH (4.7%): Treatments (2.3%); Hearing (1.5%); Ailment (0.8%). EMPLOYMENT (71.2%): Finding a Job (27.4%); Placement (19.3%); Career Counseling (13.9%); Transition from High School (11.1%); Career (10.8%). SUPPORT (20.0%): Financial Aid for College (10.3%); General Financial (3.6%); Accommodations (1.9%); Financial Aid for School (1.4%); Miscellaneous Support (1.1%).
Of the statewide total of 2,863 persons with significant disabilities at the time of their DRS application, 235 persons were determined to be of minority status. The demographic profile of this subset of minority status individuals with significant disabilities consists of the following characteristics:

**Gender:** 53.85% male, 46.15% female;

**Race:** 5.5% American Indian, 3.8% Asian, 80.4% African American, 9.4% Hispanic, and 0.9% Native Hawaiian;

**Age:** 37.0% under 20 years old, 23.4% 20-34 years, 14.0% 35-44 years, 23.8% 45-64 years, 1.7% 65 years or older;

**Primary Impairment:** 11.9% Sensory/Communicative Impairments, 22.6% Physical Impairments, 65.5% Mental Impairments, 0.0% Unknown.

As part of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, DRS identified the following as the most frequently reported service needs in each of the categories of Education, Training, Health, Employment, and Support, based on the qualitative analysis of the reported service needs of 235 consumers with significant disabilities from minority backgrounds. The approximate percentage of consumers with significant disabilities from minority backgrounds reporting each service need is also listed below.

**EDUCATION (18.3%):** College (11.9%); Non-Specific Education (6.4%). **TRAINING (35.3%):** Vocational Training (31.5%); Driving (3.8%). **HEALTH (16.2%):** Hearing (6.0%); Treatments (4.3%); Vision (3.8%); Ailment (3.0%). **EMPLOYMENT (75.3%):** Placement (32.3%); Finding a Job (28.5%); Career Counseling (7.7%); Career (7.2%); Transition from High School (3.8%). **SUPPORT (14.9%):** Financial Aid for College (4.3%); Accommodations (4.3%).

Of the statewide total of 2,863 persons with significant disabilities at the time of their DRS application, 70 persons were determined to be aged 65 years or older. The demographic profile of this subset of individuals with significant disabilities aged 65 years or older consists of the following characteristics:

**Gender:** 60.0% male, 40.0% female;
Race: 94.3% White, 5.7% Other (African American/Hispanic/American Indian/Native Hawaiian/Asian), 0.0% Unknown;

Age: 100% 65 years or older;

Primary Impairment: 82.9% Sensory/Communicative Impairments, 14.6% Physical Impairments, 0.0% Mental Impairments, 2.4% Unknown.

As part of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, DRS identified the following as the most frequently reported service needs in each of the categories of Education, Training, Health, Employment, and Support, based on the qualitative analysis of the reported service needs of 70 consumers with significant disabilities aged 65 years or older. The approximate percentage of consumers with significant disabilities aged 65 years or older reporting each service need is also listed below.

EDUCATION (0.0%). TRAINING (8.6%): Other Training (4.3%). HEALTH (78.6%): Hearing (75.7%). EMPLOYMENT (54.3%): Job Retention (38.6%); Finding a Job (10.0%). SUPPORT (8.6%): Assistive Technology (4.3%).

Results of the Analysis of the Reported Pre-Employment Transition Service Needs of Students with Disabilities

SPPE staff members in 2014, under guidance of the WVSRC-DRS Joint Committee on Needs Assessment, conducted a qualitative analysis of the reported service needs of 2,863 persons with significant disabilities of various age and disability groups statewide. These individuals represent a good sample of consumers with significant disabilities that will continue to seek assistance from agencies in coming years, ceteris paribus. All 55 counties in West Virginia were represented in the sample. SPPE staff members separately analyzed the needs comments of the 1,059 students with disabilities included in the sample. The needs comments were analyzed and grouped based on their indication or implication of need of one or more of five required pre-employment transition services (PETS services):

1) Job exploration counseling;
2) **Work-based learning experiences**, which may include in-school or after school opportunities, or experience outside the traditional school setting (including internships), that is provided in an integrated environment to the maximum extent possible;

3) **Counseling on opportunities for enrollment** in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institutions of higher education;

4) Workplace readiness training to develop **social skills and independent living**; and

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

Of the 1,059 students with disabilities providing needs comments, 929 (87.7%) indicated or implied a need for one or more PETS services.

The demographic profile of these 929 students with disabilities consists of the following characteristics:

- **Gender**: 55.9% male, 44.1% female;
- **Race**: 92.8% White, 6.7% Other (African American/Hispanic/American Indian/Native Hawaiian/Asian), 0.5% Unknown;
- **Age**: 100.0% under 20 years old;
- **Primary Impairment**: 4.3% Sensory/Communicative Impairments, 15.2% Physical Impairments, 80.5% Mental Impairments, 0.0% Unknown.

As part of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, the following report presents the results of the qualitative analysis on the needs comments of these 929 students with disabilities who indicated or implied a need for one or more PETS services.

Job Exploration Counseling (676, 72.8%); Counseling on Opportunities for Enrollment in Comprehensive Transition or Postsecondary Educational Programs (348, 37.5); Social Skills and Independent Living (70, 7.5%); Work-Based Learning Experiences (21, 2.3%); and Self-Advocacy (3, 0.3%).

Results of the Survey of Consumer Affairs Conference (CAC) Attendees on the Needs of Persons with Significant Disabilities

In the fall of 2014, DRS solicited input on the service needs of persons with significant disabilities by requesting input from CAC attendees.
DRS issued surveys in the conference registration packets provided to all attendees as part of the comprehensive statewide needs assessment for individuals with significant disabilities. Based on analysis of the responses of 35 CAC attendees from across the state, the most frequently reported service needs for persons with significant disabilities included the following: transportation (27, 30.0% of the 90 total needs reported), employment needs (11, 12.2%), housing (9, 10.0%), health care needs (8, 8.9%), and accessibility (8, 8.9%).

The survey also asked respondents to indicate service gaps for individuals with disabilities. The most commonly reported statewide service gaps were transportation (13, 20.0% of the 65 total gaps reported), housing (8, 12.3%), employment (6, 9.2%), emergency services (5, 7.7%), and health care (5, 7.7%).

Results of the Survey of DRS Field Staff on the Needs of Persons with Significant Disabilities

DRS is mandated under the federal Rehabilitation Act to periodically conduct a needs assessment of persons with significant disabilities. As part of this process and in conjunction with WVSRC, DRS issued a survey in May 2014 to its field staff, including rehabilitation services associates, counselors, supervisors, and managers. The comprehensive survey asked them to offer their perceptions of the service needs and service gaps of persons with significant disabilities being served, including students with disabilities’ need for pre-employment transition services. The survey also obtained the specific areas where service needs and gaps were perceived to exist.

The survey instrument and methodology were based on previous needs assessment studies, as they generated valid and reliable information on the service needs of persons with significant disabilities in West Virginia. After pre-testing the questionnaire with the selected field counselors, supervisors, and managers along with discussions with the WVSRC Executive Director, the field staff survey was completed by 161 DRS rehabilitation services associates/counselors/supervisors/managers during the annual state conference.

Current Job Title

Of the 159 respondents, 103 were counselors- 64 (40.25%) Rehabilitation Counselors, 17 (10.69%) Senior Rehabilitation Counselors, and 22 (13.84%) Certified Rehabilitation Counselors. There were 34 (21.38%)
Rehabilitation Services Associates (RSAs), 16 (10.06%) Field Office Managers/Supervisors, and 6 (3.77%) District Managers.

The survey asked respondents to rate the level of need for 69 VR-related services on a five-point Likert scale ranging from “1-least needed/used” to “5-most highly needed/used;” not applicable (N/A) was also an option for each service. Services that were rated by 50% or more respondents as having a high level of need (a rating of 4 or 5) are found below for each service category.

Educational Services

Vocational Education (124, 77.02%), 2-year or 4-year College (113, 70.18%), High School (107, 66.46%), and Special Education (103, 63.98%).

Training Services

Job Search Training/Assistance (136, 84.47%), Career Planning (106, 65.84%), Business Vocational (106, 65.84%), and On-the-job Training/Job Trial (90, 55.90%).

Health Services

Counseling and Guidance (139, 86.34%), Psychological/Psychiatric Treatment (124, 77.02%), Physician’s Services (106, 65.83%), and Substance Abuse Treatment (92, 57.14%).

Employment Services

Job Placement (140, 86.95%), Availability of Psychological Evaluation (126, 78.26%), Vocational Evaluation (118, 73.30%), Job Development (109, 67.70%), and Community Based Assessment (101, 62.74%).

Support Services

Transportation (129, 80.13%) and Financial Assistance (106, 65.84%).

CRP Services
Direct Placement (99, 61.49%), Work Adjustment Training (91, 56.52%), Community Based Assessment (88, 54.66%), and Job Coaching-Other than Supported Employment (SE; 81, 50.31%).

Service Gaps

Respondents that indicated a perceived service gap in either the multiple-choice (Yes, No, or N/A) or open-ended response (“Which of the above services are most in need of an increase in availability?”) sections were totaled for each service. The number and percentage of respondents who reported a gap for the service are in parentheses followed by the number of responses by DRS office location.

Educational Services

The five most commonly reported gaps for educational services were:


**Literacy Instruction** (67, 41.61%) — Beckley-4, Charleston-6, Clarksburg-6, Huntington-5, Lewisburg-3, Logan-5, Marshall-2, Martinsburg-2, Moorefield-1, Morgantown-4, Oak Hill-3, Parkersburg-2, Point Pleasant-1, Princeton-6, Romney-1, Sistersville-2, Summersville-2, Teays Valley-3, Weirton-1, Weston-3, and Wheeling-3. (Unknown-2)

Training Services

The five most commonly reported gaps for training services were:


Health Services

The five most commonly reported gaps for health services were:


Employment Services

The five most commonly reported gaps for employment services were:


**Small Business Development (48, 29.81%)** -- Beckley-2, Charleston-4, Clarksburg-2, Elkins-3, Huntington-1, Keyser-3, Lewisburg-1, Logan-3, Moorefield-1, Morgantown-2, Oak Hill-1, Parkersburg-3, Point Pleasant-3,
Princeton-1, Sistersville-2, Spencer-1, Summersville-3, Teays Valley-2, Weirton-4, Welch-1, Weston-1, and Wheeling-3. (Unknown-1)


**Support Services**

The five most commonly reported gaps for support services were:


**Child Care** (69, 42.86%)-- Beckley-4, Charleston-9, Clarksburg-4, Elkins-2, Fairmont-1, Huntington-4, Keyser-2, Lewisburg-4, Logan-4, Marshall-1, Martinsburg-1, Moorefield-1, Morgantown-2, Mullens-1, Oak Hill-3, Parkersburg-1, Point Pleasant-1, Princeton-2, Sistersville-2, Summersville-3, Teays Valley-3, Weirton-1, Welch-1, Weston-3, and Wheeling-5. (Unknown-4)

**Housing Assistance** (62, 38.51%)-- Beckley-3, Charleston-6, Clarksburg-2, Elkins-3, Fairmont-1, Huntington-4, Keyser-1, Lewisburg-5, Logan-4, Marshall-1, Martinsburg-3, Morgantown-2, Oak Hill-2, Parkersburg-5, Point...
Pleasant-2, Princeton-5, Romney-1, Spencer-1, Teays Valley-2, Welch-1, Weston-2, and Wheeling-5. (Unknown-1)

CRP Services

The five most commonly reported gaps for CRP Services were:


Overall Service Needs for West Virginians with Disabilities

Respondents were asked to identify the top five overall service needs for different consumer groups with which they have experience with providing VR services. Respondents were also asked to indicate if they did not have experience working with the consumer group. The number and percentage of respondents who indicated a gap for the service are in parentheses followed by the number of responses by DRS office location.

**Note:** New categories were created to incorporate answers that were not specific to a pre-existing service category from the survey. For example, the “Overall Training” category was created to include a number of open-ended responses where the respondent indicated a need for training, but not a specific type; for example, “Training options” and “Training services.” The Miscellaneous category contains individual responses that were not clear in meaning or otherwise could not be grouped into a particular theme.

**General Territories**

The survey asked participants to “Please list the top five services that our consumers with disabilities in DRS general territories need within your service area.” There were 131 respondents to this question. The most commonly reported service needs were:

**Transportation** (94, 71.76%)-- Beckley-6, Charleston-7, Clarksburg-6, Elkins-2, Fairmont-2, Huntington-9, Keyser-2, Lewisburg-6, Logan-3, Marshall-1, Martinsburg-5, Morgantown-6, Mullens-3, Oak Hill-2, Parkersburg-2, Point Pleasant-2, Princeton-7, Ripley-2, Romney-1, Sistersville-1, Spencer-2, Summersville-3, Teays Valley-2, Weirton-5, Welch-1, Weston-3, and Wheeling-1. (Unknown-2)

Psychological/Psychiatric Services (35, 26.72%)-- Beckley-1, Charleston-6, Clarksburg-1, Fairmont-1, Huntington-4, Keyser-1, Lewisburg-2, Logan-2, Marshall-2, Martinsburg-1, Oak Hill-1, Princeton-1, Summersville-1, Teays Valley-2, Weirton-1, and Wheeling-4. (Unknown-4)

Overall Training (29, 22.14%)-- Beckley-1, Charleston-5, Clarksburg-6, Fairmont-1, Huntington-3, Keyser-1, Lewisburg-1, Morgantown-2, Mullens-2, Oak Hill-1, Parkersburg-2, Ripley-1, Sistersville-1, Summersville-1, and Wheeling-1.

Substance Abuse Treatment (23, 17.56%)-- Beckley-3, Elkins-3, Huntington-2, Lewisburg-2, Logan-2, Moorefield-2, Morgantown-1, Mullens-2, Princeton-2, Summersville-1, and Weirton-1. (Unknown-2)

Life Skills Training (23, 17.56%)-- Charleston-2, Elkins-1, Fairmont-1, Huntington-3, Keyser-1, Lewisburg-1, Logan-3, Martinsburg-1, Parkersburg-1, Princeton-2, Summersville-2, Weirton-1, and Weston-3. (Unknown-1)

Transitioning Youth

The survey asked, “From your experience with transitioning youth with disabilities, please list the TOP FIVE services that you feel these consumers need in your service area.” There were 110 respondents to this question. The most commonly reported service needs were:


Transportation (26, 23.64%)-- Beckley-1, Clarksburg-1, Elkins-1, Fairmont-1, Huntington-2, Keyser-2, Lewisburg-2, Logan-1, Marshall-1, Martinsburg-2, Morgantown-1, Parkersburg-2, Princeton-1, Spencer-1, Summersville-1, Teays Valley-1, Weirton-2, Weston-1, and Wheeling-1. (Unknown-1)


Overall Training (17, 15.45%)-- Beckley-1, Charleston-2, Clarksburg-2, Fairmont-1, Huntington-1, Morgantown-1, Mullens-1, Parkersburg-1, Point Pleasant-1, Princeton-1, Sistersville-1, Summersville-2, Teays Valley-1, and Wheeling-1.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing

Respondents were asked, “From your experience with individuals who are deaf/hard of hearing with disabilities, please list the TOP FIVE services that you feel these consumers need in your service area.”

There were 49 respondents to this question. The most commonly reported service needs were:

Hearing/Audiological Services (29, 59.18%)-- Charleston-3, Clarksburg-1, Elkins-2, Huntington-1, Keyser-1, Logan-3, Marshall-1, Martinsburg-6, Parkersburg-1, Point Pleasant-1, Princeton-1, Summersville-1, Weirton-1, Weston-1, and Wheeling-1. (Unknown-2)

Interpreter Services (17, 34.69%)-- Beckley-2, Charleston-1, Clarksburg-2, Huntington-1, Lewisburg-3, Logan-1, Point Pleasant-1, Princeton-1, Teays Valley-1, Weirton-1, and Wheeling-2. (Unknown-1)

Job Placement (9, 18.37%)-- Charleston-2, Clarksburg-1, Lewisburg-1, Martinsburg-2, Morgantown-1, Teays Valley-1, and Weston-1.

Transportation (8, 16.33%)-- Beckley-1, Elkins-1, Lewisburg-2, Logan-1, Morgantown-1, and Teays Valley-2.

Overall Training (8, 16.33%)-- Beckley-1, Charleston-2, Elkins-1, Marshall-1, Martinsburg-1, Morgantown-1, and Parkersburg-1.

Blind/Visually Impaired
Respondents were asked, “From your experience with individuals who are blind/visually impaired with disabilities, please list the TOP FIVE services that you feel these consumers need in your service area.” There were 33 respondents to this question. The most commonly reported service needs were:

Transportation (18, 54.55%)-- Beckley-2, Charleston-1, Clarksburg-1, Elkins-1, Fairmont-1, Huntington-1, Keyser-1, Lewisburg-2, Morgantown-1, Parkersburg-1, Princeton-1, Romney-1, Weirton-1, and Wheeling-2. (Unknown-1)

Orientation/Mobility Services (10, 30.30%)-- Beckley-1, Charleston-2, Fairmont-1, Huntington-1, Keyser-1, Lewisburg-1, Martinsburg-1, Romney-1, and Wheeling-1.

Job Placement (7, 21.21%)-- Charleston-2, Elkins-1, Marshall-1, Martinsburg-1, Morgantown-1, and Weston-1.

Assistive Technology (6, 18.18%)-- Charleston-1, Clarksburg-1, Elkins-1, Logan-1, Marshall-1, and Martinsburg-1.

Overall Training (6, 18.18%)-- Elkins-1, Lewisburg-1, Marshall-1, Martinsburg-1, Morgantown-1, Parkersburg-1.

Minority Individuals

The survey asked, “From your experience with minority individuals with disabilities, please list the TOP FIVE services that you feel these consumers need in your service area.” There were 92 respondents to this question. The most commonly reported service needs were:

Job Placement (22, 23.91%)-- Charleston-2, Clarksburg-1, Huntington-3, Martinsburg-1, Morgantown-1, Point Pleasant-1, Princeton-2, Ripley-1, Teays Valley-4, Weirton-2, Weston-1, and Wheeling-2. (Unknown-1)

Overall Training (21, 22.83%)-- Beckley-1, Charleston-5, Clarksburg-2, Elkins-1, Fairmont-1, Huntington-2, Marshall-1, Martinsburg-2, Morgantown-1, Oak Hill-1, Ripley-2, Romney-1, and Teays Valley-1.


Housing Assistance (16, 17.39%)-- Charleston-2, Martinsburg-4, Morgantown-1, Oak Hill-1, Parkersburg-2, Point Pleasant-2, Princeton-3, and Wheeling-1.


Comments and Suggestions

There were 115 respondents that provided comments when asked for ways in which DRS could help them perform their job more effectively and efficiently. Suggestions with similar themes were grouped and some respondents provided comments that spanned several themes. The most common responses were Paperwork Reduction (13 respondents, 11.30%), Time with Clients (13, 11.30%), Policy Changes (12, 10.43%), Caseload Size (11, 9.57%), and Transportation (10, 8.70%).

Additional Comments on the Unmet Service Needs of Individuals with Disabilities

There were 43 respondents that provided 58 additional comments which were grouped into major themes. Thirteen (30.23%) responses were related to Transportation. The next most common responses were for
more CRPs/Vendors (5 respondents, 11.63%), DRS Employee Training (4, 9.30%), and Psychological/Psychiatric Services (4, 9.30%).

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires that the comprehensive statewide needs assessment include an assessment of the vocational rehabilitation service needs of “youth with disabilities, and students with disabilities, including their need for pre-employment transition services.” DRS field staff that serve transitioning youth are one key resource in identifying the service needs of youth with disabilities in West Virginia. Therefore, needs assessment surveys completed by field staff that serve transitioning youth were analyzed separately in order to identify students’ needs for pre-employment transition services (PETS). There were 18 services in the survey that are considered PETS and were used for the post-hoc PETS subset analysis of need and gap ratings by field counselors who are assigned to serve high school youth.

Selected PETS

The following services from the survey were considered PETS for this analysis:

- Special Education Services
- Tutoring
- Work Adjustment Training
- Job Search Training
- On-the-job Training
- Career Planning Training
- Training on Disability Rights
- Independent Living Skills
- Drive Training
- Job Club Skills
- Counseling and Guidance
- Community Based Assessment
- Trial Work Experience
- Vocational Evaluation
- Job Placement
- Peer Support
- Work Skills Assessment
- Life Skills Training
Respondents

There were 74 respondents, 46% of the 161, that indicated having a partial or full school territory. The breakdown of the respondents by current position is as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Position</th>
<th># of Respondents</th>
<th>% of Respondents</th>
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<td>Rehabilitation Counselor</td>
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<td>Senior Rehabilitation Counselor</td>
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<td>17.57</td>
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<td>Certified Rehabilitation Counselor</td>
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<td>9.46</td>
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<td>Field Office Manager/Supervisor</td>
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<td>4.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation Services Associate</td>
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<td>24.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>74</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Office Location

Respondents were from 27 branch office locations. The Ripley office was the only location not represented in the PETS subset. One respondent did not provide their office location. The total number of respondents by district and office location are as follows:

**District 1** (13 Respondents)—Charleston-4, Point Pleasant-2, Ripley-0, Spencer-2, Teays Valley-5.

**District 2** (10)—Clarksburg-2, Elkins-3, Morgantown-1, Fairmont-1, Weston-3.
District 3 (11)— Parkersburg-3, Sistersville-2, Weirton-3, Wheeling-3.


District 5 (14)— Huntington-1, Logan-2, Marshall University-6, Mullens-3, Welch-2.

District 6 (13)— Keyser-4, Martinsburg-6, Moorefield-2, Romney-1.

Top PETS Needs

Service need/use for each PET service was assessed to allow respondents to indicate which services their consumers need/use most often. This was done independently of the service gap assessment as some services may be highly needed/used, but are readily available and therefore do not require an increase in availability.

Services that were identified as either “4” or “5,” indicating frequent need by 50% or more of the total respondents are listed for each service category below with the total number and percentage of respondents in parentheses:

- Job Placement (67, 90.54%)
- Counseling and Guidance (64, 86.49%)
- Special Education Services (61, 82.43%)
- Job Search Training (61, 82.43%)
- Vocational Evaluation (55, 74.32%)
- Career Planning Training (51, 68.92%)
- Community Based Assessment (48, 64.86%)
- On-the-job Training (43, 58.11%)
- Work Skills Assessment (41, 55.41%)
- Work Adjustment Training (38, 51.35%)
- Driver Training (38, 51.35%)
- Tutoring (37, 50.00%)

Top Five Reported PETS Gaps
Respondents that indicated a perceived service gap in either the multiple-choice (Yes, No, or N/A) or open-ended response (“Which of the above services are most in need of an increase in availability?”) sections were totaled for each service. The number and percentage of respondents who reported a gap for the service are in parentheses:

- Tutoring (44, 59.46%)
- On-the-job Training (38, 51.35%)
- Job Search Training (31, 41.89%)
- Life Skills Training (31, 41.89%)
- Job Placement (31, 41.89%)

Results from the survey of DRS Field Staff on CRP Services

Information on the needs and gaps for CRP services was also collected from 119 DRS field staff as part of the FY 2015 comprehensive statewide needs assessment. Survey respondents rated nine different CRP service categories for their level of understanding of the service, need/use of the service, and their perception of any gap for each service. The nine CRP service categories were: Community Based Assessment; Supported Employment; Work Skills Assessment; Direct Placement; Work Adjustment Training; Life Skills Training; Extended Assessments; Extended Supported Employment; and Job Coaching-Other than Supported Employment.

All nine CRP service categories were reported as being understood by at least 87% of the field staff surveyed. The most commonly needed/used CRP service categories were: Community Based Assessment (105 of 115 responses, 91.3%); Direct Placement (104 of 116 responses, 89.7%); Job Coaching-Other than Supported Employment (99 of 114 responses, 86.8%); Work Adjustment Training (96 of 113 responses, 85.0%); and Life Skills Training (95 of 114 responses, 83.3%). The most commonly reported gaps for CRP Services were: Community Based Assessment (44 of 114 responses, 38.6%); Direct Placement (35 of 111 responses, 31.5%); Work Skills Assessment (27 of 106 responses, 25.5%); Work Adjustment Training (25 of 108 responses, 23.2%); and Supported Employment (24 of 111 responses, 21.6%).

DRS conducted a survey of CRPs/community service providers (CSPs) with acknowledged vendor status to provide services (including supported-employment services) to DRS consumers across the state. The survey
was conducted as a part of the statewide comprehensive needs assessment study of persons with significant disabilities in West Virginia.

DRS distributed the survey via email to 58 DRS-acknowledged CRPs/CSPs to collect input on their provision of services to West Virginians with significant disabilities, their level of communication with DRS, ways in which DRS could improve services or service delivery, and what the CRPs/CSPs urgently needed to better serve West Virginians with significant disabilities. Forty-seven surveys were returned to DRS, for a response rate of 81.0 percent. Surveys were returned from CRPs/CSPs working with DRS offices across the state.

Service Provision

In each of the six DRS districts, all nine categories of CRP services were reported as being provided. Services were also reported as being provided in 53 out of 55 counties in West Virginia (based on DRS records, CRP services are provided in the two remaining counties, although not by the respondents of the survey). All nine services were reported as being provided in 37 out of 55 counties (67.3%). Excluding the two aforementioned “unserved” counties, the remaining counties were provided between five and eight services. Additionally, in most counties, various services were provided by multiple CRPs/CSPs.

Communication and Liaison Contact

All 47 CRPs/CSPs provided a rating of their communication with DRS. Rating options included Excellent, Very Good, Good, Poor, and Very Poor. No CRPs/CSPs gave a rating of Very Poor and 43 of the 47 CRPs/CSPs (91.5%) gave a response of Good or better. Additionally, CRPs/CSPs were asked whether a DRS liaison counselor was in contact on a regular basis. Thirty-two (32) CRPs/CSPs responded yes, while 15 CRPs/CSPs responded no (68.1% and 31.9%, respectively).

DRS Improvement

Forty-four (44) of the 47 CRPs/CSPs gave comments regarding specific things that DRS could do to improve services or service delivery. One of the most common themes in the comments involved referrals. This included not only requests for greater numbers of referrals, but also an increase in referral quality.
Another major theme from these comments included improvements in information sharing and awareness. This theme was multi-faceted, weaving through multiple types of information to be shared with various stakeholders, including consumers. Several CRPs/CSPs indicated that DRS counselors lacked awareness about services, while some made a recommendation for information-sharing meetings to serve as a remedy for such a deficiency. Other CRPs/CSPs provided comments indicating a need for more consumer-related awareness including greater consideration of the consumers’ needs when selecting services, more information about the consumers at the time of referral, and educating consumers about the effects that employment can have on their other benefits.

Funding, aside from the funding generated from an increase in referrals, was an additional theme found in the comments of CRPs regarding DRS improvement. These comments regarding funding varied, from requests for grant monies to increases in service fees.

CRP/CSP Needs

Forty-one (41) of the 47 CRPs/CSPs gave comments on what the CRP/CSP urgently needed to better serve West Virginians with disabilities. Funding and referrals were the most reported needs. Several comments were also made that emphasized an enhancement of the relationship between DRS and CRPs on some level. In general, these comments referred to a greater sharing of information and responsibility between DRS and the CRPs. Other, less commonly addressed themes that could be found in the comments included needs for more transportation help and better relationships with employers to facilitate placement.

Conclusions Based on the Survey of CRPs/CSPs

No less than five CRP service categories were reported, by CRPs/CSPs, as being provided in each of West Virginia’s counties, with the exception of two counties. All nine CRP services were reported as being provided in all six DRS districts and in two-thirds of all West Virginia counties.

Over 90% of CRPs/CSPs reported a Good or better rating of communication with DRS and no CRP/CSP rated communication with DRS as being Very Poor. This is somewhat contradictory with the fact that only 68.1%
of the CRPs/CSPs claimed that a DRS liaison counselor was in contact on a regular basis. This raises the slightly counter-intuitive idea that communication does not have to be frequent, or even regularly occurring, in order to be good. Comments regarding communication reflected this at times, suggesting that communication was good when it occurred. At other times, comments indicated that the lack of regular communication was indeed a problem.

Communication was also a factor in comments regarding DRS improvement and CRP/CSP needs. These comments demonstrated CRPs’/CSPs’ beliefs that improvements in information acquisition and sharing between the parties would better enable the parties to make well-informed decisions regarding services and consumer needs. Comments on DRS improvement and CRP/CSP needs also emphasized funding and referrals, requesting that DRS continue to provide (or provide more of) each.

Identifying Individuals with Disabilities Who Have Been Unserved or Underserved by DRS

According to the United States 2010 Census, there are 113,006 minorities in West Virginia, making up 6.1% of the state’s total population. Since FY 2012, DRS has exceeded this percentage in terms of minority consumers served (6.8%, 6.5%, and 7.2% for FY 2012, FY 2013, and FY 2014, respectively), indicating overall equal access to services.

United States 2010 Census data reveals that 11 counties in West Virginia have minority populations that exceed 3,000: Kanawha (21,027, 10.9% of total county population); Berkeley (12,669, 12.2%); Raleigh (9,059, 11.5%); Monongalia (8,701, 9.1%); Cabell (8,125, 8.4%); Jefferson (6,622, 12.4%); Mercer (5,255, 8.4%); Marion (3,192, 5.7%); Wood (3,110, 3.6%); Ohio (3,027, 6.8%); and Fayette (3,013, 6.5%). In each year since FY 2012, the DRS minority service percentage has exceeded the county minority population percentage for seven of the eleven aforementioned counties: Kanawha, Berkeley, Raleigh, Cabell, Jefferson, Mercer, and Marion. The DRS minority service percentage was below the county minority population percentage in each year since FY 2012 for Monongalia and Ohio counties. In Wood and Fayette counties, the DRS minority service percentage matched or exceeded the county minority population percentage in FY
2012 and FY 2014, but was below the county minority population percentage in FY 2013. Below is a list of each of these eleven counties (with its respective minority population and percentage in parentheses), followed by the DRS minority service percentage for each county in FY 2012, FY 2013, and FY 2014.

Kanawha (21,027, 10.9%): FY 2012 – 14.0%; FY 2013 – 13.7%; FY 2014 – 14.6%

Berkeley (12,669, 12.2 %): FY 2012 – 16.3%; FY 2013 – 15.4%; FY 2014 – 19.0%

Raleigh (9,059, 11.5%): FY 2012 – 17.3%; FY 2013 – 14.9%; FY 2014 – 14.7%

Monongalia (8,701, 9.1%): FY 2012 – 6.6%; FY 2013 – 7.6%; FY 2014 – 8.3%

Cabell (8,125, 8.4%): FY 2012 – 12.0%; FY 2013 – 11.5%; FY 2014 – 11.3%

Jefferson (6,622, 12.4%): FY 2012 – 14.2%; FY 2013 – 13.2%; FY 2014 – 14.1%

Mercer (5,255, 8.4%): FY 2012 – 10.8%; FY 2013 – 10.8%; FY 2014 – 11.2%

Marion (3,192, 5.7%): FY 2012 – 10.0%; FY 2013 – 10.6%; FY 2014 – 10.6%

Wood (3,110, 3.6%): FY 2012 – 3.6%; FY 2013 – 3.3%; FY 2014 – 4.4%

Ohio (3,027, 6.8%): FY 2012 – 5.3%; FY 2013 – 6.5%; FY 2014 – 6.1%

Fayette (3,013, 6.5%): FY 2012 – 8.2%; FY 2013 – 5.5%; FY 2014 – 7.4%

In addition, the United States 2010 Census data indicated three additional counties in West Virginia with a minority population under 3,000 and a county minority population percentage greater than 6.5%: McDowell (2,403; 10.9%), Gilmer (1,520; 17.5%), and Summers (970; 7.0%). Of these three counties, only McDowell County had a DRS minority service percentage (15.3% in FY 2012, 15.6 in FY 2013, and 15.3% in FY 2014) higher than its county minority population percentage (10.9%). No minorities were served by DRS between FY 2012 to FY 2014 in either Gilmer or Summers counties. Below is a list of each of these three counties (with its respective minority population and percentage in parentheses), followed by the DRS minority service percentage for each county in FY 2012, FY 2013, and FY 2014.
McDowell (2,403, 10.9%): FY 2012 – 15.3%; FY 2013 – 15.6%; FY 2014 – 15.3%

Gilmer (1,520, 17.5%): FY 2012 – 0.0%; FY 2013 – 0.0%; FY 2014 – 0.0%

Summers (970, 7.0%): FY 2012 – 0.0%; FY 2013 – 0.0%; FY 2014 – 0.0%

To determine potentially underserved areas, the DRS minority service percentage for the three-year period (FY 2012 – FY 2014) for each county was compared to that county’s minority population percentage. Counties with mean DRS minority service percentages that are lower than the minority population percentage are considered to be potentially underserved. Of the 14 aforementioned counties, only 4 counties met this criterion: Monongalia, Ohio, Gilmer, and Summers counties.

DRS utilized geographic information systems (GIS) to pinpoint potential underserved zip codes in Gilmer and Summers counties. Zip codes that meet two criteria are identified as potential underserved areas: (1) the zip code has a minority population greater than or equal to 50 and (2) there are 10 or fewer minority consumers (as of March, 2015) reported in the agency’s database for the last four fiscal years. Applying these criteria reveals four potentially underserved zip codes, one in Gilmer County (Glenville) and three in Summers County (Alderson, Hinton, and Talcott). In Glenville (Gilmer County) and Alderson (Summers County) zip codes there exists Federal Corrections Institutions, thus eliminating them from the list of potential underserved zip codes. DRS will pursue outreach efforts in Summers County, targeting Hinton and Talcott zip codes to market and expand VR services to individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds.
(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 West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) calculated its estimate of individuals with disabilities who are eligible for services under this State Plan by applying the state incidence of disability rate for individuals ages 18-64 (17.2%) to the state general population figure for individuals who are ages 18-64 (1,144,202). Both statistics are from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2009-2013 American Community Survey five-year estimates.

Based on an estimate from the American Community Survey (as of October 2015), there are 197,114 people with a disability in WV between ages 18-64. If DRS authorizes an average of $2,868 of services per consumer in a fiscal year, then over $565 million would be needed to purchase vocational rehabilitation services for these potentially eligible individuals to move them toward competitive employment outcomes.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, the Division expects to serve 13,551 consumers with disabilities, obligating $25.6 million of the Title I funds. Additionally, the agency expects to serve 176 consumers with most significant disabilities [i.e., Order of Selection (OS) category 1], using $300,000 of the Title VI-B funds.
DRS does not use Title VI-b funds for administrative costs in the provision of SE services. When Title VI-B funds ($300,000 total, with a minimum of $150,000 set aside for youth with disabilities under the age of 24) are exhausted, DRS defrays supported employment program service costs with Title I funds for individuals who require the services or who qualify and have not yet been served under the supported employment program.

DRS estimates that during FY 2017, 400 individuals who are eligible for VR services, will not be receiving services due to an order of selection. However, these individuals may be served if resources become available.

The table presented below projects the number of individuals who are eligible for services, number of individuals who will be served under Title I and Title VI-B, and cost of services for each priority category within the order of selection for Fiscal Year 2017.

Priority (OS) Categories for Title I:

1. Eligible applicants with the most significant disabilities.

2. Eligible applicants with significant disabilities.

3. Eligible applicants with non-significant disabilities comprised of individuals with a permanent disability and whose service provision will be completed in less than nine months.

4. Eligible applicants with non-significant disabilities comprised of individuals with a non-permanent disability.

Section (m) provides further description and definition for each priority category and justification for individuals who will receive services with funds provided under Part B of Title I and under Part B of Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Title I or Title VI</th>
<th>Estimated Funds</th>
<th>Estimated Number to be Served</th>
<th>Average Cost of Services</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Title I</td>
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<td>OS Category 4</td>
<td>Title I</td>
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<td>OS Category 1</td>
<td>Title VI</td>
<td>$300,000</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>$1,704</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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:
   - the most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates;
   - the State’s performance under the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA; and
   - 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.

State’s Goals and Priorities
The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) employs many goals to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities, particularly those individuals with the most significant disabilities. Furthermore, DRS recognizes those services essential to needs identified in the comprehensive assessment, evaluation of the Designated State Unit’s performance on pre-WIOA Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) standards and indicators to ensure quality services for individuals with significant disabilities, and services vital to the operation and effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program in West Virginia.

For the development of agency goals and priorities, DRS followed WIOA guidance in the development of the Unified State Plan. DRS worked closely with the WIOA core partners including WorkForce West Virginia and the WV Adult Education. The DRS goals and priorities were developed to support the overall state goals and priorities in achieving a well-integrated workforce development system that provided customer-focused services to job seekers in West Virginia.

The West Virginia State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) maintained involvement throughout the development and assessment of agency goals and priorities in a variety of ways and provided DRS with valued input and recommendations. DRS executive managers, representatives of SRC, the West Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), and the Client Assistance Program (CAP) were invited to discuss DRS goals and priorities for carrying out the VR and supported employment programs. The Executive Directors of the SRC and SILC attend monthly DRS Executive Management Group (EMG) meetings to discuss various ongoing issues affecting the agency and are privy to the current goals, objectives, and strategies pertaining to specific agency issues. Additional involvement occurs through DRS staff members attending SRC and SILC meetings to share information regarding agency performance, needs assessment, and State Plan activities. All SRC members were provided draft copies of the PY 2016/FY 2017 State Plan for review. Additionally, the SRC formed a subcommittee on needs assessment and the State Plan. The SRC members discuss DRS activities at regularly scheduled meetings and provide input to DRS.

The workforce development system of West Virginia has identified the following goals for Program Years 2016-2019:

Goal #1: Workforce Development System Integration
In order for WIOA to be successful, a seamless one-stop delivery system must be created. As resources become more and more limited, partners in the workforce development system must work together in order to provide maximum benefit to our customers.

Goal #2: Customer-Driven Approach (Individual & Employer)

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

Goal #3: Career Pathways Development

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

Goal #4: Increase Opportunities for Youth

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

DRS is fully committed to coordinate its activity and services with core and community partners to ensure successful completion of the aforementioned goals. The following goals highlight specific focus areas for DRS that will also contribute to the overall goals of the West Virginia WDS:

DRS Goal 1 – Provide integrated vocational rehabilitation services to West Virginians with disabilities to enable them to attain a high school education or greater. Compared to the national average of 28.8%, West Virginia has a much lower percentage of individuals 25 years and older having attained a bachelor’s degree (18.8%; from http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/54000.html). For individuals with disabilities, the percentage is much lower, at 8.10%. While a majority (69.4%) of West Virginians with disabilities age 25 or over have a high school education or higher, nearly a third (30.6%) of this population does not, compared to only 10.9% of the State’s population of 25 or older without a disability. Close relationships with the WV Adult Education Program (Adult Ed) and the WV Higher Education Policy Commission, as well as State and Local Education Agencies, will help to close this education gap.

DRS Goal 2 - Provide Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) to students with disabilities. Pursuant to requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and findings from the 2015 CSNA, DRS will, in cooperation with State and Local Education Agencies, provide Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) to students with disabilities, focusing on students 21 years or younger while still in high school. The provision of PETS offers students with disabilities information about careers, career opportunities, education and training programs, and self-advocacy. This information and work-based experiences can lead to more well-informed career decision making and can empower students with disabilities to become more educated and skilled, moving toward a career that meets their needs. Activities under this DRS goal are provided in conjunction with those of the West Virginia Department of Education’s Graduation 20/20 project. This initiative focuses on improving the graduation rate for West Virginia high
school students with disabilities. In 2014, only 70.27% of students with a disability in West Virginia graduated from high school with a regular diploma. By 2018, Graduation 20/20 has a target increased graduation rate (with a regular diploma) of 81.44% for students with disabilities.

DRS Goal 3 – Provide integrated vocational rehabilitation services to West Virginians with disabilities to enable them to obtain competitive employment, especially in occupations and careers within emerging industries statewide. From a Bureau of Labor Statistics' December 2014 report, West Virginia had the lowest workforce participation rate (all individuals, with and without disabilities) among all the states and the District of Columbia, with 52.8% compared to the national average of 62.7%. Individuals with barriers to employment, including those with disabilities, have lower employment/workforce participation rates. Labor force participation among persons with disabilities in West Virginia has been steadily declining in recent years. Since 2010, labor force participation among these individuals is estimated to have fallen from 31.7% (63,609) to 29.1% (57,785) in 2013. As of 2013, labor force participation for persons with disabilities in West Virginia was almost 12 percentage points below the national rate of 41.0%. West Virginia has a high poverty rate, with 17.9% of residents below the poverty level compared to 15.4% nationally (http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/54000.html). The poverty rate is especially high for individuals with disabilities, with estimates that 24.9 % of persons with disabilities above the age of 18 (86,250 of 346,903) were living in poverty in 2013. Even among those employed, there are still significant numbers of West Virginians who earn below the poverty line.

WorkForce West Virginia expects the largest numeric change in employment growth (from 2012 to 2022) to occur in the industries of Health Care and Social Assistance (+23,142; 33.50%), Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation (+5,594; 35.39%), Government (+5,322; 14.22%), Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (+3,951; 34.18%), and Retail Trade (+3,561; 8.92%).

Findings from the 2015 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) indicated the need to improve vocational rehabilitation (VR) services in specific ways to warrant the creation of two additional DRS goals.
DRS Goal 4 – Improve access and availability of transportation options at the community level for DRS consumers who need transportation assistance to achieve or maintain competitive, integrated employment. FY 2015 CSNA findings from field staff surveys and Consumer Affairs Conference (CAC) attendee surveys indicate a need for continued efforts to increase the availability of transportation throughout the state. Based on responses by stakeholders across the state, transportation continues to be an issue and a perceived barrier to employment/training. DRS continues to implement several initiatives to help alleviate the need for transportation while taking into account the wide array of circumstances that West Virginians with disabilities experience. DRS has authorized the direct purchasing of cars for qualified consumers as well as the creation of the Vendor Travel Reimbursement for community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) who provide transportation for consumers; counselors also encourage consumers’ family members to assist with reimbursable transportation. DRS will continue to make sure that consumers are aware of these options and continue to identify targeted solutions to the varied transportation issues for West Virginians with disabilities, focusing specifically on individualized transportation solutions.

DRS Goal 5 – Continue to build collaborative relationships with community providers (including CRPs, Independent Living, and other community providers) to enhance the availability of services to DRS consumers. VR consumers require specialized services provided by CRPs statewide to achieve an integrated, competitive employment outcome. Responses from the CSNA indicate there still is a need for DRS to continue to improve collaborative relationships with all community providers. Findings from the CSNA point to a need to focus efforts on specific geographic areas within the state where miscommunication between community providers and DRS counselors continues.

(m) Order of Selection. Describe:
   (1) Whether the designated State unit will implement and order of selection. If so, describe:
      (A) The order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided VR services.
      (B) The justification for the order.
(C) The service and outcome goals.
(D) The time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.; and
(E) How individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities.

(2) If the designated State unit has elected to serve eligible individuals, regardless of any established order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment.

Order of Selection

The Division’s Director will determine whether resources will be available to provide vocational rehabilitation services to all eligible individuals throughout the program year. If not, consistent with state and federal laws and regulations, the Director will establish restrictions regarding priority categories for selecting the order in which otherwise eligible individuals may be served. Only the Director may establish an order of selection.

In Federal Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) will be operating under an order of selection (OS), as there will not be adequate resources to provide services to all eligible consumers. DRS will continue to place eligible applicants with non-significant disabilities (OS priority categories 3 and 4) on the waiting list in FY 2017. DRS has not elected to serve eligible individuals regardless of any established order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment.

Description of Priority categories

Priority Categories

Following are the order of selection categories currently applicable to the Division’s vocational rehabilitation program:

Category 1: Eligible applicants with the most significant disabilities.

Category 2: Eligible applicants with significant disabilities.

Category 3: Eligible applicants with non-significant disabilities comprised of individuals with a permanent disability and whose service provision will be completed in less than nine months.
Category 4: Eligible applicants with non-significant disabilities comprised of individuals with a non-permanent disability.

The Counselor will determine the significance of an individual’s disability after conducting a diagnostic study that allows for assessing the permanency of the disability, the number of functional capacities limited by the disability, the number of vocational rehabilitation services needed, and the time in service required to complete those services. These criteria are used when determining whether the individual’s disability is non-significant, significant, or most significant.

Definitions

Individual with a Most Significant Disability (MSD).

An individual who:

a. Has a permanent physical or mental impairment which seriously limits three or more functional capacities (mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerances, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome;
b. Will require two or more vocational rehabilitation services in addition to counseling and assessment; and
c. Those services will require more than twelve months.

Alternatively, any individual who will be receiving services under an individualized supported employment plan for employment will be determined to be MSD.

Individual with Significant Disability (SD).

An individual who:

a. Has a permanent physical or mental impairment which seriously limits one or more functional capacities (mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerances, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome;
b. Will require one or more vocational rehabilitation services in addition to counseling and assessment; and
c. Those services will require nine months or more.

Individual with Non-Significant Disability.
An individual who:

a. Has a non-permanent disability, or
b. Has a permanent disability whose service provision will be completed in less than nine months.

Time in Service

For the purpose of determining significance of disability, “time in service” is considered to begin upon implementation of the Individualized Plan for Employment and end upon entering Status 22 (in employment).

Automatic Classification as an Individual with Significant Disability

An individual who is a Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiary or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipient will be coded automatically as SD. However, if the individual meets MSD criteria, that designation will apply.

Recertification

Once an individual has been certified as having a significant disability, the individual is exempted from being recertified as having a non-significant disability. However, an individual may be recertified from SD to MSD if all MSD criteria are met. In such instances, the Counselor will note appropriate circumstances in the Action Statement/Details section of the consumer’s case record.

DRS Responsibilities when Implementing an Order of Selection

An OS has no impact on the DRS obligation for case finding and referrals. DRS has a continuing responsibility to make the public and referral sources aware of the services it has to offer individuals with disabilities, especially those with the most significant disabilities. Furthermore, DRS shall ensure its funding arrangements for providing services, including third party arrangements and establishment grants, are consistent with the OS. Any funding arrangements that are inconsistent with the OS will be renegotiated.
Priority of categories to receive VR services under the order

OS Administration Process

DRS will continue to place eligible applicants with non-significant disabilities (OS priority categories 3 and 4) on the waiting list in FY 2017. DRS consumers in priority categories 1 and 2 will continue to receive services in FY 2017.

Services necessary for determination of eligibility, assessment of rehabilitation needs, and post-employment services are exempted from the Division’s order of selection. No administrative exemption from the order of selection shall be approved except by the Director or his/her designee. Any individual notified by the Counselor of classification as a member of an open priority category shall be exempted should that category later be closed.

Plan for Implementing the Order of Selection

DRS will strictly adhere to federal regulations in administering its OS. DRS will continue to: (1) implement the order on a statewide basis; (2) notify all eligible persons of their assignment to a particular priority category and their right to appeal this assignment; (3) assure continuity of services to all persons who were receiving services under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) prior to the effective date of the closure order; and (4) assure that funding arrangements are consistent with the OS [34 CFR 361.36(e)].

When the order of selection is implemented, DRS will continue to ensure that an eligible individual who is not assigned to an open OS category has access to services provided under the information and referral system [Section 101(a)(5)(D) of the Act]. Information and referral services include: (1) providing VR information and guidance to assist the individual to achieve employment and (2) appropriately referring the individual to other federal and state programs, including other statewide workforce development programs, that are best suited to meet the individual’s specific employment needs [Section 101(a)(20)(A) of the Act].

When making a referral, DRS will provide the individual with:
• a notice of the referral;
• information about a specific point of contact within the program to which the individual is being referred; and
• information and advice about the most suitable service for assisting the individual to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment [Section 101(a)(20)(B)(ii) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.37(b)(2)].

DRS will continue to maintain the individual’s service record to include documentation on the nature and scope of the information and referral services it provides to the individual and documentation on the referral itself [34 CFR 361.47(a)(13)].

DRS will open and close priority categories as needed in FY 2017, so long as the order of the categories is maintained and continuity of services to all individuals selected for services is assured.

DRS will use the individual’s date of application to rank individuals within a priority category. This equitable and reasonable factor provides a method of selecting individuals from a waiting list when DRS has enough resources to serve some, but not all, individuals in that OS priority category.

Describe how individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities

DRS’ Client Services Manual clearly outlines OS Categories to ensure priority services for persons with MSD throughout the state. Furthermore, DRS has budgeted sufficient resources to serve all consumers with disabilities in all open OS Categories with priority given to persons with MSD. DRS utilizes data and caseload management reports to monitor and ensure services to OS Category 1, persons with MSD, are maintained through the FY.

DRS will reopen priority categories as resources become available. In determining whether to reopen a priority category, DRS will ensure that sufficient resources will be available throughout the FY to continue providing services to individuals under an IPE and to serve individuals in the highest priority categories.

When a closed category is reopened for services, individuals in that category will be notified in writing by DRS that they can now receive services. DRS will ensure all individuals selected for services will continue to receive those services without interruption.
In FY 2017, the agency plans to serve 13,551 individuals with an expected outcome goal of 2,140 rehabilitants within a service time frame of 10 and 26 months and at a cost of $25,603,510 for all priority categories.

The table below projects FY 2017 related outcomes and goals for Titles I and VI-B by priority category:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Category</th>
<th>Number of individuals to be served</th>
<th>Estimated number of individuals who will exit with employment after receiving services</th>
<th>Estimated number of individuals who will exit without employment after receiving services</th>
<th>Time within which goals are to be achieved</th>
<th>Cost of services</th>
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<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>$586,152</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(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.

State’s Goals and Plans Regarding Distribution of Funds Received Under Title VI, Part B of the Act

The methodology of the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) for distribution of Title VI-B funds is based exclusively on a fee-for-service authorization process with approved vendors of supported employment (SE) services. DRS uses no Title VI-B funds for administrative costs. Utilizing the DRS fee schedule for SE services, rehabilitation counselors utilize Title VI-B and Title I funds to provide needed SE services for eligible individuals with the most significant disabilities.

DRS established a statewide fee-for-service funding approach for job development services for SE-eligible individuals. This structure provides vendors an effective and efficient way of meeting the costs of this critical element of the job placement process. The process provides reimbursement for employment outcomes and brings increased energy and vendor resources to support job development activities.

In FY 2015, DRS exhausted the $300,000.00 of the Title VI-B funds to serve individuals with the most significant disabilities in its SE program through community rehabilitation program (CRP) services. When Title VI-B funds ($300,000 total per year with $150,000 set aside for youth with disabilities) are exhausted, DRS defrays supported employment program service costs with Title I funds for individuals who require the services or who qualify and have not yet been served under the supported employment program. In FY 2015, DRS authorized $474,215.67 SE services for 151 youth with disabilities and $254,054.95 in SE services for 109 adults with disabilities.

DRS plans to continue using three prevalent models of supported employment services: individual placement, mobile work crews, and enclaves. Additionally, DRS will encourage and support development of
affirmative industries that integrate workers with disabilities and workers without disabilities throughout the CRP network.

DRS policies defining competitive employment settings promote linking CRPs with federal and state work contracts that may exist within the community. Such links expand job opportunities for individuals receiving SE, particularly those who reside in rural locations. This approach also directs Title VI-B and Title I funds into placement-related services and activities.

**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.

DRS Goal 1 – Provide integrated vocational rehabilitation services to West Virginians with disabilities to enable them to attain a high school education or greater.

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) will continue to monitor the educational achievement of all of its consumers, especially those in the transition youth (TY) population. Youth have become a primary focus in vocational rehabilitation and DRS will work closely and diligently with State and Local Education Agencies to ensure that its TY population receives the services that it needs, including pre-employment transition services for high school students with disabilities. Each high school in WV has a DRS counselor assigned to it to guarantee the service provision of students with disabilities. A greater emphasis is now being placed for counselors to do outreach with these students and their parents/guardians during their sophomore year (rather than their junior year, as was formerly practiced) in order to maximize the counseling opportunities.

DRS counselors will continue to take part in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) development of students with disabilities when they are invited to do so. Counselors will also stay in contact with educators to discuss and resolve educational difficulties as they arise.
DRS will also work closely with WV Adult Education, referring consumers as needed, to ensure that individuals with disabilities have an adequate opportunity to obtain a completed high school level education.

DRS Goal 2 - Provide Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) to students with disabilities.

The 2015 comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA) indicated that job exploration counseling was the most frequently reported pre-employment transition service need. In accordance with this, and per the requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), DRS has recently restructured its field services unit, creating a subdivision of counselors that focus solely on providing services, including Pre-employment Transition Services (PETS), to students with disabilities. DRS counselors in high schools will provide PETS to students with disabilities, especially job exploration counseling, in order to give students with disabilities and their parents/guardians a better understanding of labor market conditions, current and emerging career opportunities, and the necessary education and training requirements related to those opportunities.

In addition to ongoing program activities, DRS will host a one week summer workshop for transition students who are juniors entering into their senior year of high school. The workshop will be held in seven areas across the state. DRS staff participating include the PETS Counselor, Employment Specialist, and RSA assigned to the PETS territory. Class will start at 9:00am and end at 4:00pm. Class size for each of the seven workshops will be approximately 30 students.

Students will earn minimum wage for the time that they attend. DRS is also requesting WorkForce West Virginia and WV Adult Education to participate in the workshops to provide additional information to the students.
Topics to be covered:

- Career planning
- Career preparation
- SSI/SSDI Information
- Understanding the importance of necessary personal documents, e.g., social security card, driver’s license, birth certificate, pay stubs.
- Communication
- Conflict Management
- Employer Expectations
  - Attendance and Punctuality
  - Timeliness of task completion
  - Be able to work without supervision
  - Positive work ethic
  - Manage multiple tasks
- High-growth Jobs
- Personal Brand
- Job Hunting Tools- resumes, cover letters, interviews, and digital profiles

In 2016, DRS will partner with Community Access, Incorporated to implement a program to support the design and implementation of programming and outreach while addressing the new direction mandated by WIOA. Specifically, the program will address the five mandated PETS for high school students with disabilities through an expansion of the Student Transition to Employment Program (STEP). The program will assist school districts by offering training and technical assistance in setting up community-based work experience programs for students with disabilities. The project will help level the playing field between resource-rich metropolitan areas and isolated rural settings that often have few services available. In addition, a strong statewide outreach to teachers, parents, students, and other VR stakeholders will be a component of the project. A concerted effort will be made to include historically under-served groups including students in the foster care system, those returning from out-of-state placements, and those students on the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) track. The project has the following goals:

1. To assist school districts in setting up community-based Work Exploration programs.
2. To develop statewide parent training network utilizing the Parent Community Resource Centers.
3. To develop a network of specialists to work with DRS, WorkForce West Virginia, and WV Department of Education (WVDOE) staff.
(4) To develop a statewide cross-sector outreach program with a strong emphasis on traditionally underserved populations.

DRS Goal 3 – Provide integrated vocational rehabilitation services to West Virginians with disabilities to enable them to obtain competitive employment, especially in occupations and careers within emerging industries statewide.

Collaboration with WorkForce West Virginia

DRS will maintain regular communication with WorkForce West Virginia to stay abreast of trends in employment, including changes in education and training requirements. This will be accomplished through regular meetings of the workforce development system (WDS), written communications, teleconferences, and other media, as appropriate. DRS, particularly through its employment specialists, will also stay informed of emerging careers and occupations via WorkForce West Virginia’s Labor Market Information website. DRS employment specialists continuously collect employment information from their business contacts. This information is shared within the WDS.

Use of DRS Employment Specialists

DRS will continue to use its employment specialists to gather information regarding employers at the local level, including information regarding job placements for individuals with disabilities and regarding current and expected employer needs.

DRS has an in-house Employer Services Section that specializes in providing employers with disability-related information, services, and pre-screened job seekers. The DRS Employer Services Section has 12 employment specialists that cover all 55 counties in West Virginia. DRS’ team of employment specialists provide business owners and employers with critical business options and assistance in staffing, employee retention strategies, education on disability-related issues, job accommodations, and information about financial incentives for employers who hire individuals with disabilities.
Direct contact with employers is a key strategy to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities for vocational rehabilitation (VR) consumers, including students with disabilities. Employment specialists therefore contact employers directly to identify current and future job openings. To facilitate this, DRS utilizes labor market information provided by WorkForce West Virginia to identify the top employers in each county; contact is always made with the top ten employers in each county. When meeting with employers, employment specialists provide valuable information, including the DRS Employer Resource Guide. The resource guide provides the following information:

- Staffing services
- Training programs and incentives for hiring people with disabilities
- Financial incentives
- Accessibility assessments
- Accommodating employees with disabilities
- Basic disability etiquette
- Attitudinal barriers
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Locating a DRS office
- Where to find additional resources

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

The Employer Services Section also works with employers to better serve transitioning youth with disabilities, including providing career exploration opportunities for students with disabilities. In 2015, DRS debuted the Positive Outcomes within Education and Rehabilitation (POWER) program. POWER is a job
shadowing program that offers transitioning students, who may be having a difficult time choosing a career path, the opportunity to experience an occupation by spending time with a professional working in the students’ vocational goal/career field of interest. The POWER program allows the student the opportunity to experience an occupation prior to committing to training. It guides the student to take a serious, realistic look at the occupation, allowing the student to make a more informed choice.

Assistive Technology

DRS will continue to provide rehabilitation technology solutions to individuals with disabilities as needed so that those individuals can become employed or maintain employment. DRS has developed working relationships and agreements for the coordination of activities with the West Virginia Assistive Technology System (WVATS) of the West Virginia University Center for Excellence in Disabilities. The WVATS’ role is to provide access to and help with the acquisition of assistive technology (AT) devices and services for individuals with disabilities. WVATS also provides device demonstrations, device loans, training, AT information, and technical assistance.

DRS has a rehabilitation technology unit, with two locations (in Nitro, covering the southern half of the state and in Morgantown, covering the North), which provides AT consultations and solutions to eligible VR consumers with AT needs statewide. With the coordination of services between DRS and WVATS, assurances are made that needed AT solutions can be provided to individuals with disabilities.

DRS Goal 4 – Improve access and availability of transportation options at the community level for DRS consumers who need transportation assistance to achieve or maintain competitive, integrated employment.

Transportation is an ongoing issue for West Virginians with disabilities, due to the rural nature of the state. A large proportion of the State’s inhabitants live far away from jobs, agency offices, and other resources. DRS continues its commitment to reduce transportation barriers for consumers with disabilities and focuses
on individual transportation solutions (ITS) to satisfy immediate transportation needs. To help reduce these barriers, DRS counselors will encourage planning for transportation needs early in the development of a consumer’s rehabilitation program. At application, counselors will identify transportation issues and focus on finding solutions to include in the consumer’s Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). This will ensure that the ability of consumers to reach their vocational goal is not impeded by preventable transportation barriers. Transportation issues also will be addressed by the standard instrument prescribed for routine use by supervisors and quality assurance staff in case reviews. Beyond ITS, DRS will continue to assign responsibility to a staff member in each branch office to maintain a list and working knowledge of local transportation options and will continue to participate in local and state initiatives to coordinate and expand transportation resources.

DRS Goal 5 – Continue to build collaborative relationships with community providers [including community rehabilitation programs (CRPs), Independent Living, and other community providers] to enhance the availability of services to DRS consumers.

A large amount of the success that DRS has in its mission to enable and empower individuals with disabilities to work and to live independently hinges on its relationships with CRPs. In general, DRS has good working relationships with the various CRPs throughout the State. However, CSNA results suggest that improvements can be made, particularly in specific geographic areas. To facilitate this improvement, DRS has established a number of strategies to put into action:

- Continue to educate field staff, especially the new counselors, about CRPs and their services. Use of the new ‘CRP Locator’ tool (a web-based, user-friendly vendor guide) and counselor CRP site visits will increase awareness of available service options, which will help to maintain collaborative relationships with CRPs and enhance the availability of services to DRS consumers.

- Continue to maintain regular communications between DRS and community providers in each district and at the state level. Each DRS district will continue to host joint meetings with DRS district and branch office staff and CRPs in those districts to provide opportunities for CRP representatives and DRS personnel to discuss local service needs of DRS consumers. Subsequent to each meeting, the local DRS office will be required to send a brief report to the CRP Program Manager. This process will allow all
parties involved in the expansion of community-based services to be kept informed of progress and issues. The Division will continue to examine the information and recommendations collected from various meetings between CRP and DRS staff members.

Progress on communication will continue to be made as the Division acquires more understanding of the issues and barriers facing the CRP and DRS staff members in their service provision to persons with significant disabilities in WV. Ongoing communication activities with CRPs also will include:

- An e-mail list-serv with all current vendors that will be updated periodically and utilized to send out training opportunities, policy changes, and general updates when needed.
- DRS counselors in each district will continue to be assigned as liaisons to each CRP and will continue to be required to complete a monthly update regarding the CRP. They will collect this information by visits and/or phone calls. Having CRP liaisons that regularly discuss service-related issues specific to the local service area(s) will aid in maintaining collaborative working relationships and enhancing the availability of services to consumers.
- Two rehabilitation specialists covering all districts in the state will provide technical assistance to CRPs and DRS staff. They will make site visits to CRP and DRS district and branch offices. During these visits, they will provide technical assistance and schedule training and other meetings that need to occur. They will serve as a communication link when issues arise and make themselves available to attend the communication meetings and transition team meetings.

- Conduct site visits to ensure that community providers continue to meet DRS standards and requirements.
- Increase the service provision of acknowledged vendors and work with community providers to expand their service areas to enhance the availability of community services within needed areas.
- Continue to conduct Transition Team meetings at the district level with DRS, WV Department of Education, and CRP staff members. The meetings will be held to promote interagency collaboration
by allowing staff from each agency/CRP to become familiar with the different eligibility requirements and service definitions across agencies.

- Continue to conduct cross training and face-to-face meetings with community partners at the local level.

- Continue to assign liaison responsibilities to staff members and provide them guidance about the purpose of DRS participation in community events.

- Monitor the DRS counselors/supervisors/managers’ perception of the quality of CRP services through a survey instrument.

- Monitor and assess the impact of the Quality Assurance unit on the counselor’s case management practices by using data generated from the quality assurance specialists’ review of cases.
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.

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.

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

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

PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING GOALS AND PRIORITIES

Goals and priorities developed by the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), the West Virginia State Rehabilitation Council (WVSRC), and the West Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council (WVSILC) are annually evaluated. All planning contributes toward performance of the DRS mission which is to enable and empower individuals with disabilities to work and to live independently.


Performance Goal:

Exceed RSA benchmarks for evaluation standards and performance indicators (S&I). To achieve successful performance on Evaluation Standard 1 (Employment Outcomes), DRS needed to meet or exceed the performance levels established for four of the six performance indicators in the evaluation standard, including meeting or exceeding the performance levels for two of the three primary indicators (Performance Indicators 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5). To achieve successful performance on Evaluation Standard 2 (Equal Access to Services), DRS needed to meet or exceed the performance level established for Performance Indicator 2.1.
The agency conducted the following activities in FY 2015:

- DRS continued to closely and continually monitor its performance toward meeting Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) requirements for evaluation standards and indicators (S&I).

- Continued to work with local education agencies to promote awareness of vocational rehabilitation services to high school students with disabilities.

- Continued to stress quality case closures and competitive employment outcomes for consumers.

- Continued to observe provisions of the General Education Provision Act (GEPA). DRS continued to promote equitable access to VR services regardless of gender, race, national origin, color, disabilities, or age. Both the Blind and Visually Impaired Services and Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services units continued to provide comprehensive compensatory skills and academic training to individuals with sensory impairment.

- Continued to provide comprehensive statewide rehabilitation technology services that include assistive technology, environmental modification, rehabilitation engineering, fabrication, and driver education/vehicle modification services.

- Continued to work within the workforce development system established by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Outcomes: Based on FY 2015 RSA-911 (case service report) data, DRS successfully met requirements for the performance evaluation standards and indicators established by RSA.

**DRS PERFORMANCE ON THE STANDARDS AND INDICATORS IN FY 2015**

To successfully meet requirements for the RSA Standards and Performance Indicators, DRS must pass 4 out of 6 employment outcome indicators (Indicators 1.1 to 1.6) and pass 2 of the 3 primary indicators (Indicators 1.3, 1.4, 1.5). Additionally, DRS must also pass the equal access indicator (Ind. 2.1). A detailed report of the evaluation standards and performance indicators for DRS in FY 2015 follows.

**Standard 1: Employment Outcome in FY 2015**
DRS was below the RSA requirement for indicator 1.1. In FY 2015, DRS produced 2,090 rehabilitants, which was 499 below the required level of 2,589 rehabilitants (achieved in FY 2014).

DRS exceeded the RSA requirement for indicator 1.2. In FY 2015, 58% of DRS consumers who received services under an Individualized Plan for Employment became rehabilitants. The 58% rehabilitation rate is 2.2% above the RSA benchmark of 55.8%.

DRS exceeded the RSA requirement for indicator 1.3. In FY 2015, 99.9% of DRS rehabilitants were in competitive, self-employment, or state-agency managed business enterprise program (BEP) employment with earnings at or above minimum wage. The competitive percentage of 99.9% is 27.3% above the RSA benchmark of 72.6%.

DRS exceeded the RSA requirement for indicator 1.4. In FY 2015, 86.7% of DRS rehabilitants who entered competitive, self-employment, or BEP employment with earnings at or above minimum wage were individuals with significant (SD) or most significant disabilities (MSD). The SD/MSD competitive percentage of 86.7 is 24.3% above the RSA benchmark of 62.4%.

DRS exceeded the RSA requirement for indicator 1.5. In FY 2015, the average hourly earnings of DRS rehabilitants who entered competitive, self-employment, or BEP employment with earnings at or above minimum wage was 63% of the average hourly earnings for all employed West Virginians. The 63% achievement in FY 2015 is 11% above the RSA benchmark of 52%.

DRS did not exceed the RSA requirement for indicator 1.6. In FY 2015, the percentage of DRS rehabilitants in competitive, self-employment, or BEP employment with earnings at or above minimum wage and reporting their own income as the largest source of support increased by 52% between application and closure. The 52% increase is 1% below the RSA benchmark of 53%. For job retention closures, there is no change in the primary source of support from application to closure. A high volume of consumers with job retention cases in FY 2015 was a difficult barrier to overcome in meeting the benchmark for this indicator.

**Standard 2: Equal Access to Services in FY 2015**
DRS exceeded the RSA requirement for indicator 2.1. In FY 2015, the ratio of minority service rate over non-minority service rate was 0.883. The 88.3% service rate ratio is above the RSA benchmark of 80%.

DRS provides rehabilitation and related services to all persons with disabilities, including individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds who meet qualifications for DRS services. People with disabilities from minority backgrounds are represented within the DRS caseload proportionate to their numbers within the general population. In FY 2015, DRS surpassed by 0.083 the RSA benchmark of 0.80 (ratio) for indicator 2.1 relating to the equal access to services standard. DRS continues to stress its strong commitment to equal access to rehabilitation services for all West Virginians with disabilities.

DRS is committed to pursuing outreach efforts and marketing referral and other information about DRS and its services to West Virginians with disabilities, particularly those who are members of minority populations. DRS continues to emphasize development and production of a statewide public awareness campaign and participation in a variety of multi-cultural events such as awareness fairs and diversity days.

Progress in Achieving FY 2015 Goal and Priority 2: Improve and maintain the consistency of policy interpretation, implementation, and casework practices through a comprehensive quality assurance program.

Performance Goal:

Achieve an overall score above 75% on the next Quality Assurance Review (QAR).

The agency conducted the following activities in FY 2015:

- DRS continued to include representatives from the WVSRC, the WVSILC, and the West Virginia State Client Assistance Program (CAP) in the Division’s policy consultation group. These representatives fully participate in development and revision of policies relating to case services prior to public comment. Their participation helps broaden the discussion and reduce the potential for different interpretations of the policy changes.
Quality assurance specialists (QAS) continued to work in the six DRS districts to develop consumer services policy, review casework practices, assure consistent interpretation of policy throughout the state, and provide training on policy and casework to DRS staff members. QAS schedule their visits in each DRS office at least monthly. QAS assist in the evaluation for counselors moving from temporary employment to permanent employment. The QAS also assist managers with employee remediation in regard to identifying training needs and providing the training. QAS are the field’s direct connection to the State Office. During these field office visits, QAS may:

* Conduct policy and procedures training;
* Update staff members on State Office activities, proposed policy changes, challenges, or upcoming goals;
* Ask for input about any problems the field is experiencing and solicit suggested policy or procedural change;
* Review counselor case files; and
* Be available to handle staff member problem cases and clarify policy.

QA staff continued to develop and conduct a variety of training on new policy, as well as refresher training on current policy and procedural issues during FY 2015. Consistency has been strengthened by using the same training material, which is now available via a shared network folder for accessibility purposes as well. QA staff members have worked on researching, revising, and developing policy on training, transition, and employment services.

As quality assurance specialists and managers work together in the field, the field staff members have become more connected to the State Office, opening them up to generating suggestions that have been instrumental in policy and procedural changes.

In FY 2015, the QA Unit continued to use training modules for new counselors and rehabilitation services associates. The training consists of two components—Group Training and Decision Tree Training. The new counselor and rehabilitation services associates Decision Tree Training provides technical assistance and guidance in policies and procedures, documentation, best practices, and improving client services.
are completed at two and five months after training. These help the counselors, the QAS, and managers to monitor progress in a new hire’s training and comprehension. Strengths and weaknesses are identified to provide any necessary technical assistance or support.

Outcomes:

The most recent statewide overall QAR score was 80%, an improvement from the 77% from the previous QAR. In addition, seven of the ten casework domain area scores improved from the previous QAR. Based on each district’s scores, QAS have provided relevant training and technical assistance to improve casework practices.

In FY 2015, DRS continued to provide training and technical assistance for new and more experienced counselors. In addition, the QA Unit has developed a new training format for newly hired counselors and rehabilitation services associates. The QA Unit began training new counselors and rehabilitation associates using the new format.

Progress in Achieving FY 2015 Goal and Priority 3: Develop, establish, and maintain collaborative relationships with community providers (including CRPs, Independent Living, and other community providers) to enhance the availability and quality of services to DRS consumers.

Performance Goal:

a. Achieve an overall rating of “Excellent” or “Good” by at least 78% of respondents to the CRP perspectives survey regarding the working relationship with DRS.

b. Achieve an overall rating of “Excellent” or “Good” by at least 80% of DRS counselors who provide reviews of CRP service quality.

The agency conducted the following activities in FY 2015:

-New approaches to training and educating DRS counselors have led to increased awareness of local CRP service providers and the types of CRP services available to DRS consumers. New counselors now visit all CRPs in their service area and are provided with a user-friendly CRP vendor guide detailing services and
providers by county. The visits and detailed guides will help foster working relationships between new DRS counselors and CRPs.

- DRS continued to partner and regularly meet with such groups as the West Virginia State Rehabilitation Council, West Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council, Developmental Disabilities Council, Mental Health Planning Council, and WV Association of Rehabilitation Facilities. DRS continues to receive a commitment from a representative of the West Virginia Department of Education and WVSRC to attend CRP Advisory Committee meetings in order to identify and better coordinate the vocational rehabilitation service needs of transitioning youth.

- DRS continued to conduct Transition Team meetings at the district level. These meetings bring DRS, WV Department of Education, and CRP staff from within the districts together to promote interagency collaboration. These meetings also allow staff from each agency/CRP to become familiar with the different eligibility requirements and service definitions across agencies. This familiarity will help enhance working relationships and create improved conditions for collaborations with community providers.

- DRS hosted district-level meetings to provide opportunities for CRP representatives and DRS personnel to discuss local service needs of DRS consumers. Subsequent to each meeting, the local DRS office is required to send a brief report to the CRP Program Manager. This process allows all parties involved in the expansion of community-based services to be kept informed of progress and issues.

- The Division continued to examine the information and recommendations collected from various meetings between CRP and DRS staff members. Progress on communication is being made as the Division acquires more understanding of the issues and barriers facing the CRP and DRS staff members in their service provision to persons with significant disabilities in WV. Ongoing communication activities with CRPs include:

  - An e-mail list-serv with all current vendors that is updated periodically and utilized to send out training opportunities, policy changes, and general updates when needed;

* Joint meetings with DRS district and branch staff and CRPs in those districts;
*DRS counselors in each district are assigned to be CRP liaisons to each CRP and are required to complete a monthly update regarding the CRP. They collect this information by visits and/or phone calls; and

*Two rehabilitation specialists cover all districts in the state. These individuals provide technical assistance to CRPs and DRS staff. They make site visits to CRP and DRS district and branch offices. During these visits, they provide technical assistance and schedule training and other meetings that need to occur. They serve as a communication link when issues arise and make themselves available to attend the communication meetings and transition team meetings.

Outcomes:

In FY 2015, DRS continued to develop and maintain collaborative relationships with community providers throughout the state. The successfully implemented strategies included training of counselors and CRP staff in individual and joint settings. All new DRS counselors have site visits with CRPs in their service area to foster relationships at the local level. In addition, DRS now has agreements with 68 CRPs in 97 locations around the state, a substantial increase since first adopting this goal and priority. Surveys were completed by DRS and CRP staff members. The results of the surveys indicate an overall positive working relationship between DRS and CRPs, with 78% of DRS respondents and 78.7% of CRP respondents indicating a “Very Good” or “Excellent” working relationship. DRS will continue to examine the quality of working relationships between DRS and community partners, as well as the availability and usage of CRP services across all DRS districts.

In FY 2015, DRS authorized $154,336.63 for services provided by centers for independent living for 59 consumers. These services included attendant care/activities of daily living assessment, community based assessment, job coaching, work adjustment training, life skills training, Daniel Memorial Independent Living Scale, and academic/literacy training.

Progress in Achieving FY 2015 Goal and Priority 4: Increase the availability of job development, job coaching/supportive employment, job placement services, work adjustment training, work skills development, and life skills training within the community.

Performance Goal:
Eliminate all CRP services gaps as reported by DRS counselors.

The agency conducted the following activities in FY 2015:

- Identified existing community services (including CRPs, Independent Living, and other community providers), where they are, and where there are best practices. DRS created and will continue to update a user-friendly CRP vendor directory that includes all DRS-acknowledged CRPs and the services each provide by county. This directory is reviewed during the CRP services component of new counselor training to ensure DRS staff are aware of the CRP services that are available to the consumers they serve.

- Continued to expand the pool of job coaches using the Student Transition to Employment Project (STEP).

- Continued to incorporate a CRP component in training of DRS field staff. This training segment increased awareness of CRP service options, especially among the new counselors and rehabilitation services associates, available in the district and ensured understanding of the service definitions, requirements, and authorization codes.

Outcomes:

As of November 2015, DRS has agreements with 68 CRPs in 97 locations around the state. All 55 West Virginia counties have a DRS-acknowledged CRP where VR consumers can receive services. Additionally, DRS has substantially increased the number of job coaches (29 as of November 2015) for transitioning youth, especially in rural areas, through STEP. From FY 2009 to FY 2015, DRS more than doubled the number of VR consumers receiving CRP services and the total dollar amount authorized for those services. Through survey responses, DRS staff members have indicated areas of the state that are in need of increased CRP service capacity. The information from the surveys will be utilized to target specific areas where service gaps have been reported. This will remain an ongoing focus for DRS.

Progress in Achieving FY 2015 Goal and Priority 5: Improve access and availability of transportation options at the community level for DRS consumers who need transportation assistance to meet their rehabilitation goals.

Performance Goal:
Increase the number of consumers provided transportation services from the previous fiscal year.

The agency conducted the following activities in FY 2015:

- Continued commitment to reduce transportation barriers for consumers with disabilities and focus on individual transportation solutions (ITS) to satisfy immediate transportation needs.

- Continued to assign responsibility to a staff member in each branch office to maintain a list and working knowledge of local transportation options.

- Continued to participate in local and state initiatives to coordinate and expand transportation resources.

- Continued to encourage planning for transportation needs early in the development of the consumer’s rehabilitation program. At application, DRS counselors identify transportation issues and focus on finding solutions to include in the consumer’s Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). This ensures that the ability of consumers to reach their vocational goal is not impeded by preventable transportation barriers. Transportation issues were also addressed by the standard instrument prescribed for routine use by supervisors and quality assurance staff in case reviews.

Outcomes:

In FY 2015, DRS authorized $1,041,707 in transportation services for 1,159 consumers. This is fewer than the 1,330 consumers served in FY 2014. The decrease was caused, in part, by the closure of Order of Selection Categories 3 and 4.

Progress in Achieving FY 2015 Goal and Priority 6: Develop strategies for outreach efforts to minority populations.

Performance Goal:

Attaining a score of 0.85 on RSA Performance Indicator 2.1, the ratio of minority to non-minority service rate.

The agency conducted the following activities in FY 2015:
Continued to identify and participate in multi-cultural events throughout West Virginia.

Continued to maintain a website and other public materials that demonstrate diversity. DRS will continue statewide outreach to all individuals with disabilities who are interested in preparing for, getting, keeping, or returning to employment in the competitive labor marker. In doing so, DRS will exercise care to ensure that its public information products reflect its appreciation for and value of diversity, including its brochures, posters, flyers, newspaper inserts, and websites, etc.

Continued to meet and work with representatives of agencies/organizations that serve minority populations in the identified areas.

Continued to utilize geographic information systems (GIS) technology to locate potential unserved and underserved minority areas. DRS will continue to use its geographic information system, case management system, and multiple data sources to identify communities with significant minority populations which appear potentially unserved and/or underserved.

Continued to mail informational flyers describing DRS services to households in areas where people with disabilities from minority backgrounds may be underserved or unserved. Information about the vocational rehabilitation services provided by DRS will be sent to all residences along delivery routes for the United States Postal Service that are located in these zip codes.

Outcomes:

In FY 2015, DRS attained a score of 0.883 on RSA Performance Indicator 2.1.

Progress in Achieving FY 2015 Goal and Priority 7: Increase the number of blind/visually impaired (VI) DRS consumers served by 5% per year and expand services to blind/VI DRS consumers statewide.

Performance Goal:

To serve 5% more blind/VI consumers than were served in the previous fiscal year.

The agency conducted the following activities in FY 2015:
-Skills trainers continued to provide daily living skills evaluation and training in consumers’ homes within the local area.

-Continued to provide technical assistance to counselors to determine blind/VI consumer needs. DRS counselors received training regarding blind/VI program service delivery for consumers in areas such as orientation and mobility (O&M), Computer Access, and Daily Living Skills, as needed. This training will allow DRS Counselors to increase knowledge of services available and expand services to blind/VI consumers and will improve consumer satisfaction, which will also promote consumer growth in numbers.

-DRS O&M specialists continued to assist DRS specialty counselors in identifying and contacting non-DRS O&M specialists within their district. This will create better opportunities for DRS counselors to refer blind/VI consumers to O&M specialists who can provide needed services to consumers, thereby improving consumer satisfaction. This will also create better opportunities for O&M specialists to refer their blind/VI consumers who want to work to DRS for services, which will expand the blind/VI consumer body.

-Visually Impaired in-home skills training staff continued providing services to DRS consumers within their communities. Expanding needed services will improve consumer satisfaction with services, which will serve as a catalyst for consumer growth in numbers.

-Continued to partner with the National Federation of the Blind of West Virginia (NFBWV) to continue community based Braille tutoring through a no-cost grant extension. This service will improve the overall quality of services provided to blind/VI consumers, which will also promote consumer growth in numbers.

-Continued to work with the West Virginia Optometric Association to educate optometrists about services that DRS can provide to their visually impaired patients. This will increase the likelihood that optometrists statewide will refer patients to DRS for services, which will expand the blind/VI consumer body.

-Maintained a statewide acknowledged vendor list of optometrists who have received training in the services needed to provide low vision evaluation services and Bioptic lens evaluation for the Low Vision Bioptic Driving Program. DRS will sponsor education and training at the Optometric Association training to enlist optometrists to provide low vision evaluation services. This acknowledged vendor list helps facilitate the provision of low vision evaluations required by state law prior to training in the Bioptic Driving program.
This will increase the availability of services within the community and expedite the process for entrance into the Low Vision Driving program. Reduction of the transportation barrier for visually impaired individuals will increase the number of successful employment outcomes for blind/VI consumers.

- Continued training sessions for the specialty counselors for the blind in a variety of areas, as needed. This will allow these specialty counselors to provide quality services to blind/VI consumers and will improve consumer satisfaction. This will also serve as a catalyst for consumer growth in numbers.

- Continued to develop and maintain working relationships with teachers of the visually impaired statewide, particularly at the West Virginia School for the Blind (WVSB). DRS counselors will hold meetings with teachers and administrators of the WVSB annually. This will enable DRS to receive more referrals of blind/VI students from educational settings who are interested in going to work. This will also enable DRS counselors to better understand blind/VI consumers that are attending school and provide quality services to those consumers, which will improve consumer satisfaction.

Outcomes:

In FY 2015, DRS served 589 blind/VI consumers, this is a decrease from the 769 consumers served in FY 2014. The agency continues to work toward the goal of a 5% increase in the number of blind/VI consumers served from the previous FY. This is due, in part, to the closure of Order of Selection (OS) Categories 3 and 4, which has reduced the number of blind/VI consumers eligible to receive services. Though the number of consumers did not increase the number of consumers at the desired rate, several strategies have improved service availability and provision for blind/VI consumers. Improvements have been accomplished by increasing training for VR counselors, increasing the time staff spend serving blind/VI consumers, partnering with other organizations, and maintaining working relationships. Since adopting this goal, VI Daily Living Staff Skills Trainers increased their time serving DRS consumers in each district by 20%. These Skills Trainers are providing community based services including daily living skills and evaluations at home and job sites.

Progress in Achieving FY 2015 Goal and Priority 8: Expand and improve services to transitioning youth with disabilities (TY).

Performance Goal:
An 80% overall satisfaction rating by TY consumers on the annual Consumer Satisfaction Survey.

The agency conducted the following activities in FY 2015:

- Held Transition Conferences in each district to enable DRS staff to share their unique expertise and skills in serving TY. These meetings provided training and technical assistance, regarding WIOA, for field staff serving transitioning youth.

- Implemented the Positive Outcomes Within Education and Rehabilitation (POWER) program to connect TY with various employers throughout the state for the purpose of job shadowing and professional career exploration.

- Initiated a state-wide procedural goal of meeting with TY referrals, and commencing DRS services for eligible individuals much earlier in the transition process.

- Continued to hold Transition Team meetings and work with the CRP/School Transition Teams in each district to broaden the availability of services to TY and increase collaboration among VR stakeholders.

- Contacted financial aid offices at post-secondary institutions to promote timely processing that will lead to enhanced service quality. DRS will participate via educational presentation in the annual conference for WV Association of Financial Aid Administrators in 2015.

- Conducted joint Professional Development Trainings with DRS Transition Counselors, School Transition Coordinators, and CRPs.

- Continued to hold Transition Advisory Team meetings with the purpose of strengthening the district-level Transition Teams, planning the annual DRS State Transition Conference, and working with the state-level DRS Transition and Education Programs Supervisor.

- Disseminated DRS Transition brochures and posters for use by Transition Counselors.

- DRS continued to focus on the Student Transition to Employment Project (STEP). The project is designed to train special education teachers and aids to become vendors with DRS. Working in close partnership with
the DRS School Counselor, this unique program allows for individuals with disabilities who are graduating from high school to receive job placement and training from the teacher or aide who worked with them throughout high school. The purpose of STEP is to provide a more seamless transition from school to work for students with disabilities. STEP methodology allows students to build on previous success with someone they know and trust. In 2014, a Rehabilitation Services Specialist position was added to further expand the program throughout the state. This additional position has yielded excellent progress, with a substantial increase in the number of STEP vendors and increased communication with local school staff across the state in 2015.

-Continued to meet with WV Department of Education officials in an effort to develop a system to identify students with disabilities who are at high risk for dropping out of high school and provide information for the One Year Exit Survey.

-DRS collaborated with WV Office of Institutional Education as well as the Division of Juvenile Services (DJS) to develop a cooperative agreement regarding the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to TY who are institutionalized. In 2015, DRS provided information to DJS staff regarding agency-offered services.

Outcomes:

Results from the FY 2014 Consumer Satisfaction Report (the most recent at the time of publication of this document) indicate that the TY satisfaction levels were 75%.

PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT (SE) GOALS

The total authorized dollars for CRP supported employment services in FY 2015 was $730,838 for 259 consumers with most significant disabilities. This is a decrease from the previous FY, when 275 consumers were served and $1,097,408.88 authorized for CRP SE services.

As previously addressed in the discussion of DRS Goal 5, DRS continued to promote the expansion community rehabilitation programs to expand their services into potentially unserved or underserved areas. DRS continued to identify new community rehabilitation programs to increase the availability of supported employment services (i.e., job coaching) for West Virginians with significant disabilities. The agency
continued to emphasize job coaching for DRS consumers who are not in the supported employment program.

**DRS PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA**

DRS acknowledges the legal requirement to report on the performance accountability indicators under Section 116 of WIOA. However, data collection on the performance accountability indicators is only beginning, making a report of DRS performance impossible at this time. As DRS moves forward in its task to place individuals with disabilities into competitive, integrated employment in program year (PY) 2016, it will collect and monitor participant data in order to generate reports on:

- The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
- The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;
- The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
- The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program;
- The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment; and
- The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers.

**UTILIZATION OF TITLE I FUNDS FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES**

**I&E FUNDS FOR THE WEST VIRGINIA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL AND WEST VIRGINIA STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL**

DRS fully embraces the Congressional intent that individuals with disabilities and their advocates are full partners in the state rehabilitation program. Therefore, DRS has established a goal to improve its service delivery system through involvement of consumers and their advocates to increase the ease of access to, timeliness of, and quality of rehabilitation services and ultimately to improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. The Division’s concentration of I&E efforts on consumer partnerships demonstrates its commitment to enhanced consumer involvement.
Success in working with consumers and their advocates is fundamentally important in developing and using innovative approaches to achieve long-term success in expanding and improving rehabilitation services, including supported employment. DRS pursues that work primarily through partnership initiatives with the West Virginia State Rehabilitation Council and the West Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council.

DRS believes that the activities of these councils provide a promising foundation for the kind of partnership envisioned by the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998. If that partnership is to achieve its full potential, however, it must receive the necessary support.

Therefore, DRS annually allocates I&E funds to support general operations of the West Virginia State Rehabilitation Council and the West Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council.

FY 2015 highlights for each appear below.

WEST VIRGINIA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

I&E funds support operations and activities undertaken by members of the WVSRC. DRS allocated $120,000 for WVSRC in FY 2015.

As required by the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998, WVSRC assists DRS by conducting a survey of consumer satisfaction for DRS consumers whose VR cases have been closed. Surveys were mailed to over 5,000 individuals in FY 2015. WVSRC uses I&E funds to share costs of contracting an independent consultant to compile a report of survey results.

I&E funding assists WVSRC to prepare, publish, and distribute its annual report.

WVSRC also participates in development and establishment of DRS goals and priorities outlined in this state plan. I&E funds are used for travel costs as necessary.

WEST VIRGINIA STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL

In combination with Title VII money, I&E funds help support operations and activities undertaken by the WVSILC. DRS allocated $239,000 for WVSILC in FY 2015.
WVSILC, in partnership with DRS, is responsible jointly developed and submitted the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) for FY 2014-2016. WVSILC continues to monitor and evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the SPIL. In conjunction with DRS, WVSILC prepares and submits the 704 Report for West Virginia.

WVSILC members and/or employees collaborate with and/or participate in activities of the WV Centers for Independent Living (WVCIL), WV Developmental Disabilities Council, WVSRC, WV Olmstead Council, WV Mental Health Consumers Association, WV American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), Medley Hartley Advocacy Project Advisory Council, WV Transportation Alliance, and the Fair Shake Network. WVSILC also coordinates activities with the WVSRC including joint meetings and training sessions with these other organizations. Training for service providers on sexual victimization of individuals with disabilities has been scheduled.

WVSILC conducts a survey of consumer satisfaction for consumers who received independent living services. WVSILC uses I&E funds to share costs with DRS and WVCIL for distribution of the survey and contracting an independent consultant to compile survey results and prepare an annual report of findings.

WVSILC ensures that all meetings are open to the public and provides notice through the WV Secretary of State’s Office as well as through statewide media at least two weeks prior to the meetings.

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

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

(2) The timing of transition to extended services.

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) vendor acknowledgment process includes an in-service training session for prospective new vendors and training updates as requested. During the training session, participants receive a Service Provider Guide and an introduction to the DRS process for providing supported employment (SE) services. DRS also loans SE training books and materials at no cost.
The quality of SE services is directly tied to the competency of the personnel performing job development and community based training services. DRS encourages and supports the provision of a broad range of in-service training programs for personnel directly involved in SE service delivery.

DRS is committed to ensuring the availability of SE services throughout West Virginia as reflected in progress toward DRS Goal 5 (Continue to build collaborative relationships with community providers [including community rehabilitation programs (CRPs), Independent Living, and other community providers] to enhance the availability of services to DRS consumers). There are currently 63 DRS-acknowledged SE vendors from all districts across the state. These vendors make SE services available to an increasing number of individuals with the most significant disabilities.

In accordance with federal regulations, the SE services that may be provided to individuals and youth with disabilities placed in SE include:

1. Evaluation of rehabilitation potential for SE to supplement the comprehensive assessment conducted under the Title I program;

2. Job development;

3. Job placement;

4. Intensive on-the-job training provided by skilled job coaches/employment specialists;

5. Case management services;

6. Job monitoring, whether performed on-site or off-site, that includes regular contact with employees, employers, parents, guardians, and other professionals to reinforce and maintain the job placement;

7. Rehabilitation technology assessment and services as appropriate; and

8. Post-employment services (following transition to extended SE services) that are available from the extended service provider and that are needed to maintain the SE job placement.
As appropriate, youth with disabilities placed in SE may also receive transition services and pre-employment transition services (PETS) that include:

1. Job exploration counseling;

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

3. Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institutions of higher education;

4. Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living;

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

DRS receives state funds earmarked to provide Extended Supported Employment Services (ESES) for SE clients closed as successfully rehabilitated who, after an assessment of their progress and continuing needs for services, are found to require ongoing job coaching to maintain employment and are not eligible for services through other funding sources. The consumer’s Individualized Plan for Employment includes an estimate of the time needed for transition to extended services. Provision of ESES (job coaching) to all eligible SE clients, including youth with the most significant disabilities, in accordance with an approved IPE will not exceed 4 years, as required by federal regulations. Consumers in SE placement are eligible to receive any services traditionally available through the DRS Title I program.

The demand and need for SE services continues to be significant, particularly in rural areas, as well as for those individuals who are transitioning from school to the workforce. DRS continues its commitment to expanding the statewide capacity for SE services.

DRS will continue to provide SE services to its consumers and will acknowledge additional SE service providers where needed. The Division will continue to consider non-traditional approaches to SE service delivery and will increasingly emphasize the development of natural supports wherever possible. DRS anticipates that more individuals will receive services with the increased number of approved SE providers.
DRS authorized SE services to 259 individuals in FY 2015.

While SE services may be expected to vary in scope and duration from individual to individual, core services that may be provided to individuals and youth with disabilities placed in SE can include:

1. Assessment of the individual’s environmental circumstances;
2. Job analysis and job development;
3. Rehabilitation technology assessment;
4. Job placement following appropriate match of job/consumer characteristics identified in during assessment, job analysis, and job development (services 1 and 2 above);
5. Intensive, one-on-one, on-the-job training;
6. Job stabilization, job coach fading as much as possible; and
7. Extended Supported Employment Services (ESES), optimally including natural supports.

In order to ensure that priority of resources is given to those individuals with the most significant disabilities, DRS will continue to implement an order of selection (OS) in FY 2017, where applicants meeting the criteria for OS priority categories 3 and 4 will be placed on a waiting list.
# VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

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<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services</strong> is authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act), as amended by WIOA, and its supplement under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of VR services, the <strong>West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services</strong> agrees to operate and administer the State VR Services Program in accordance with the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations, policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of VR services and the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>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</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>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; <strong>Yes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The State legally may carry out each provision of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement. <strong>Yes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>All provisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement are consistent with State law. <strong>Yes</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The <strong>Director, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services</strong> 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;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The <strong>Director, West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services</strong> has the authority to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and the supplement for Supported Employment services;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>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. <strong>Yes</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The State Plan must provide assurances that:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan: The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) the establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act.</td>
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</table>
(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):

(A) is an independent State commission.

(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council. (select Option B)

(c) consultations regarding the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act.

(d) the financial participation by the State, or if the State so elects, by the State and local agencies, to provide the amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of carrying out the VR program in accordance with section 101(a)(3).

(e) the local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds, (Yes/No) (select No)

(f) 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) (select No)

(g) statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act. Is the designated State agency requesting or maintaining a waiver of statewideness for one or more services provided under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan? (Yes/No) (select No) See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan.

(h) the descriptions for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(B); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.

(i) all required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act.

(j) the requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act.
(k) the compilation and submission to the Commissioner of statewide assessments, estimates, State goals and priorities, strategies, and progress reports, as appropriate, and as required by sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2), and 606(b)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.

(l) the reservation and use of a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of VR services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities.

(m) the submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administration of the Provision of VR Services: The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(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) (select No)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) comply with the requirements for the development of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(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.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
(g) provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act.

(h) comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual reviews, as appropriate, for individuals employed either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as required by section 101(a)(14) of the Rehabilitation Act.

(i) meet the requirements in sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act if the State elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs

   (i) with respect to students with disabilities, the State,

(i) has developed and will implement,

(A) strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and

(B) strategies to achieve the goals and priorities identified by the State, to improve and expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities on a statewide basis; and

(ii) has developed and will implement strategies to provide pre-employment transition services (sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(25)).

---

Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement:

(a) The designated State unit assures that it will include in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act.

(b) The designated State agency assures that it will submit reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.
| (c) | The designated state unit will coordinate activities with any other State agency that is functioning as an employment network under the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency program under Section 1148 of the Social Security Act. |

| 6  |
| (a) | Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program: The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(G) and (H) of the Rehabilitation Act. |

| (b) | The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act. |

| 7  |
| (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. |

| (b) | The designated State agency assures that: |

| 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. |
State Plan Certified By

As the authorized signatory identified above, I hereby certify that I will sign, date and retain in the files of the designated state agency/designated state unit Section 1 of the Preprint, and separate Certification of Lobbying forms (Form ED-80-0013; available at http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/ed80-013.pdf) for both the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.

Signed? Yes

Name of Signatory Donna L. Ashworth

Title of Signatory Director

Date Signed (mm/dd/yyyy) 03/03/2016

Assurances Certified By

At the request of RSA, the designated state agency and/or the designated state unit provide the following assurance(s), in addition to those contained within Section 2 through 8 below, in connection with the approval of the State Plan for PY 2016-2019 No
Appendix 1: Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Include the State's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability indicators based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year: PY 2016/FY 2017</th>
<th>Year: PY 2017/FY 2018</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proposed/Expected Level</td>
<td>Negotiated/Adjusted Level</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>55.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dislocated Workers</td>
<td>71.4</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Youth* (Education, Training or Employment)</td>
<td>Adult Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>64.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Median</td>
<td>Vocational Rehabilitation</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wagner-Peyser</td>
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<td>71.3</td>
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<tr>
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**West Virginia State Unified Plan**  
Revised: March 7, 2016
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### Additional Indicators of Performance

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 