ALABAMA PYS 2022-2023 (MOD)

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I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE

This is a combined plan

COMBINED PLAN PARTNER PROGRAM(S)

Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as amended by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)

Employment and Training programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))

Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.)

Senior Community Service Employment program (programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))

B. PLAN INTRODUCTION OR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. Background

Over the last several years, Alabama has accelerated efforts toward strengthening the state's education and workforce development systems. This work has incorporated and aligned the efforts of many partners in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors, as well as citizens and stakeholders across the state. The *State of Alabama's 2020 Combined Plan for WIOA (2020 Combined Plan)* represents a moment of opportunity to not only record and build on the success and collective impact of these efforts to date but also to articulate a vision and priorities for collaborative work over the next four years.

B. Two Lenses for Alabama's Combined Plan

Alabama's *2020 Combined Plan* was developed in response to two key directives and, therefore, can be viewed through two key lenses.

(1) Technical Plan: Compliance with Federal Requirements

First, the *2020 Combined Plan* must meet the requirements of federal law as outlined the following legislation:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (Public Law 113-128) (July 22, 2014)
- Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) (July 31, 2018)

Compliance with these laws and guidelines allows Alabama to access much-needed funds for key state programs and initiatives and ensure it is aligned with best practices at the national level. As a result of this compliance focus, the plan includes some highly technical sections and components written by and for state agencies with specialized knowledge and expertise.

(2) Collaborative Plan: Responsive to Stakeholder Feedback

Secondly, the *2020 Combined Plan* represents an opportunity to respond to the vision and needs of stakeholders across the state. These stakeholders were engaged in the planning process for the *2020 Combined Plan* through a series of public engagement meetings that allowed individuals from diverse backgrounds and perspectives to share a collective and collaborative vision for the state. As a result of this collaborative focus, the plan outlines programs, priorities, and initiatives that respond to key barriers that emerged in stakeholder feedback (see Section F).

C. Vision for Alabama's Workforce Development System

Through the *2020 Combined Plan,* Alabama seeks to create a strong workforce development system that is centered on **competency-based career pathways** into the middle class. This vision includes a focus the following key elements:

- **Awarenesscampaign** to build knowledge of available resources and opportunities
- **One-stop career centers** that serve as connections between employers, employees, and education and training resources
- **Career exploration tools** and resources readily accessible to all Alabamians
- **Streamlined funding system** that enables education and training entities to meet the needs of employers and potential or existing employees
- **Public-private partnerships** that increase capacity for meeting workforce needs
- **Network of empowered Regional Workforce Councils** that play a central role in bridging business needs with a talent supply chain
- **Longitudinal data system** as an integral part of the strengthened workforce system

D. Plans, Priorities, and Partners Supporting the Vision

The vision outlined above is already being addressed through three key plans and initiatives in Alabama. These plans are complementary to one another and to the *2020 Combined Plan* and include a set of five consistent themes or priorities. Moreover, several key coordinating entities are supporting implementation and achievement of the plans. The plans, priorities, and coordinating entities are described briefly in the narrative below.

(1) Key Plans Shaping Alabama's Education and Workforce Development System

- ***Accelerate Alabama 2.0*** **is Alabama's strategic economic development growth plan focused on technology-focused, skill-based jobs that will create sustainable employment opportunities for Alabamians. Developed in 2017, the plan includes targeted business sectors and three key economic development drivers: Recruitment, Retention, and Renewal.**
- ***Strong Start, Strong Finish*** **is Governor Kay Ivey's education initiative designed to integrate Alabama's early childhood education, K-12 education, and workforce development systems into a seamless experience for all Alabamians. *Strong Start, Strong Finish* includes five critical benchmarks: Pre-K readiness, school readiness,**

literacy and numeracy, career exploration and discovery, and college and/or career readiness.

- ***Success Plus: Preparing Alabama's Workforce for Opportunity and Growth*** is Alabama's strategic plan for reaching its educational attainment goal of adding 500,000 highly skilled employees to the workforce by 2025. Approved by the Alabama Workforce Council in 2018, Success Plus includes five priorities for reaching the goal: awareness, access and success, pathways, leadership and collaboration, and assessment and continuous improvement. Engagement and input from 300 key partners and stakeholders and more than 1,500 additional residents of Alabama informed this plan.

(2) Common Themes and Priorities across the Plans

Across efforts to strengthen Alabama's education and workforce development systems to date and looking ahead toward the future, a set of five key priorities provide a useful framework for collective efforts:

- **Awareness**: Making information about education, training, and jobs widely available
- **Access and Success**: Increasing access to education, training, and support for all individuals
- **Pathways**: Creating clear education and training tracks that lead to in-demand jobs
- **Leadership and Collaboration**: Working together across agencies, organizations, and systems
- **Assessment and Continuous Improvement**: Using data to inform decision making

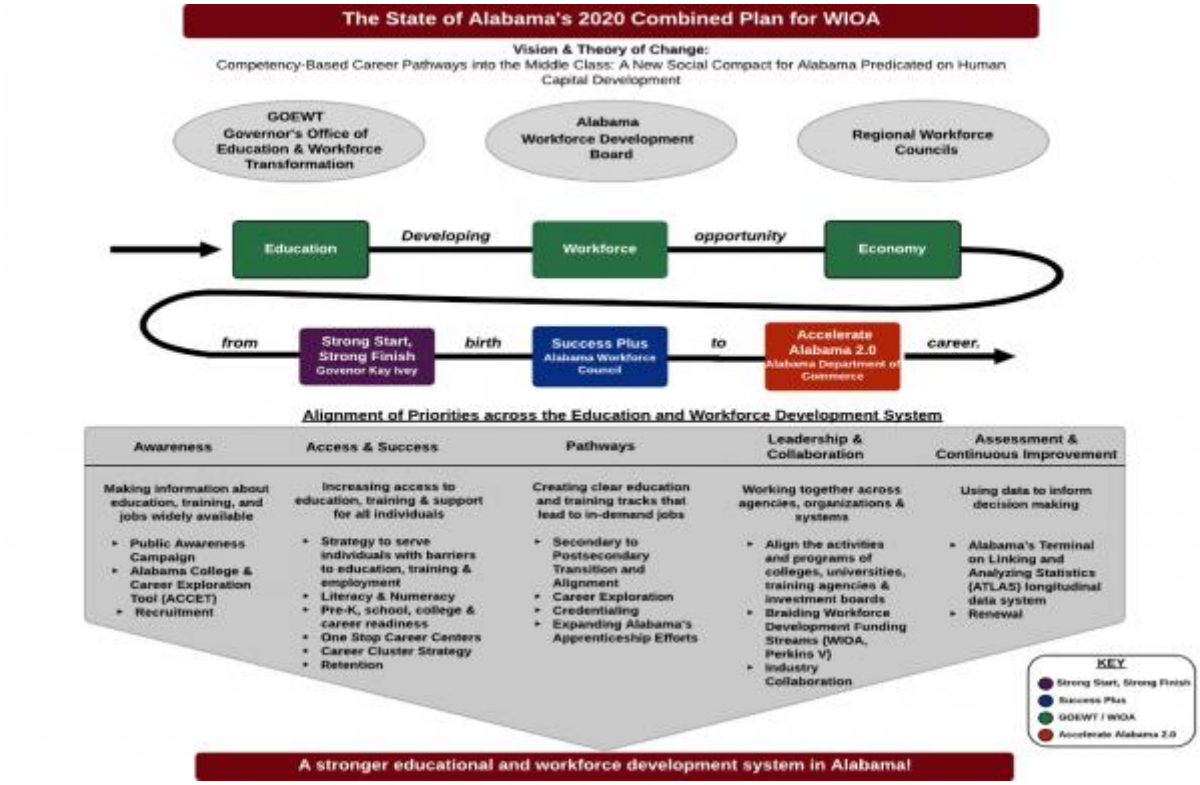
(3) Key Partners and Coordinating Entities

While many partners are involved in the education and workforce system, the following key partners play important coordinating roles at the state and local levels.

- **Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Transformation (GOEWT): Established by Governor Ivey to ensure Alabama's attainment and labor force participation goals are met through an equity-based framework**
- **Alabama Workforce Development Board (AWDB)**: Established to assist the Governor in the development, implementation, and continuous improvement of the WIOA and related programs to ensure alignment with the Alabama workforce development system including linkages among workforce development programs
- **Alabama Workforce Council (AWC) and the Regional Workforce Councils**: The AWC was established to provide a direct link to the workforce needs of business and industry, and, at the local level, there are seven multi-county regional workforce councils in Alabama

E. <u>Alignment of Plans, Priorities, and Key Partners</u>

The *2020 Combined Plan* presents a unique opportunity to demonstrate and build on the alignment of existing plans, priorities, and key partners within the vision articulated in the plan. The diagram below shows the alignment of the plans, priorities, and key partners, as well as identifies several key programs and initiatives in development within each of the themes and priority areas and helping to develop opportunity for Alabamians from birth through career.



The State of Alabama's 2020 Combined Plan for WIOA

Alabama's Workforce Alignment Efforts

Three federal laws govern the education-to-workforce pipeline: the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins), and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Because they are administered across different state agencies, coordinating the federal programs is challenging. ESSA provides funding for public education from kindergarten to 12th grade. Perkins provides funding for secondary and postsecondary career and technical education (CTE) programs. WIOA Title I funds the public workforce development system, which matches labor market needs with education, training, and support services for youth and adults looking for meaningful employment. WIOA Title II funds adult education and literacy activities for out-of-school youth and adults who lack a high school diploma or proficiency in English. Together ESSA, Perkins, and WIOA facilitate an education-to-workforce pipeline that provides individuals with the academic, technical, and employability skills they need to be successful in the workforce.

In 2003, Governor Bob Riley began the process of consolidating and aligning workforce development efforts in Alabama when he signed Executive Order No. 17 to consolidate state workforce development programs into the Office of Workforce Development.2 The order was developed to reduce duplication and provide seamless delivery of services to citizens and employers in Alabama. The agencies who were tasked to consolidate efforts per the governor's order included the Workforce Innovation Act (WIA), now reauthorized as WIOA, partner agencies: the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA), the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations, the Department of Human Resources, the Department of Rehabilitation Services, the Department of Children's Affairs, Alabama Industrial Development Training (AIDT), Alabama Department of Education and the Alabama Postsecondary Education System (now ACCS).3 Dr. Matthew Hughes directed the Governor's Office of Workforce Development (GOWD) under the Riley Administration. The GOWD was not continued during the administration of Governor Bentley.

In 2015, many of Alabama's workforce and economic development agencies were consolidated into the Department of Commerce's business development and workforce development divisions. As part of the realignment in 2015, Alabama Industrial Development Training (AIDT), Alabama's worker training incentive program; workforce development functions previously carried out by the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA), including Workforce Investment Boards, Rapid Response, the Incumbent Worker Training Programs; oversight of the state's seven Regional Workforce Councils, formerly held by the Alabama Community College System (ACCS); and the Alabama Workforce Council, a blue-ribbon panel established to explore how to improve educational outcomes and strengthen workforce and economic development efforts were all transferred to the Department of Commerce's Workforce Development Division. The Alabama Legislature passed Act 2015-450 in 2015 moving several workforce programs to the Alabama Department of Commerce, thereby creating the Department of Commerce's Workforce Development Division. The Commerce Workforce Development Division is comprised of Alabama Industrial Development Training (AIDT); federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Programs; Regional Workforce Councils; and management and administrative support for the Alabama Workforce Council. A Deputy Secretary of Commerce position was created, currently held by Mr. Ed Castile, to lead the Commerce Workforce Development Division. During the 2016 regular Legislative Session, the Apprenticeship Alabama program was added to the Commerce Workforce Development Division. In addition, AIDT's role was expanded in the 2017 regular session of the Alabama Legislature with the passage of Alabama Reinvestment and Abatements Act, which allows AIDT to assist established companies with employee training for qualified projects.

F. Addressing Stakeholder Priorities for Workforce Development

As part of the development of the *2020 Combined Plan*, Alabama engaged local stakeholders in a series of seven local stakeholder input meetings. Two meetings were held in each of the state's seven workforce council regions from between July and October 2019. Meetings served as listening sessions during which participants provided qualitative data in forms of verbal feedback and written response representing the needs and perspective of their community.

In the listening sessions, stakeholders were asked to provide one word to represent their vision for the future of Alabama's workforce. The compilation of these words is graphically represented at the right.



Word Cloud

In addition to a vision, stakeholders identified a number of challenges, barriers, and opportunities Alabama must address as it strives to improve the state's workforce. The top themes and priorities that emerged from the stakeholder listening sessions as well as where they are addressed in the *2020 Combined Plan*, are included in the table below.

Priority or Theme	Stakeholder Insights
1. Transportation	Lack of transportation access directly impedes the public's engagement in employment, vocational training, and educational opportunities
2. Childcare	Limited access to affordable, quality childcare programs during varied work hours prohibits the public's engagement in employment and training opportunities
3. ADA Compliance and Disability Accommodations	Accessibility for disabled populations must be a priority to develop an inclusive plan for Alabama's workforce; employees and employers need direct training and support on work sites in order to ensure all current and potential employees are able to meaningfully participate and remain in the workforce

Priority or Theme	Stakeholder Insights
4. Internet and Technology	Lack of access to broadband and up to date computer skills training is a barrier to Alabama's workforce and employers
5. Education and Training	Direct access to quality and equitable education and training must exist in every community to strengthen Alabama's future workforce
6. Communication and Accessibility	A unified, common message about all available services and supports is necessary. As part of this unification, Alabama needs a solidified system of access for providers, employers, and the general public to easily access and engage with available information and resources in one place.
7. Service Providers	Service providers need a shared system of accountability for reaching measurable goals. Services providers need updated processes to streamline access and information distribution as well as greater connection to community resources outside of their own organization
8. Health, Healthcare, and Benefits	Alabama's workforce needs a system to ensure housing and food security stability while working to obtain employment; this system must provide an interim or gap coverage for those on SSDI/SNAP benefits who are indirectly discouraged from entering the workforce due to the risk of losing benefits
9. Employer Support	Employers need a streamlined process to access information and engage with local service providers
10. Equitable Access and Success	Alabama must focus on populations with significant barriers to career attainment opportunities, including disabled and special needs individuals, English Language Learners (ELL), GED students, first-generation college students, low-income individuals, minorities, rural residents, and single parent heads of household

As part of the 2020 Combined Plan 2022 modification development process, the Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Transformation and the State Workforce Development Board hosted a stakeholder engagement session in each of Alabama's seven workforce regions. Providing supportive services and reemployment for Alabamians who have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic was the central theme of the 2022 modification stakeholder engagement sessions.

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

A. ECONOMIC, WORKFORCE, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

1. ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

Recessions and Recovery

Alabama lagged the nation experiencing the effects of the December 2007-June 2009 Great Recession. Alabama experienced the most significant economic losses of that recession in 2009. Alabama lagged again when the rest of the nation started pulling out of the recession. In 2015, construction had not yet begun to recover, and economists wondered if it would ever get back to prerecession levels. Federal, state, and local government budgets suffered tremendously, and cutbacks occurred at all levels. Federal budget constraints hurt the state's military base operations and federal research contracts in the state. This led to fewer jobs and a slower recovery. In 2016 when states began to see their unemployment rates finally decline, Alabama had the highest unemployment rate in the Southeast Region and was one of the top five highest rates in the nation. However, the data reflected some confidence in the recovery with rising civilian labor force numbers. In just two short years, Alabama not only recovered from that recession, but reached historic high levels of civilian labor force and number of people employed.

The population and economy at all levels suffered in 2020 when the labor market bottomed out during the COVID pandemic and briefest recession in history. The recession associated with the pandemic lasted two months and resulted from mandated industry shutdowns. Unemployment claims reached over 106,000 for the week ending April 4, 2020, and over 221,000 claims were paid during the week of May 9, 2020. Even as businesses in Alabama slowly opened back up, the unknown effects and fear in the population related to the pandemic continued to inject uncertainty in the labor force participation and economic projections that require consistency. Even so, Alabama has largely rebounded from the COVID recession and the labor market is returning to pre-COVID health. Average annual 2020 figures compared to preliminary 2021 suggest that even while labor force numbers are not where they were pre-pandemic, a healthy recovery is occurring in Alabama labor markets.



The latest seasonally adjusted data are for December 2021. At this time, the civilian labor force was 2,227,172, with 69,854 people in the state classified as unemployed, equating to an unemployment rate of 3.1%.

Alabama's Population and Population Growth

The Alabama population count of almost 4.8 million for 2010 was 7.5 percent more than in 2000. The state's population growth was lower than the nation's growth of 9.7 percent. During that period, population growth in the North and West AlabamaWorks regions were higher than

the state's average. North AlabamaWorks had the highest population growth at 10.7 percent, followed by West (7.6 percent) and Central Six (7.1 percent). East AlabamaWorks had the lowest population growth at 3.3 percent.

The 2019 population estimates show a 2.6 percent population increase, or 123,449 people for the state since 2010 with much of the regional growth occurring in the North AlabamaWorks with an 57,494 more people, and Southwest AlabamaWorks with an additional 29,972. This is a 5.2 percent and 4.1 percent respective increase over the 9-year period. The estimates indicate population declined in East AlabamaWorks by -2.7 percent or -10,185 individuals. The Southeast region remained steady with no measurable growth and only a small increase of 129 people. The remaining five regions fell in between this range and are presented below.

Table: Population by Workforce Development Region

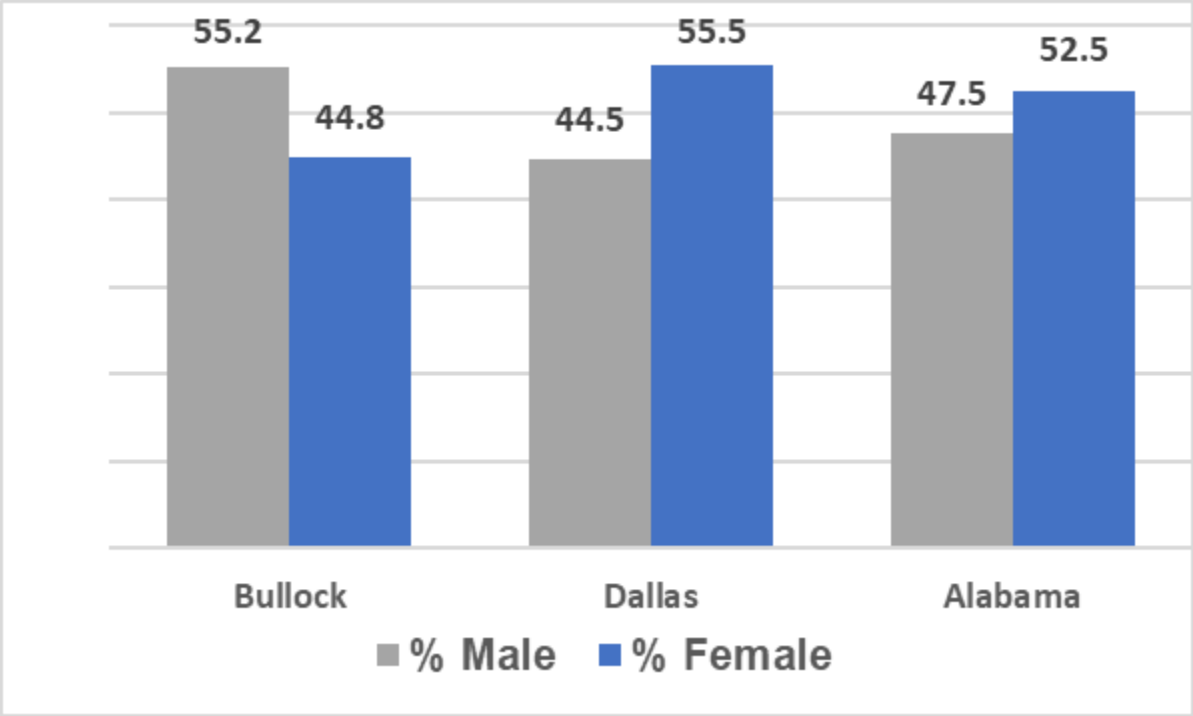
Alabama Works Region	1990 Census	2000 Census	2010 Census	2019 Estimate	Change 2000-2010	Percent Change	Change 2010-2019	Percent Change
North	876,519	996,565	1,103,284	1,160,778	106,719	10.7	57,494	5.2%
East	335,387	370,774	383,099	372,914	12,325	3.3	-10,185	-2.7%
West	286,383	305,545	328,717	335,838	23,172	7.6	7,121	2.2%
Central Six	940,268	1,031,412	1,105,132	1,131,562	73,720	7.1	26,430	2.4%
Central	622,805	695,681	741,877	754,365	46,196	6.6	12,488	1.7%
Southeast	335,242	354,943	378,812	378,941	23,869	6.7	129	0.0%
Southwest	623,983	692,180	738,815	768,787	46,635	6.7	29,972	4.1%
Alabama	4,040,587	4,447,100	4,779,736	4,903,185	332,636	7.5	123,449	2.6%
United States	248,709,873	281,421,906	308,745,538	328,239,523	27,323,632	9.7	19,493,985	6.3%

Source: Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama and U.S. Census Bureau.

Census Bureau five-year estimates for 2019 indicate the population in the state is 68.1 percent White, 26.6 percent Black, 1.4 percent Asian, and 0.5 percent American Indian. The largest percentage of the White population lives in north Alabama, while the largest percentage of the Black population lives in central Alabama. The state's largest population of American Indians reside in Washington County (7.4%) followed by Lawrence County (5.6%) and Escambia County (4.0%). The counties with the largest Asian population are Lee County (4.3%) and Montgomery County (2.8%). The counties with the largest percentage of Hispanic population are Franklin (17.4%), DeKalb (14.6%), and Marshall (14.0%), all counties in the northern part of the state.

The population decennial counts, estimates, and projections by age group.

Population members 18 years of age and over break out statewide as 47.5 percent male and 52.5 percent female. The split between sexes is most noted in Dallas County being 44.5 percent male and 55.5 percent female and Bullock County with 55.2 percent male and 44.8 percent female. The challenges faced by families that rely on quality childcare to participate in the labor force must be addressed and are crucial to economic recovery from the COVID recession. Support for the childcare communities exist in part with agencies such as the Alabama Department Human resources, Child Care Services Division and childcare subsidy programs (see the ADPH 2020 Annual Report WEB.pdf, retrieved 2/16/2022). A full discussion of the Child Care Workforce Stabilization Grant is beyond the scope of this report, however this labor force dynamic in families must be addressed in order to increase labor force participation and encourage parents to return to work post-COVID.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Retrieved from https://api.census.gov/data/2019/acs/acs5/profile 2/8/2022.

According to the Alabama State of the Workforce Report XIV, the population aged 65 and over is growing rapidly as the baby boomer generation ages. Consequently, growth of the prime working age group (20-64) and youth (0-19) is expected to lag that of the total population through 2040. From a 2018 base, prime working age population growth is expected to decline through 2030 but grow by 2.1 percent by 2040 as an exodus of baby boomers from the workforce will end. This poses a challenge for workforce development. To meet long-term occupational projections for growth and replacement, labor force participation of younger residents must increase; additionally, older workers may need to be incentivized to work longer.

Alabama's Manufacturing Environment in the 21st Century

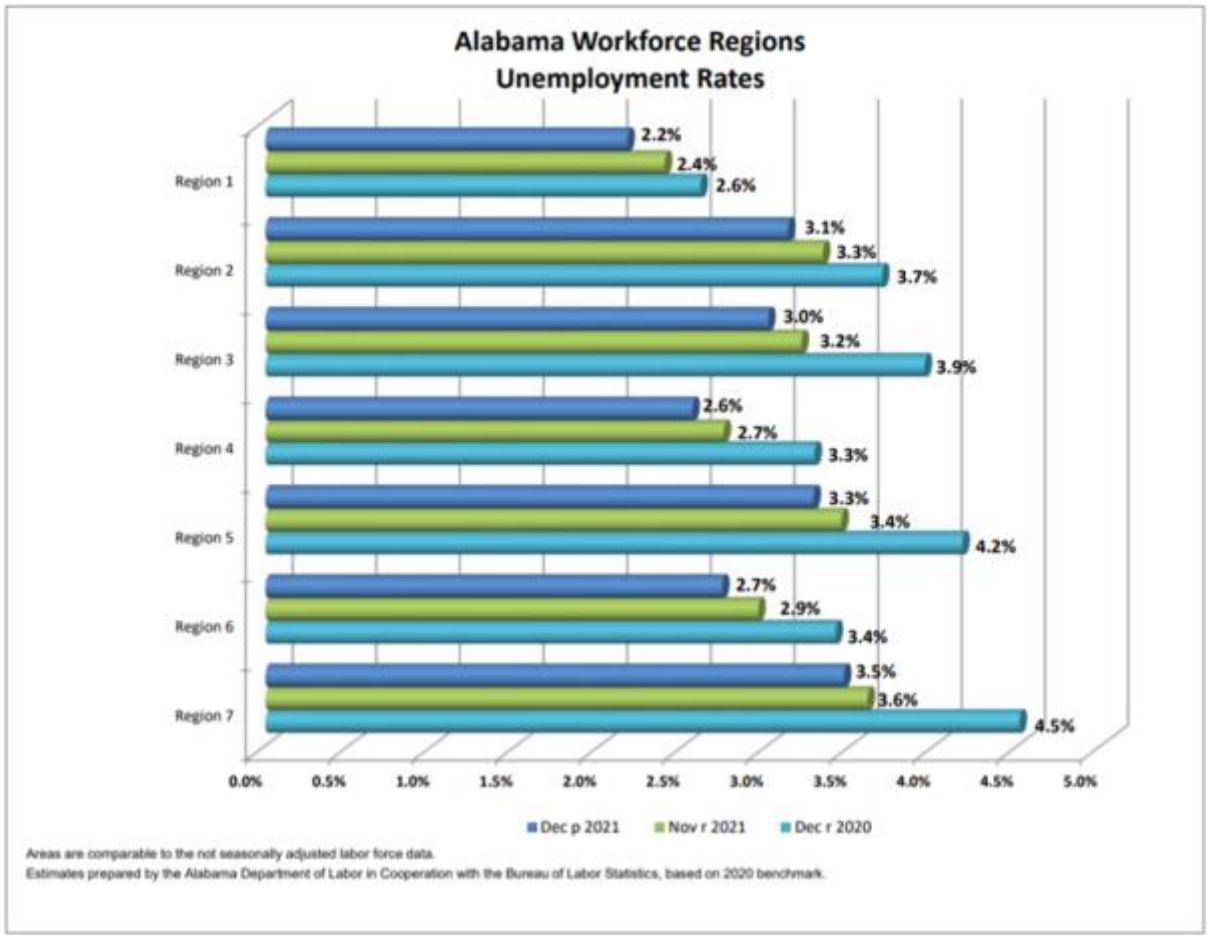
Historically, the economy in the United States has thrived from its manufacturing industries. At the turn of the 21st century, many states had shifted away from manufacturing, due to cheaper labor overseas. Alabama is one of only 5 states in the nation where manufacturing was the largest industry every year since 1990.The 21st century began with an influx of new major automotive manufacturers into the state, making up for thousands of textiles and apparel manufacturing jobs lost over the past two decades.

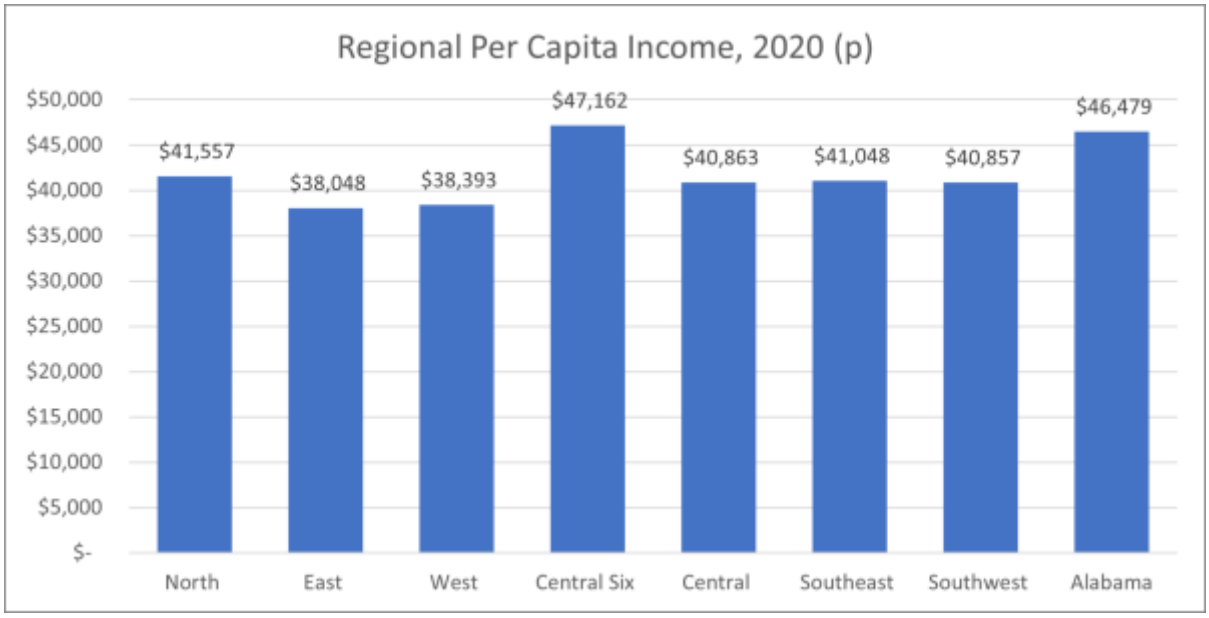
While auto manufacturers did suffer during the Great Recession, they have experienced increases in auto sales and exports since, which has led to additional shifts and more employees. This, in turn, had a positive effect on the output of the parts suppliers in the state. The resurgence in automotive manufacturing has also led to additional transportation manufacturers locating in the state. Aerospace Manufacturing has always had a large presence due to Marshall Space Center in Huntsville, Alabama, but since 2000 this industry has expanded into new regions of the state to become a major aerospace presence across the nation. According to Census records, from 2019 to 2020, exports have dropped 17.6 percent, with largest percent change occurring with Passenger Motor Vehicles (Census HTS codes 8703.32 and 8703.24). For 2020, Alabama exported over 17.1 billion dollars in goods down slightly from 2019's 20.8 billion.

Overview of Alabama's Workforce Development Regions & Regional Workforce Councils

In 2016, the state had 10 regional workforce development councils that worked with industry to ensure they had trained workers to meet the demand of those high demand industries. In 2017, the leadership of the Alabama Workforce Council along with partner agencies of WIOA and the WIOA State Board decided to reduce the regions to seven. At the same time, state WIOA leadership and The US Department of Labor (USDOL) worked toward increasing the number of local WIOA boards from 3 to 7 and matched those regions to the 7 regional workforce councils (RWCs). Each of the regions has boards consisting of industry leaders, educators, economic developers, and community leaders. The RWCs are arranged as 501c3 organizations with executive directors and are primarily funded by the state through the Alabama Department of Commerce.

Southwest Alabama Workforce Development Council (SAWDC) was the first of these in Alabama and includes the Mobile and Daphne/Fairhope/Foley metropolitan areas. In 2017, the Mobile local WIOA board expanded to the same geographic area of SAWDC and became the Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment (SWAPTE). The Jefferson County local WIOA board expanded to the geographic area of the Central Six Workforce Development Council and became Central Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment (CAPTE). The remaining counties that were previously part of the third local state board were divided into the geographic areas of the other 5 RWCs and function under the same names. Each of the 7 regions in the state varies economically. All include at least one metropolitan area, which drives the economy and jobs in the region. All of the regions also include at least one four-year college or university.





Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, https://apps.bea.gov/iTable/iTable.cfm?reqid=70&step=1&isuri=1&acrdn=5#reqid=70&step=1&isuri=1&acrdn=5, *retrieved 2/15/2022.Note: Per capita personal income was computed using Census Bureau midyear population estimates. Estimates for 2010-2020 reflect county population estimates available as of March 2021. These estimates are based on the 2010 census. BEA will incorporate Census Bureau midyear population estimates based on the 2020 census results when they become available*

	2021 Annual Average(p)				Change Over 2020			
	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Rate (%)	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Rate (%)
North	547,444	533,720	13,724	2.5	3,186	15,098	-11,912	-2.2
East	153,040	147,578	5,462	3.6	-2,794	2,146	-4,940	-3.1
West	149,612	144,267	5,345	3.6	-2,803	1,993	-4,796	-3.1
Central Six	543,426	527,233	16,193	3.0	4,159	17,457	-13,298	-2.5
Central	336,456	323,586	12,870	3.8	-4,888	4,822	-9,710	-2.8
Southeast	160,212	155,107	5,105	3.2	-711	2,678	-3,389	-2.1
Southwest	333,175	319,560	13,615	4.1	-2,916	7,790	-10,706	-3.1
Alabama (nsa)	2,223,364	2,151,051	72,314	3.3	-6,754	51,989	-58,742	-2.6
United States (nsa)	161,204,000	152,581,000	8,623,000	5.3	461,667	4,786,250	-4,324,583	-2.8

Source: Alabama Department of Labor, LMI Division LAUS Program in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Note: (p) Preliminary data; (nsa) Not Seasonally Adjusted.

North Alabama Works

North Alabama Works (Region 1) encompasses three metropolitan areas, Huntsville, Decatur, and Florence/Muscle Shoals. The estimated population in 2019 was 1,160,778 which is a 5.2 percent gain since 2010. The per capita income in 2020 was $41,557, $4,922 below the state estimate. Total preliminary employment in March 2020 was 519,093, which is a -1.1 percent decline from 2017. Manufacturing employs the largest percentage of the workforce in the region, at 20.3 percent. This region is known for its nationally recognized high-tech hub in the Huntsville metro. With the second largest research and development park in the United States, the area is home to a large array of fortune 500 companies, local and international high-tech companies, and U.S. space and defense agencies. This hub for research and development employs nearly half of the state's total architecture and engineering occupations, and a third of the computer and mathematical occupations.

Along with the rest of the state, this region has experienced immense growth in transportation and manufacturing occupations. For several years motor vehicle body and trailer manufacturing were a large part of the economy in the western portion of the region. In addition, Toyota has operated an engine manufacturing plant in the Huntsville area since 2003, but since the 2008 recession, the region has attracted numerous motor vehicle parts manufacturers. Employment in this industry has slightly decreased by 0.2 percent since 2016. In January of 2018, Toyota announced plans to build a $1.6 billion plant located between Decatur and Huntsville that will employ up to 4,000 people. As of June 2021, Toyota has added 1,600 employees to the workforce. Toyota's new presence will certainly increase the business for surrounding parts and metals manufacturers in the region and statewide. Although the Huntsville metro is centered on technology, many of the surrounding counties in the region still depend on agriculture, with an estimate of over 17,300 employed. The region continues to be a large producer of large poultry, cattle, corn, and cotton.

The labor force impact from the COVID recession began in April 2020, when the unemployment rate for the region reached 10.9 percent with 57,820 people counted as unemployed. Just one month later, the number of unemployed dropped to 33,659 with a rate of 6.3%. Since that time, the region has logged a tremendous recovery to almost pre-pandemic levels and a current preliminary December 2021 rate of 2.5% unemployment.

East Alabama Works

East Alabama Works (Region 2) includes the Gadsden and Anniston metropolitan areas. In 2019 the region's population estimate was 372,914, a loss of 2.7 percent from 2010. Population in the two metro areas make up over 55 percent of the region's population. These metro areas had a population decline of over 10,000 people since 2010. Per capita income in the region for 2020 was $38,048. Total employment in 2020 was 149,430, down 4.2% percent since 2016. While manufacturing has the highest employment in the region, most of the growth over the last two years occurred in construction, adding 543 jobs, and transportation and warehousing. In just two years, transportation and warehousing added 921 jobs in this region, equaling a 24.6 growth rate.

In March 2020, the region had approximately 6,098 unemployed, equaling a 3.9 percent unemployment rate. By April, that had jumped to 26,835 unemployed and a corresponding rate of 17.1 percent. Annual 2021 figures indicate a positive rebound from COVID levels with only 5,462 unemployed and a rate of 3.6 percent.

West Alabama Works

West Alabama Works (Region 3) includes the Tuscaloosa metropolitan area; however, a majority of the counties in the region are rural. The region had an estimated population of 335,838 in 2019, 62 percent in Tuscaloosa County. Per capita income is over $8,000 less than the state average, with an estimate in 2020 of $38,393. Tuscaloosa County makes up approximately 68 percent of the region's total employment. Educational Services is the dominant industry in Tuscaloosa County, with the presence of The University of Alabama. Manufacturing has a large impact on the region's economy, with nearly 19 percent of the total employment. Total employment has slightly decreased 2.7 percent since 2016, reaching 149,153 in 2020. The manufacturing industry, employing 19,429 people in 2016, experienced over 9.5 percent growth since 2016. With the Mercedes Plant announcement to build electric cars in the region and an estimated employment of 3,200, growth is expected to continue.

In March 2020, an estimated 5,028 people were unemployed, equaling an unemployment rate of only 3.3 percent. Only the following month in April those numbers would jump to 24,045 unemployed with an unemployment rate of 16.2 percent. The annual average in this region now indicates only 5,345 unemployed persons with a rate back down to 3.6 percent.

CAPTE

The most heavily populated region in the state is in Central Alabama Partnership for Training & Education (CAPTE or Region 4), which consists of the Birmingham metropolitan area. The 2019 population estimate was 1,105,132, showing an increase from 2010 of 2.4 percent. The region's per capita income based on the 2020 estimate is $47,162. Nearly 25 percent of the state's workforce is located within the region, with a total employment of 519,431 in 2019. This region is centrally located in the state with a six-spoke interstate system, which establishes it as a distribution hub. The region is also the financial center of the state, with approximately 36,778 employed in finance and insurance industries, 52.4 percent of the state total. According to the Federal Reserve, Birmingham has nearly $220 billion in bank assets, ranking it as the second largest banking center in the south and 11th nationally. Corporate headquarters for four financial institutions and several major insurance companies are located here. CAPTE also leads the state in health care services and medical research. The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) is the fourth largest academic medical center in the United States, and it ranks 44th out of 965 institutions in the National Science Foundation Total R&D Expenditures. Furthermore, UAB's University Hospital is the third largest public hospital in the nation. In 2018, Amazon announced that it would open a fulfillment center in Jefferson County, that would add 1,500 workers. This center is expected to contribute $232 million to the state's economic output annually, and add $137 million to the state's GDP, according to the University of Alabama, Center for Business and Economic Research. The increase in transportation and warehousing employment since 2016 is partly due to Amazon. This industry added over 793 jobs equaling a growth rate between 2016-2020 of 5.9% percent, with more growth expected.

During the COVID Recession, in March 2020, this region had an unemployment rate of 3.0 percent, with 16,120 unemployed. By April, unemployment had increased to 11.4 percent with 59,519 unemployed. Average annual figures for 2021 show a remarkable recovery back to 16,193 unemployed people with a rate of 3.0 percent.

Central Alabama Works

Central Alabama Works (Region 5) comprises 13 counties and includes the Montgomery and Auburn/Opelika Metropolitan areas. The 2019 population estimate for this region is 754,365, which represents 15.4 percent of the total state population. In 2020, the per capita income was $40,863, $5,616 lower than the state average. Total employment in the region was estimated at 325,034 in 2019, which is a gain of over 4.1 percent from 2016. But average. Many veterans live in this region, with the presence of the Maxwell Air Force Base. Like most of the other regions of the state, Central Alabama Works has experienced immense employment growth in transportation manufacturing industries. With the location of a major automobile manufacturing plant in the region, employment has grown 9 percent in automotive manufacturing and a 6 percent decline in automotive parts manufacturing since 2018. Another major industry in the area is education services, due to the presence of several major universities, such as Auburn, Tuskegee, Alabama State, AUM, Huntingdon, Faulkner, Troy Montgomery, and many community colleges in the region. A study by the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities reported that Auburn had a $5.63 billion economic impact in the state in 2019. Since 2016, employment in transportation and warehousing has increased 13.2 percent, adding over 1,070 jobs.

The COVID impact on the civilian labor force in March 2020, an estimated 11,676 people were unemployed, producing a 3.5 percent unemployment rate. Only the following month the unemployed numbered 45,465 and a corresponding rate of 13.7 percent. Tremendous recovery is seen in the 2021 annual average of 12,780 unemployed at a rate of 3.8 percent.

Southeast Alabama Works

Southeast Alabama Works (Region 6) includes the Dothan metropolitan area and surrounding counties. Population in the region remained stable with an estimate of 378,941 in 2019. Coffee County showed the most population growth of 4.8 percent since 2010, reaching 52,342. Military

veterans are a huge part of this region, with an estimated 34,000, the highest in the state. Houston County had the highest percentage of veterans, with an estimated 8,228 residing there. Coffee county had the highest per capita income in the region, at $43,094 in 2018, slightly higher than the state average. The region's 2020 per capita income was $41,048. This region is home to a major university, military base, and strong presence in aviation training. Additionally, the area continues to be a large producer of cotton, peanuts, and poultry and eggs, with an estimated agriculture employment of 7,556 in 2017. Total employment in the region in 2019 was estimated at 156,601.

COVID civilian labor force estimates for March 2020 show the unemployment rate was 3.5 percent, with 5,497 people unemployed. In April that had ballooned to 15,708 unemployed at a rate of 10.1 percent. The 2021 annual average for his region shows a recovery back to 5,105 unemployed at 3.2 percent, much better than pre-COVID levels.

SWAPTE

Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training & Education (SWAPTE), also know as Region 7, encompasses the southwest region of the state. This area consists of the Mobile and the Daphne-Fairhope-Foley metropolitan areas. The latest population estimates for the metro areas combined are approximately 636,444 while the total population for the remaining six counties in the region is 132,343. Per capita income for the region in 2020 was $40,857. Total employment has grown 3 percent between 2018 and 2020, while manufacturing employment has remained stable. With the expansion underway at Airbus, after announcements to produce a new A220 assembly line in Mobile, growth is expected to continue.

The March 2020 data shows that approximately 13,245 people were unemployed, equaling an unemployment rate of 4.0 percent, the highest of all the regions. Wilcox County, one of the poorest counties in the nation, reported a 9.6 percent unemployment rate, up 3.4 percent from September 2019. In April of 2020, this region had 46,646 people unemployed representing a rate of 14.1 percent - a 10 percent increase over the month. These numbers dropped again by the Annual average 2020 estimate to 13,615 unemployed. This reflects an unemployment rate of 4.1 %

(i) Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

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

Alabama's number one manufacturing export is in transportation equipment manufacturing, to include aerospace, automotive, and shipbuilding. At the height of the Great Recession, transportation manufacturing dropped down to 43,205 employed, but since 2010 has grown over 38.9 percent, with automotive parts manufacturing growing the most at 75.4 percent. Ship and boat building had a slight downturn in 2010, possibly affected by budget cuts and fewer federal contracts. However, it has shown the second largest growth at 45.6 percent through 2020.

Due to economic development efforts, thousands of new jobs have been announced for the coming years. Alabama's Air National Guard's 187th Fighter Wing in Montgomery will be home to the F-35 jets, which are key to the nation's future military needs. This will bring more aerospace jobs to the central region. Furthermore, thousands of jobs were announced around the state with companies like Boeing, Airbus, Aerojet Rocketdyne, and Lear. This will boost the need for jobs like avionics technicians and various other engineering and engineering technician jobs. The state will also gain another major automotive manufacturer in North Alabama. Toyota announced that it would open a plant to build both Toyotas and Mazdas, creating around 4,000 new jobs in the state. Thousands of additional parts manufacturing and other jobs will follow to supply this new plant. The state is going to have to produce thousands more trained workers in jobs such as CNC operators, machinists, fabricators, industrial machinery mechanics, industrial

maintenance specialists, and other skilled manufacturing jobs that require some training and education beyond high school.

One of the industries that was hardest hit by the recession was Construction. In 2008 employment in construction totaled over 105,000 in Alabama. In one short year, that total was down over 15,000. When recover began and unemployment rates started to slowly decline in 2015, Construction employment continued to decline. In 2016 Construction employment in the state was only approximately 83,000. But with major new industries bringing new construction projects within the last two years, and infrastructure improvements to roads and bridges across the state, Construction employment finally increased. In 2020, employment was over 92,000, which surpassed the level in 2010. While the industry has not reached pre-recession employment levels, it's expected that growth will continue over the next few years. After many people lost their jobs during the recession, many who were at retirement age never returned to work, which caused the industry to lose some of its highest experienced and skilled workers. Now that the industry is recovering, employers are finding it extremely difficult to find experienced midlevel managers. They are also having problems hiring individuals for many of the skilled trade positions, such as electricians, HVAC techs, heavy equipment operators, and cost estimators.

While transportation and warehousing—like most industries—took a hit during the recession, it has steadily increased in employment since 2010. Warehousing has especially grown, with an increase of nearly 70.0 percent since 2010. In the last three years, nearly 12,000 jobs have been added statewide in the transportation and warehousing industry. Companies like Amazon, Walmart, Publix, Facebook, and several others have all contributed to this large increase in employment. Regions 1, 4, 5, and 7 added the most jobs totaling over 15,000. Several new jobs in food and beverage distribution were announced across the state, many in the Birmingham metro area. For at least five years, heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers have had the highest number of online job ads statewide, averaging over 1,200 each month. With the increases in distribution and warehousing, plus increases in manufacturing, demand for qualified truck drivers will likely increase. Furthermore, these new companies are going to require hundreds of customer service reps, computer user support specialists, and warehouse jobs requiring industrial equipment operation and maintenance.

Information Technology is another targeted industry cluster. The largest industry in the information technology cluster is business support services. This industry has grown at a steady pace, even during the recession, of over 63.0 percent since 2000. The Huntsville area is the prime location for IT industries in the state.

The fact that the baby boomers are hitting retirement age and people are living longer is having a large impact on the health care system. Additionally, there are many more specialized jobs in healthcare than in the past because healthcare costs have risen, and so has demand for healthcare. While hospitals have experienced small but steady growth every year since 2010, most of the growth in health care employment comes from industries that provide more focused care. Industries such as outpatient care centers, home health care services, and specialized health practitioners have doubled in employment since 2010. In addition, employment in residential disability, mental health, and substance facilities have grown 226.0 percent since the turn of the century. Continuing care retirement and assisted living facilities have also doubled in employment. Furthermore, as the population ages, so does the workforce in the health care industry. In Alabama in 2020, 23.0 percent of the health care workforce was over the age of 55. With the projection—for the period 2018-2028—of nearly 90,000 new jobs in health care, combined with an increasing number of workers retiring, the demand for healthcare workers will continue to increase.

One of the industries within the healthcare sector that has experienced a large amount of demand is home health care services. According to the U.S. Census Bureau there are about 54 million Americans aged 65 and older, with that number only expected to grow through 2060.

Occupations within this group with the highest projected employment in 2028 include: Registered Nurses, Home Health Aides, Personal Care Aides, Nursing Assistants, Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses, and Healthcare Social Workers. Demand for occupations within this industry will only continue to grow as Baby Boomers age and retire from the workforce. Caring for the increasing elderly population, who may be living alone, places stresses on support systems with only an estimated 400 Healthcare Social Workers across the state in 2018.

Table: Alabama Agriculture Facts (Alabama Leading Commodities for Cash Receipts, 2020)

2020 Highlighted Crops	Cash Receipts	U.S. Ranking
All Commodities	**$4.66 billion**	**28**
Broilers	$2.41 billion	4
Chicken Eggs	$447 million	9
Cattle & Calves	$390 million	29
Cotton lint and Seed	$298 million	9
Peanuts	$115 million	3
Catfish	$98.8 million	2

Source: USDA, NASS, Southern Regional Field Office. Retrieved from http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Alabama

Table: Top Occupations for Food Products Cluster

	2018 Employment	Mean Hourly
Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers	10,700	$13.15
Slaughterers and Meat Packers	3,130	$11.02
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	2,370	$14.96
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,700	$22.92
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	1,690	$35.20
Driver/Sales Workers	1,690	$17.01
Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	1,260	$18.07
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	1,240	$19.52
Packers and Packagers, Hand	1,180	$13.64

Source: 2020 release of the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Report in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics; wage data aged using the most current Employment Cost Index (ECI) factors. Note: Data reflects wages across all industries, not specifically to respective industry cluster.

Table: Top Occupations for Forest Products Cluster

	2018 Employment	Mean Hourly
Paper Goods Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	3,170	$25.67
Assemblers and Fabricators, All Other, Including Team Assemblers	2,620	$18.18
Sawing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Wood	2,610	$15.34
Logging Equipment Operators	1,950	$19.06
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	1,680	$14.96
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	1,330	$26.72
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,260	$22.92
Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	1,240	$18.07
Helpers--Production Workers	1,160	$13.84
Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Except Sawing	1,030	$15.34

Source: 2020 release of the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Report in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics; wage data aged using the most current Employment Cost Index (ECI) factors. Note: Data reflects wages across all industries, not specifically to respective industry cluster.

Table: Top Occupations for Aerospace Cluster

	2018 Employment	Mean Hourly
Computer Programmers	4,450	$44.45
Software Developers, Applications	4,040	$51.95
Software Developers, Systems Software	2,630	$51.95
Aerospace Engineers	2,140	$62.19
Interviewers, Except Eligibility and Loan	1,940	$18.80
Electrical Engineers	1,920	$52.84
General and Operations Managers	1,870	$61.05
Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians	1,740	$31.87
Civil Engineers	1,700	$47.22
Computer User Support Specialists	1,690	$25.64

Source: 2020 release of the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Report in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics; wage data aged using the most current Employment Cost Index (ECI) factors. Note: Data reflects wages across all industries, not specifically to respective industry cluster.

Table: Top Occupations for Automotive Cluster

	2018 Employment	Mean Hourly
Assemblers and Fabricators, All Other, Including Team Assemblers	16,430	$18.18
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	2,910	$19.52
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	2,620	$33.84
Molding, Coremaking, and Casting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	2,540	$17.97
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	2,450	$26.72
Cutting, Punching, and Press Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	2,360	$18.78
Tire Builders	2,070	NA
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	1,400	$14.96
Helpers--Production Workers	1,360	$13.84
Industrial Engineers	1,320	$46.48

Source: 2020 release of the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Report in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics; wage data aged using the most current Employment Cost Index (ECI) factors. Note: Data reflects wages across all industries, not specifically to respective industry cluster.

Table:. Top Occupations for Bioscience Cluster

	2018 Employment	Mean Hourly
Chemical Equipment Operators and Tenders	2,090	$29.77
Phlebotomists	900	$17.18
Chemical Plant and System Operators	790	$39.31
Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians	660	$23.28
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	610	$26.72
Industrial Engineers	510	$46.48
Computer Systems Analysts	500	$47.22
Electrical Engineers	460	$52.84
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	410	$33.84
General and Operations Managers	400	$61.05

Source: 2020 release of the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Report in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics; wage data aged using the most current Employment Cost Index (ECI) factors. Note: Data reflects wages across all industries, not specifically to respective industry cluster.

Table: Top Occupations for Chemicals Cluster		
	2018 Employment	Mean Hourly
Chemical Equipment Operators and Tenders	2,210	$29.77
Chemical Plant and System Operators	790	$39.31
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	600	$26.72
Industrial Engineers	470	$46.48
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	390	$33.84
Mixing and Blending Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	330	$22.16
Textile Winding, Twisting, and Drawing Out Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	230	$17.93
Extruding and Forming Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Synthetic and Glass Fibers	230	$22.09
Chemical Technicians	230	$27.98
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	220	$22.92
Source: 2020 release of the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Report in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics; wage data aged using the most current Employment Cost Index (ECI) factors. Note: Data reflects wages across all industries, not specifically to respective industry cluster.		

Table: Top Occupations for Corporate Operations Cluster

	2018 Employment	Mean Hourly
Customer Service Representatives	7,030	$18.00
Telemarketers	1,710	$15.40
General and Operations Managers	1,440	$61.05
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	1,090	$18.80
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	1,030	$19.33
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	1,000	$28.59
Accountants and Auditors	1,000	$36.06
Office Clerks, General	960	$13.19
Bill and Account Collectors	820	$17.37
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	580	$35.20

Source: 2020 release of the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Report in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics; wage data aged using the most current Employment Cost Index (ECI) factors. Note: Data reflects wages across all industries, not specifically to respective industry cluster.

Table: Top Occupations for Distribution Cluster

	2018 Employment	Mean Hourly
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	18,830	$22.92
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	6,260	$14.96
Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	2,480	$18.07
Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	1,320	$18.06
Packers and Packagers, Hand	1,300	$13.64
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	1,240	$18.80
Dispatchers, Except Police, Fire, and Ambulance	1,240	$19.80
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	1,220	$23.20
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	1,050	$14.72
General and Operations Managers	1,010	$61.05

Source: 2020 release of the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Report in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics; wage data aged using the most current Employment Cost Index (ECI) factors. Note: Data reflects wages across all industries, not specifically to respective industry cluster.

Table: Top Occupations for Information Technology Cluster		
	2018 Employment	Mean Hourly
Computer Programmers	3,800	$44.45
Software Developers, Applications	3,490	$51.95
Software Developers, Systems Software	1,820	$51.95
Management Analysts	1,630	$49.34
Computer User Support Specialists	1,490	$25.64
General and Operations Managers	1,290	$61.05
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	1,200	$18.80
Computer Systems Analysts	1,180	$47.22
Computer and Information Systems Managers	1,150	$64.87
Customer Service Representatives	1,140	$18.00
Source: 2020 release of the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Report in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics; wage data aged using the most current Employment Cost Index (ECI) factors. Note: Data reflects wages across all industries, not specifically to respective industry cluster.		

Table: Top Occupations for Metals and Advanced Materials		
	2018 Employment	Mean Hourly
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	3,980	$21.67
First-line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	2,710	$33.84
Machinists	2,620	$24.04
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	2,520	$26.72
Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters	2,140	$21.65
Chemical Equipment Operators and Tenders	2,060	$29.77
Cutting, Punching, & Press Machine Setters, Operators, & Tenders, Metal & Plastic	2,000	$18.78
Helpers--Production Workers	1,630	$13.84
Assemblers & Fabricators, All Other, Including Team Assemblers	1,600	$18.18
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, & Weighers	1,470	$19.52
Source: 2020 release of the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Report in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics; wage data aged using the most current Employment Cost Index (ECI) factors. Note: Data reflects wages across all industries, not specifically to respective industry cluster.		

Table: Top Occupations for Healthcare Cluster		
	2018 Employment	Mean Hourly
Registered Nurses	46,230	$30.41
Nursing Assistants	22,090	$13.55
Personal Care Aides	13,630	$11.10
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	10,630	$20.54
Medical Assistants	8,790	$15.85
Receptionists and Information Clerks	7,670	$13.87
Childcare Workers	5,770	$11.06
Medical Secretaries	5,590	$18.36
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	4,950	$18.80
Home Health Aides	4,860	$11.10
Source: 2020 release of the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Report in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics; wage data aged using the most current Employment Cost Index (ECI) factors. Note: Data reflects wages across all industries, not specifically to respective industry cluster.		

ii) Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.

Alabama's strategic plan for economic development is also targeting industries that are associated with *Enabling Technology*, due to the increased use of nanotechnology and robotics used in many of the large automotive production plants in Alabama and surrounding states. To show the dedication to prepare the workforce for these types of jobs, the State of Alabama, Calhoun Community College, AIDT, and robotics industry leaders across the nation collaborated to build the robotics technology park. The robotics technology park consists of three training facilities, each targeted to a specific industry need. While the industries associated with this cluster show minimal growth thus far, over 1,000 additional jobs have recently been announced specifically for this high-tech cluster, and many of the new manufacturers in the state employ the use of robotics and other advanced technology in their plants. In 2018 an Air Force innovation hub, MGMWERX, began operations in Montgomery, AL. MGMWERX is a partnership with the Air Force Research Laboratory and will take ideas generated from the Air University at Maxwell AFB to further develop them to solve technological and efficiency challenges within the military.

Cyber Security is an emerging industry, another cluster which overlaps the Enabling Technology cluster. Huntsville in North Alabama is home to the second largest research park in the United States, Cummings Research Park, with over 400 companies that include Fortune 500 companies, local and international high-tech enterprises, and US space and defense agencies. It also includes a thriving business incubator and competitive higher education institutions. In 2016 the Air Force created a cyber college and headquartered it at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, where the Air University is located. The capacity of this training reaches airmen around the world. It brings in both local and external experts in cyber security to teach these courses. Many of these experts come from the Maxwell Gunter Annex in Montgomery, where IT services are provided to the air force, and where cyber defense is handled for the Air force. Due

to the military's needs for this cyber training, Montgomery became the first of only four cities in the Southeast, and first in the state, with an Internet Exchange. Furthermore, Maxwell in partnership with the City of Montgomery, the County, and the State plan to build and innovation center, which will be a place where leading experts from across the country in tech advancements can work with the military toward advancements. This will create a huge advantage for economic development in the region.

The average monthly wage in 2020 across all industries in the state was $4,435. New hire monthly earnings averaged $2,670 or 60.2 percent of the average monthly wage. The highest average monthly wages were for Utilities at $8,569; Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services at $7,280; Finance and Insurance at $7,127; and Management of Companies and Enterprises at $6,841. Accommodation and Food Services paid the least at $1,734. Utilities had the highest average monthly new hire wage at $5,412, followed by Mining at $5,245 and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services at $5,177. Accommodation and Food Services paid newly hired workers the least, $1,180. The leading industries did not provide the highest wages. The highest wages were in smaller industry sectors—Utilities; Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; Finance and Insurance; Management of Companies and Enterprises; and Mining. Larger sectors, like Construction, Manufacturing, and Health Care did have higher earnings than the state average of all industries.

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 2013, The Alabama Department of Labor conducted a skills survey. Over 5,000 employers from manufacturing, construction, and utilities responded. The most significant findings appeared around soft skills. The overwhelming problem employers faced is attendance problems with their staff. In addition, when asked the top reasons for not hiring candidates for open positions, the top reason was that candidates did not pass a drug test. Since employers only perform drug tests on individuals they believe to be viable, qualified candidates, it's conceivable that these are skilled people whose barrier to employment is substance abuse. This survey published five years ago, still holds true across all industries in Alabama. Employers still speak of the same problems hiring and maintaining their workforce.

The seven regional workforce councils in the state are charged with connecting with industries in the region to assist them with their hiring needs for trained, skilled workers. Many of these regional councils conduct industry-specific meetings with business leaders to determine the most pressing occupational needs, so that the councils can connect with educational providers in the area to provide training, in cooperation with industry leaders, to fulfill those needs. Each workforce council develops target industry clusters and occupations based on feedback from industry in their regions. Below are the latest Targeted Industries and Occupations by Workforce Development Regions.

In 2018, only 33 percent of jobs were in occupations that typically require formal postsecondary education for entry. Within this group, jobs in occupations which require a bachelor's degree for entry held the largest share at 16 percent. Occupations requiring a high school diploma or equivalent and less than high school made up 67 percent of jobs in 2018. Occupations requiring postsecondary non-degree award or associate degree are expected to grow 6.8 percent through the 2018-2028 period. When categorized by on-the-job training levels, internship/residency jobs are expected to have the most growth over the period at 9.3 percent.

(i) Employment and Unemployment.

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

Alabama was one of the last states in the nation to experience significant drops in unemployment after the2008-2009 recession. A slow recovery and shifts in the state's economic structure kept unemployment significantly higher than the national average. While the state's unemployment started decreasing in 2016, the national average was dropping at a much faster speed. In January of 2019 the state's unemployment rate was nearly one half a percent lower than the national, and by the end of the year the state's rate was in line with the national and projected to continue falling. During a majority of 2020, Alabama's unemployment closely resembled the national average, With the lowest rate of 2.7 in February and the highest rate of 13.2 percent in March. Alabama started 2021 with 2,160,236 employed and—by the end of 2021 with 2,157,318— nearly one half of a percentage away from pre-pandemic numbers. An annual average of only 73,858 people were unemployed statewide in 2020.

Economists in the state projected job growth in 2021 to equal approximately 48,400 more jobs. As of September, the state has increased over double that amount, with an additional 46,600 and 2,194,158 wage and salary jobs. In eight consecutive months, Alabama's job growth rate either equaled or surpassed the nation, August's over-the-year growth at 2.3 percent while the nation was only 1.4 percent. The seasonally adjusted, preliminary unemployment number for September in Alabama was a low 66,919, equaling a 3.0 percent statewide unemployment rate. In addition, more people have entered, or reentered, the civilian labor force with the abundance of opportunities available creating a historical high of 2,261,077.

Unemployment rates for Alabama's seven regions by the end of 2021 ranged from a low of 2.2 percent in Region 1 to a high of 3.5 percent in Region 7. November 2021 estimates show Region 7 still with the highest unemployment rate, a mere 3.0 percent, with the remaining regions experiencing even lower rates, lowest at 2.4 percent in Region 1. By the end of 2020, there were 3 counties in the state with double-digit unemployment rates. Wilcox County, which has traditionally ranked in the Top 5 in the nation for highest unemployment rates, rose to its 14.7 percent in December 2020. By September 2021, there were no counties with double-digit unemployment rates. Wilcox County decreased by almost 5 percent in less than a year.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the number of employed youths aged 16-24 years old increased by 33.5 percent from April to July. Youth aged 16 to 19, experienced an estimated unemployment rate of 18.5 percent in July 2020, approximately twice as high as the July 2019 rate of 9.1 percent. Labor Force participants between the ages of 20 and 24 also experienced lower unemployment from 2020 to 2021, dropping from 10.3 percent to 6.6 percent. When examining the rates by race and sex, the unemployment rate for Black males was 4.4 percent higher than White males, as it also was for Black females compared to White females. While black males still showed the highest unemployment rate among demographic groups, it dropped from 9.9 percent in 2020 down to 6.7 percent in 2021.

Table: Unemployment Rate by Demographics	
	Unemployment Rate (%)
Age	
16-19 years	13.5
20-24 years	10.3
25-34 years	6.8
35-44 years	5.5
45-54 years	5.4
55-64 years	5.6
65 years and over	5.5
Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin	
White alone	5.8
Black or African American alone	9.9
Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity	8.7
Source: Alabama Department of Labor, Local Area Unemployment Statistics; Expanded State Employment Status Demographic Data. Note: Data represents preliminary 2020 annual average.	

Alabama's labor force participation rate has fallen from 60.1 percent in 2009 to 57.0 percent in 2021. In December of 2021, data published by BLS indicated that Alabama had the fourth lowest labor force participation rate in the nation, at 57.0 percent, tied with New Mexico and South Carolina. There have been some improvements in labor force participation, as annual average 2019 showed a 4 percent increase in the percent of noninstitutionalized population participating in the labor force, 63.1, from 2018. While Alabama still has one of the lowest participation rates in the nation, it had the largest increase over the year of all Southeast states. The largest increases in the labor force came from White men,(approximately 26,000), and women. In addition, around 97,000 youth aged 16-19 entered the labor force over the year. Adult age groups with the largest increases in labor force participation came from age 35-44, majority being women, and age 65 and over, most of these men.

With labor market conditions nearing full employment in Alabama, meeting the Success Plus goal requires increasing Alabama's labor force participation rate (LFPR), or the percentage of the civilian noninstitutionalized population age 16 and older who are employed or actively looking for work. As a result, Governor Ivey set a goal of surpassing the national LFPR by 2025. Due to Governor Ivey's focus on developing a no-wrong-door approach to the public workforce system, Alabama's LFPR increased from 56.7 percent in April 2017 when Governor Ivey assumed office to 57.7 percent on the eve of the COVID-19 pandemic in February 2020. Since 2020 and the onset of the pandemic, the LFPR fell by 1.4 percentage points.

To ensure that Alabama's postsecondary attainment and LFPR goals are reached equitably, Governor Ivey established annual statewide and regional targets for each discreet vulnerable population included in Alabama's 2020 Combined Plan. Alabama's theory of action is to surpass the postsecondary education attainment and LFPR goals by focusing on the Alabamians with the greatest barriers to entering education and workforce training. Determining which of the Alabamians who are not participating and are part of the shadow labor force is key necessary first step, yet this step is not sufficient. The sufficient next step is to determine the barriers preventing the shadow labor force from reentering the workforce.

ALABAMA

Special Population Annual LFP Goal

Special Population Groups	AL	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Region 6	Region 7
Displaced Homemaker	2,000	492	132	129	508	296	140	303
Low-Income	14,808	3,642	976	978	3,746	2,175	1,037	2,254
Indians, Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians	360	93	25	23	91	38	25	65
People with Disabilities	4,608	1,134	304	295	1,170	682	323	700
Older Individuals	1,747	430	115	112	444	259	122	265
Ex-Offenders	4,570	1,124	301	292	1,161	676	320	696
Homeless Individuals	269	66	18	7	78	40	19	41
Youth Aged Out of Foster System	40	10	3	2	15	3	3	4
English Language Learners/Low Levels of Literacy/Substantial Cultural Barriers	845	208	56	54	215	125	59	128
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers	97	24	6	6	25	14	7	15
Individuals Nearing TANF Exhaustion	535	132	35	34	136	79	37	82
Single Parent	1,918	467	127	120	497	304	134	269
Youth with parents in active duty military	735	181	49	20	187	124	51	123
Unemployed or Underemployed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Long-Term Unemployed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Veterans	7,468	1,837	493	488	1,887	1,105	523	1,135
TOTAL	**40,000**	**9,840**	**2,640**	**2,560**	**10,160**	**5,920**	**2,800**	**6,080**

Alabamians who are not in the labor force are not malingering from work. Many people face benefits cliffs when entering the workforce, which are caused when means-tested benefits taper off more quickly than an individual can compensate for through paid employment. Beyond benefits cliffs, many other demographic and social factors can shed light on LFPR in Alabama.

Nationally, and in Alabama, many young men are missing from the labor force. In January 1960, 97.1 percent of prime age men (25-54) were participating in the labor force and 42.1 percent of prime age women (25-54) were participating in the labor force. In September 2021, only 88.1 percent of prime age males are participating in the labor force and 75.3 percent of prime-age women were participating in the labor force.

The female labor participation rate in Alabama is 66.4 percent, trailing the national average by 6.2 percentage points. That's only slightly higher than the gap for males. The male LFPR in Alabama, 76.6 percent, trails the U.S. rate by 5.6 percentage points. In fact, one subset of the female population in Alabama participates in the workforce at a higher rate than the U.S. rate. Alabama females with children under 6 are more likely to be in the workforce than similarly situated women nationwide.

In Alabama, non-Hispanic whites (ages 16 and up) have the lowest LFPR of the major racial and ethnic groups, just under 57 percent, lagging non-Hispanic whites nationally by 5.4 percentage points. African Americans in Alabama have a LFPR of just over 57 percent, lagging the U.S. rate by 5.2 percentage points. Alabama's Hispanics have a LFPR of 67 percent, which is less than a percentage point difference from the US LFPR for Hispanics. Alabama's rural counties have the lowest LFPRs. Meanwhile, the most urbanized and affluent of Alabama counties have the highest LFPRs.

In comparison to the same population groups in other states, older Alabamians, and Alabamians with lower levels of education are less likely to participate in the labor force. Alabamians with a disability are also less likely to participate in the workforce compared to other states. The LFPR for those groups is roughly 10 percent lower in Alabama than it is for similar individuals across the US. The gap with the US is most extreme when it comes to individuals with less than a high school education. In Alabama, only 49 percent of individuals who lack a high school diploma are working or looking for work, compared to a LFPR of 61 percent nationally for those with less than a high school education.

Older Alabamians are also disproportionately out of the workforce. The LFPR of those 60 to 64 is 10 percentage points lower in Alabama than it is in the rest of the country: 46 percent of Alabamians ages 60-64 participate in the labor force compared to 56 percent nationally. For those between 55-59, Alabama's LFPR is 63 percent compared to 72 percent nationally. Age remains a factor in those between the ages of 45 and 54; Alabama's rate is almost 7 percentage points lower than the US average. For those 44 and younger, the gap between the Alabama workforce participation rate is narrower, though Alabama's rate is still 3 to 4 percentage points lower than the US rate.

The impact of Alabama's LFPR deficit in these subgroups is amplified because Alabama's population is older, less educated, and more disabled than the country. Alabama's median age is 38.7 compared to 37.8 in the US; 25 percent of Alabamians have a 4-year degree compared to 32 percent across the country; 11.6 percent of Alabama's population reported a disability compared to 8.6 percent nationwide.[1] The LFPR for Alabama's Black Belt counties in 2019 was 52.7 percent, more than 10 percentage points lower than the national average. The 10 Alabama counties with the lowest LFPR in 2019 were all in the Black Belt.[2]

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, 8.9 percent of Alabamians are uninsured, compared to 8.6 percent nationally; 48.8 percent of Alabamians are covered by their employers, compared to 50.3 percent nationally; 18.5 percent are on Medicaid, compared to 17.8 percent nationally; and 17.4 percent are on Medicare, compared to 15.6 percent nationally.[3]

The Bipartisan Policy Center's report, Child Care Gaps Assessment: Alabama, reports 214,150 childcare slots are needed based on the number of children under 6 with all parents in the workforce. The Gaps Assessment identified every available source of childcare and provided an estimated 128,959 available slots, showing a gap of 85,554.[4] A particular concern for businesses, some of the counties with the most rapidly growing demand for workers have substantial childcare shortages. Half of the fourteen counties that added at least 3,000 jobs from 2014-2018 are also childcare deserts. Counties on the fringes of the state's large metro areas, such as Baldwin, Tuscaloosa, St. Clair, Cullman, Limestone, Morgan, Marshall, and DeKalb, have growing populations and employment, but availability of childcare has not kept pace, creating a shortage of childcare seats. The bottom line is there is not enough childcare. Key opportunities for success include home-based childcare, shared services/co-ops, and expanding employer-sponsored care.[5]

Prior to the pandemic, Alabama's employment rate for working-age people with disabilities in America was 33.1 percent, compared to 74.6 percent of people without disabilities. This disparity is even more striking when broken down by race. 34.9 percent of working-age people with disabilities who are white have jobs compared to only 28.3 percent of those who are African American and 38.1 percent of those who are Hispanic. The LFPR for working-aged people with disabilities is now two full percentage points higher than it was before COVID-19. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, people with disabilities now have a 35.6 percent LFPR, compared to 76.1 percent of those without disabilities.

According to the SSI Annual Statistical Report 2020, Alabama ranks seventh in the nation in the percentage of the population who are receiving disability social security benefits (3.2 percent). This is a lower rank from the previous year when the state ranked second in the nation. Census estimates from 2019 reveal that approximately 781,503 people in the state have a disability, 40.3 percent over the age of 65. Over 132,000 people with disabilities were in the labor force in 2019, with over 15,000 of them unemployed. In 2019, 50.1 percent of those unemployed had some form of cognitive difficulty, which is defined as a disability that affects the brain, making it harder to do normal tasks that most people can perform. Approximately 18,831 of the working people with disabilities were still below the poverty level within the previous twelve months, while 5,183, approximately 1.3 percent, of the unemployed were below poverty level. Within the households receiving food stamps or SNAP, in the past twelve months, 46 percent of households included one or more persons with a disability, no significant change from 2016.

In Alabama's K-12 public schools, there are over 87,000 students with disabilities. The gap in graduation rates between students with and without disabilities continues to undermine their futures. Critically, among the class of 2019, the high school graduation rate for students with disabilities was only 70 percent, compared to 92 percent of students without disabilities.[6]

A report by Alan Krueger, former Chairman of the White House Council of Economic Advisers, found that opioids are likely pulling prime-age workers (between ages 25 and 54) out of the labor force.[7] Alabama, and states across the nation, face a troubling epidemic of prescription opioid and heroin abuse and addiction. Work activity among prime-age (25–54) men in America has declined precipitously, falling from 96 percent in 1967 to only 88 percent in 2016 (and 83 percent among those with only a high school degree or less education), leaving seven million or more working-age men in the non-institutional population outside the labor force.[8] Furthermore, the LFPR is lower and fell more in the 2000s in areas of the US that have a higher volume of opioid medication prescribed per capita than in other areas.[9]

In 2013, Alabama providers wrote 141.1 opioid prescriptions for every 100 people (approximately 6.8 million prescriptions)—the highest prescribing rate in the country and almost twofold greater than the average US rate of 79.3.[10] According to BlueCross and BlueShield of Alabama, 26 percent of BlueCross and BlueShield of Alabama's commercially-insured members filled at least one opioid prescription in 2015, compared to 21 percent nationally.[11] Alabama's labor force and economy are among the hardest hit by the opioid crisis. This rise in opioid use in Alabama was associated with a 2.6 percentage point decline in the state's LFPR of prime-age workers, slowing annual real gross domestic product growth by 1.2 percentage points.

[1] Tom Spencer, "Help Wanted: Alabama's Labor Force Participation Problem," Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama, 6 March 2020 <https://parcalabama.org/help-wanted-alabamas-labor-force-participation-problem/>.

[2] Ramsey Archibald, "Black Belt far behind rest of nation in work force participation: Black Belt 2020," al.com, 15 September 2020 <https://www.al.com/news/2020/09/black-belt-far-behind-rest-of-nation-in-work-force-participation-black-belt-2020.html>.

[3] Kaiser Family Foundation, "Health Insurance Coverage of the Total Population," 2020 <https://www.kff.org/ other/state-indicator/health-insurance-coverage-of-the-total-population-cps/?activeTab=map&current Timeframe=0&selectedDistributions=uninsured&selectedRows=%7B%22states%22:%7B%22alabama%22:%7B%7D%7D,%22wrapups%22:%7B%22united-states%22:%7B%7D%7D%7D&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Location %22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D>.

[4] Alabama Partnership for Children, *Working Families and Child Care in Alabama,* June 2020 <https://alabama partnershipforchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Alabama-COVID-Parent-Survey-State-report-6.29.pdf>.

[5] The Women's Fund of Greater Birmingham, *2021 Clearing the Path: Strengthening Child Care, Strengthening Alabama,* 2020 < https://wfalabama.org/assets/2021/11/TWFGB_2021-CTP-Strengthening-Child-Care-Strengthening-Alabama_Web-Ready.pdf>.

[6] Joshua Steinberg, "Building an Equitable Recovery: RespectAbility Advises Alabama on Solutions for People with Disabilities," RespectAbility, 1 December 2021 <https://therespectabilityreport.org/2021/12/01/alabama-workforce-testimony/>.

[7] Alan B. Krueger, "Where Have All the Workers Gone? An Inquiry Into the Decline of the U.S. Labor Force Participation Rate," Brookings Papers on Economic Activity, September 2017 < https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/1_krueger.pdf>.

[8] Robert Doar, Harry J. Holzer, and Brent Orrell, "Getting Men Back to Work: Solutions from the Left and the Right," American Enterprise Institute, May 2017 < http://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Getting-men-back-to-work.pdf>.

[9] Alan B. Kreuger, "Where Have All the Workers Gone? An Inquiry Into the Decline of the U.S. Labor Force Participation Rate," Brookings Papers on Economic Activity, September 2017 < https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/1_krueger.pdf>.

[10] National Institutes for Health, National Institute on Drug Abuse, *Opioid-Related Overdose Deaths,* Alabama, revised February 2018 < https://www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/opioids/opioid-summaries-by-state/alabama-opioid-summary>.

[11] "Opioid Epidemic Grows as Alabama Ranks First Nationally Having More Opioid Prescriptions than People," Press Release, BlueCross and BlueShield of Alabama, 29 June 2017 <https://www.bcbs.com/news/press-releases/opioid-epidemic-grows-alabama-ranks-first-nationally-having-more-opioid>.

While there were many improvements, there were also people who dropped out of the civilian labor force over the year. Approximately 7,000 more Black men dropped out of the labor force, increasing the total of nonparticipants to 189,000. Additionally, there were more nonparticipants within the Hispanic population in 2018, to a total of 46,000. Women dominated this increase in the Hispanic population. The age groups that experienced the largest decrease in labor force participation over the year were 25-34 and 45-54. Within the 25-34 group, most of the decrease was attributed to black males. In the 45-54 age group, increases appeared across all demographics, with an estimate of 172,000 in 2018 not in the labor force.

In 2020, the measure of labor underutilization in Alabama was 9.5 percent, 4.1 percent higher than 2019, and lower than the national rate of 13.6 percent. This measure includes the unemployed, those employed part time, and those marginally attached to the labor force. According to the Current Population Survey (CPS), Alabama had an average of 133,000 unemployed residents in 2020. Approximately 32,000 workers were employed part-time for economic reasons, which is referred to as involuntary part time. These people were either part time because the businesses they worked for were experiencing poor business conditions or were unable to find full-time employment. People marginally attached to the labor force are those who are not presently working, but would like to work, are available to work, and have looked for work within the last year, but have not searched within the last four weeks. In Alabama, the marginally attached in 2020 was approximately 16,800. The number of discouraged workers in the state, which is a subset of the marginally attached, was around 8,000, accounting for 32 percent of all marginally attached.

Table: Worker Distribution by Age in Alabama for 4th Quarter 2020.		
Age Group	Nonagricultural Employment	
	Number	Percent
14-18	48,777	2.6
19-24	199,684	10.8
25-34	394,683	21.4
35-44	397,252	21.5
45-54	384,739	20.8
55-64	312,858	16.9
65+	109,235	5.9
55 and Over Total	422,093	22.9
Total, All Ages	1,847,227	100.0
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Local Employment Dynamics Program. Note: Rounding errors may be present. Nonagricultural employment is by place of work, not residence.		

The latest census figures for 2019 estimate the population in the state age 16 to 19 is 322,486. Over 39,068 were not enrolled in school, and nearly 7,300 were not enrolled in school or participating in the labor force. In Alabama in 2019, there were approximately 141,844 youth age 14 to 21 employed in the workforce, 56 percent of them working in retail trade and accommodation and food services, earning an average monthly wage of $1,291. Nearly 9,017 youth worked in manufacturing, earning an average monthly wage of $1,326. 8,960 youth worked in health care with an average monthly wage of $1,185. 9,888 youth worked in administrative and support and waste management services with an average monthly wage of $972.

Table: Disabled in the Labor Force			
Disability	Employed	Unemployed	Not in Labor Force
Total	**132,656**	**15,612**	**253,100**
Hearing difficulty	37,905	2,030	39,391
Vision difficulty	34,351	2,619	44,040
Cognitive difficulty	42,477	7,817	118,572
Ambulatory difficulty	41,213	5,916	155,962
Self-care difficulty	8,625	2,178	53,717
Independent living difficulty	17,665	4,984	116,313
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey 1-year; Table B18120.			

Table: Households and Families Receiving Food Stamps	
	Receiving Food Stamps
Households Receiving Food Stamps	**260,883**
Households with one or more people in the household 60 years and over	81,237
Households with children under 18 years	131,273
Households below poverty level	144,288
Households with one or more people with a disability	121,871
Household median income ($) in past 12 months	17,719
Families Receiving Food Stamps	**175,268**
Families with no workers in past 12 months	46,745
Families with 1 worker in past 12 months	86,842
Families with 2 or more workers in past 12 months	41,681
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-year; Table S2201.	

In 2017, Alabama had the 20th largest veteran population in the country. (VA National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics). The state is home to five military bases: Maxwell-Gunter AFB, Montgomery; Anniston Army Depot, Bynum; Fort Rucker, Dale; Redstone Arsenal; and, Aviation Training Center Coast Guard, Mobile. In addition, Alabama is home to the fifth-largest Army National Guard in the nation, with a total force of approximately 13,000. According to the US Department of Veterans Affairs, the veteran population in the state in 2019 was 330,207, 8.8 percent of the adult population. Over 46 percent of the state's veterans were 65 or older. Around 24 percent of the veterans live in Region 1 and 20 percent live in Region 4.

A high percentage of veterans usually participate in the labor force, with Alabama's rate of 71.3 percent in 2019. Over 64.6 percent of the veteran population in the state has at least some education beyond high school, with 28 percent holding a bachelor's degree or higher. While the unemployment rate in 2019 averaged around 5.9 percent, the rate for veterans was 4.3 percent (ACS 2019). Still, there are many who need additional assistance due to disabilities which are often incurred during military service. Nearly 24,129 veterans were below poverty level in 2019 (ACS 2019). In addition, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics estimated that 104,433 veterans in the state were receiving disability compensation.

Table: Veteran Population	
	Veterans
Civilian population 18 years and over	330,207
Median Income in the Past 12 Months	
Civilian population 18 years and over	$40,874
Educational Attainment	
Less than high school graduate	20,899
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	92,286
Some college or Associate degree	122,098
Bachelor's degree or higher	91,320
Employment Status	
Labor force participation rate	71.3%
Unemployment rate	7.4%
Poverty Status	
Income in the past 12 months below poverty level	$24,129
Disability Status	
With any disability	106,151
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-year; Table S2101.	

An additional source of skilled labor exists in a pool of workers who are considered underemployed. The underemployed present a significant pool of labor because they tend to respond to job opportunities that they believe are better for reasons that include (i) higher income, (ii) more benefits, (iii) superior terms and conditions of employment, and (iv) a better match with skills, training, and experience. The underemployed also creates opportunities for entry-level workers as they leave lower-paying jobs for better-paying ones. Underemployment rates for counties, AlabamaWorks regions, and the state were determined from an extensive survey of the state's workforce. A total of 7,347 complete responses were obtained. About 52 percent (3,816 respondents) were employed, of whom 855 stated that they were underemployed. Among the regions, underemployment ranged from 19.7 percent for North AlabamaWorks to 27.7 percent for West region. Central Six has the most available labor, followed by North. The two regions account for about 44 percent of the state's available labor pool. Among counties, Tallapoosa County had the highest rate of underemployment at 37.5 percent and Morgan had the lowest with 8.8 percent. Thirty-three counties had underemployment rates above the state's 22.4 percent.

From most important to the least, the main reasons for being underemployed are low wages at available jobs, a lack of job opportunities in their area, living too far from jobs, other family or personal obligations, owning a house in their area, other undisclosed reasons, and childcare responsibilities. Non-workers cite retirement, disability or other health concerns, social security limitations, low wages at available jobs, undisclosed reasons, and a lack of job opportunities in their area as reasons for their status. Such workers may become part of the labor force if their problems can be addressed. Indeed, a recent study found that the flow of labor force nonparticipants to employment status was 60 percent more than that of unemployed workers who gain employment. This implies that the state's available labor pool could be larger than estimated in this report.

The statewide underemployment rate was 22.4 percent in 2019. Applying this rate to March 2020 labor force data means that 477,696 employed Alabama residents were underemployed. Adding the unemployed gives a total available labor pool of 551,554 statewide. This is 7.5 times the number of unemployed and is a more realistic measure of the available labor pool in the state. Prospective employers must be able to offer the underemployed higher wages, better benefits or terms of employment, or some other incentives to induce them to change jobs. The underemployed workers are willing to commute farther and longer for a better job. For one-way commute, 43.3 percent of the underemployed are prepared to add 20 or more minutes to their one-way commute and 33.4 percent are willing to add 20 or more extra miles for a better job.

Most workers (80.0 percent) are satisfied or completely satisfied with their jobs. Workers are most satisfied with the work that they do and least satisfied with the earnings they receive. Fewer underemployed workers are satisfied with their jobs (62.7 percent). The underemployed are more dissatisfied with their earnings and most satisfied with their work shift. Workers are generally willing to train for a new or better job, with the underemployed being much more willing (62.2 percent vs. 52.5 percent). However, the willingness to train is strongly influenced by who pays for the cost of training. Workers typically do not wish to pay for the training and so their willingness is highest when the cost is fully borne by the government and lowest when the trainee must pay the full costs. The underemployed workers are more willing to train for the new or better job even if they must bear the full cost.

Extremely limited data are available on opioid and substance misuse within the North AlabamaWorks region. Alabama continues to have one of the highest rates of opioid prescriptions dispensed in the nation, at a rate of 107.2 scripts per 100 residents in 2017, nearly twice the national average of 58.7 scripts per 100 residents. The number of opioid prescriptions per 100 persons in the region as compared to Alabama and the United States shows this is one of the worst contiguous regions in the country for opioid prescriptions. Opioid-related overdose deaths in Alabama have risen every year since 2013, reaching levels more than triple that observed in the mid-2000s. Using the Rural Appalachia Overdose Mapping Tool from NORC for data from 2013-2017, the counties in the region show high overdose mortality rates as compared to Alabama and the United States. As noted in the Alabama Opioid Strategic Response Needs Assessment, the state's lack of structure and regulatory guidelines for reporting drug overdose deaths has contributed to the underreporting of opioid overdoses and deaths. It is important to note that there are secondary effects of the opioid epidemic across Alabama, including, but not limited to, HIV and viral hepatitis infection attributed to unsterile intravenous drug use. The North AlabamaWorks region includes multiple counties identified to be the most vulnerable to an outbreak of HIV or Hepatitis C within the United States (CDC, 2016).

(ii) Labor Market Trends

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

The nonagricultural employment of Alabama residents in the state averaged about 1.8 million quarterly. The Health Care sector was the leading employer in Alabama, with 267,166 jobs in the second quarter of 2021. Rounding out the top five industries by employment are Manufacturing, Retail Trade, Accommodation and Food Services, and Educational Services. These five industries provided 1,084,608 jobs, 57.4 percent of the state total. Manufacturing has historically had a huge impact on the economy of the state, primarily to the tremendous growth in transportation equipment manufacturing. The state is home to four major auto manufacturing plants, a major shipbuilding plant, several aerospace manufacturing plants, including one producing planes in the US for the first time, located in Mobile, AL. These major plants have led to hundreds of thousands of jobs in parts manufacturing across the state. Automobiles have become Alabama's number one export. The state ranks second in the United States in vehicle exports, and fifth in the number of vehicles manufactured.

The insurgence of transportation manufacturing in the state has produced a huge demand for highly skilled technical workers. Occupations such as team assemblers, aircraft mechanics, aircraft assemblers, welders, industrial machinery mechanics, computer-controlled machine operators, machinists, and many others have experienced significant increases in employment. Furthermore, advances in technologies, such as the wide use of robotics for parts assembly, have raised the level of skills required to compete for these jobs. This facility, as well as the Alabama Industrial Development Training (AIDT) Maritime training facility in Mobile, are providing invaluable training services to manufacturing employers across the state.

Health care makes up approximately 14.2 percent of the state's employment. While hospitals have maintained a fairly steady employment level over the last decade, the more specialized areas of the health care industry are showing rapid growth. Due to the aging population, demand for home health services and nursing care facilities has grown rapidly. Two of the largest occupations in demand in recent years have become personal care aides and home health aides. Although these are entry-level occupations, and the wages are very low, they provide those who are interested in health care as a career an opportunity work in the field while completing their education. Outpatient surgical procedures have become the norm due to advances in technology, and this has created a boom in outpatient care facilities or rehabilitation facilities. The huge demand for physical therapists, physical therapists' assistants, occupational therapists, and speech-language pathologists is a result of an increased number of people needing assistance to function independently after medical procedures. The huge demand for health care has also created higher patient loads on physicians, which in the last decade has resulted in an increase in medical assistants, physician assistants, surgical assistants, etc. These professionals get trained to perform basic health care services, such as physicals, minor illnesses and health issues, and administer diagnostic tests, under the supervision of a physician. This frees the physicians to focus on the more serious medical problems. This is the trend throughout the health care industry. The number of surgeons, physicians, dentists, anesthesiologists cannot alone handle the huge needs from a growing and aging population. This provides huge opportunities for people who are interested in working in the healthcare field and earning a sustainable wage without obtaining advanced degrees. In Alabama, as in most of the states in the nation, specialized healthcare occupations dominate the high demand occupations. Half of the current list of the top forty occupations in highest demand are healthcare occupations, with nine requiring less than a bachelor's degree for entry into the careers. Furthermore, looking at a list of the top 40 occupations in demand requiring less than a bachelor's degree, nearly half of those are also healthcare occupations.

The high demand occupations in the state are reflective of the industries that are presently in high demand and are expected to continue that trend into the next decade. Workforce development partners are dedicated to providing training to meet employers' demands for a skilled workforce in these high demand industries and occupations. The goal to lift the state's economy is to provide its citizens with the necessary tools so that they are successful in careers that are high demand, fast-growing, and also provide sustainable wages. The current high demand occupations in Alabama are based on the 2018-2028 occupational employment projections (see tables below). Working with the ACCCP, The Alabama Department of Labor, Labor Market Information division identifies demand occupations in accordance with ACCCP demand criteria, and aligns its list of demand occupations with the ACCCP. The current list of demand occupations across all career clusters totals over 230 occupations.

Manufacturing leads the demand list with 40 demand occupations. Architecture & Construction, Health Science, Transportation, and Human Services round out the top five career clusters based on the number of demand occupations included in the list. of these healthcare occupations that are in demand are in nursing and assisting, or aides, most of them requiring a post-secondary certificate or associate degree or higher. Assemblers and Fabricators have the highest projected annual openings in Manufacturing with over 4,000 through 2028. Landscaping and grounds-keeping workers lead the with the most annual openings in

Architecture and Construction. In Health Science, Registered Nurses have the highest annual openings with over 3,400. Laborers & Freight, Stock, & Material Movers, and Heavy and Tractor Trailer Truck Drivers top the demand list for Transportation with over 6,000 and 4,000 annual openings, respectively.

For Manufacturing, over 75 percent of the occupations on the demand list require a high school diploma or less. In Architecture and Construction, as well as Transportation and Distribution, over 60 percent of the occupations in the demand list also require a high school diploma or less. The highest percent of demand occupations in Health Science require an Associate's degree. This would include Registered Nurses with a 2-year degree. For Human Services, a majority of their demand occupations a Bachelor's degree or above.

Nearly a third of the high demand occupations are highly skilled trade jobs, which typically appear in construction and manufacturing industries. Four of them, industrial machinery mechanics, assemblers and fabricators, and multiple machine tool operators are a direct result of a fast-growing transportation and aerospace manufacturing industries in the state. There is also a high demand for welders and various types of machinists across the state due to the state's expanding manufacturing industries. While these are statewide demand occupations, the demand for skilled trade occupations in the state varies depending on regional economies.

The most in-demand occupations that occur statewide include occupations for IT, engineers, managers, and various financial and data analyst type occupations. Computer occupations will continue to be in high demand as technology increases the careers that require computers and robotics. In recent years, however, interest in the pursuit of advanced IT careers has waned, so workforce development is working on efforts to increase the number of students trained in this field. The three engineering occupations are all imperative for the success of the state's thriving manufacturing sector; industrial engineers, mechanical engineers, and aerospace engineers. Demand for market research analysts is a reflection of an emphasis on making effective and efficient decisions based on data analysis. With the advancement of technology, more data is being collected than ever before. Companies are beginning to see the advantages of regular data analysis to increase success.

Twenty-five occupations were selected as the fastest growing in the state for the 2018-2028 period. Each of these occupations was expected to grow from 3.73 percent to 1.46 percent each year during the period. The majority of the twenty are healthcare-related occupations and manufacturing occupations.

Table: Worker Distribution by Age in Alabama for 4th Quarter 2020.		
Age Group	Nonagricultural Employment	
	Number	Percent
14-18	48,777	2.6
19-24	199,684	10.8
25-34	394,683	21.4
35-44	397,252	21.5
45-54	384,739	20.8
55-64	312,858	16.9
65+	109,235	5.9
55 and Over Total	422,093	22.9
Total, All Ages	1,847,227	100.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Local Employment Dynamics Program. Note: Rounding errors may be present. Nonagricultural employment is by place of work, not residence.

At 23.0 percent, older workers (age 55 and over) constitute a significant and growing part of total nonagricultural employment. The share of older workers for the WDRs ranged from 21.6 percent for Region 7 to 23.0 percent for Region 1. To meet long term occupational projections for growth and replacement, labor force participation of younger residents must increase; otherwise, older workers may be required to work longer.

Table: Commuting Patterns in Alabama				
	Percent of Workers			
Average commute time (one-way)	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**
Less than 20 minutes	50.1	48.7	48.7	47.7
20 to 40 minutes	27.2	28.3	28	28.8
40 minutes to an hour	10.3	10.5	10.2	10.1
More than an hour	3.7	4.4	3.3	4.0
Average commute distance (one-way)	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**
Less than 10 miles	41.9	40.8	40.3	40.3
10 to 25 miles	33.2	32.6	34.2	33.5
25 to 45 miles	15.2	15.7	15.3	14.7
More than 45 miles	7.0	8.6	7.1	8.7

Note: Rounding errors may be present. Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Alabama Department of Labor; and Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama.

Alabama continues to lose workers to surrounding states, for the latest data (2019) indicates there was a net out-commute of approximately 20,000 people. The total number of out-

commuters in 2019 was over 97,000, down almost 19,000 from 2018. The data indicates that the largest increase in out-commuters appeared in the 30 to 54 age group. While the largest percentage of these commuters worked in Georgia, there was minimal change over the year. There was minimal change to the percent of workers commuting to Florida and Tennessee as well.

Some of the increase in out-commuters among the state's younger workers could have been college graduates who couldn't find local jobs and settled with long commutes. According to a survey conducted by the University of AL, Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER), figures for 2019 indicate a notable reduction in both commute distance and commute time, with commute time less than 20 minutes and 40 minutes to an hour; dropping below the 2016 rates. Distances travelled less than 10 miles and 25 to 45 miles saw drops in commuting distance. While this is great for the economy, leaders both in business and public service still must explore strategies to bring workers back to Alabama and reduce the number of graduates who move out of state to pursue careers.

Table A.9 Selected High-Demand Occupations (Base Year 2018 and Projected Year 2028)			
	Average Annual Job Openings		
Occupation	Total	Due to Growth	Due to Separations
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	12,655	820	11,840
Retail Salespersons	9,500	100	9,395
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	6,140	240	5,900
Assemblers and Fabricators, All Other, Including Team Assemblers	4,935	305	4,630
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	4,800	215	4,590
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	4,265	205	4,060
Registered Nurses*	3,495	540	2,955
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	3,100	105	2,995
Helpers--Production Workers	3,000	310	2,690
General and Operations Managers	2,935	235	2,700
Nursing Assistants	2,885	130	2,750
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	2,880	110	2,770
Personal Care Aides	2,785	330	2,455
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	2,645	145	2,500
Cooks, Restaurant	2,535	255	2,280
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	2,400	130	2,265
Receptionists and Information Clerks	2,045	70	1,970
Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	1,935	80	1,850
Accountants and Auditors	1,855	125	1,730
Construction Laborers	1,775	120	1,650
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	1,765	105	1,660
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	1,620	145	1,475
First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	1,435	105	1,330
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	1,385	195	1,185

Medical Assistants	1,305	190	1,115
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	1,265	110	1,155
Electricians	1,250	80	1,170
Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	1,180	70	1,110
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	910	75	835
Medical Secretaries	815	85	730
Home Health Aides*	810	135	675
Management Analysts	760	100	665
Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	710	70	640
Software Developers, Applications*	705	180	530
Computer User Support Specialists	630	75	555
Industrial Engineers*	565	130	435
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	565	85	480
Financial Managers	530	90	445
Taxi Drivers and Chauffeurs	490	75	415
Nurse Practitioners	320	90	230
Note: Occupations are growth- and wages weighted and data are rounded to the nearest 5. Occupations in bold are also high-earning.			
* Qualify as both high-demand and fast-growing occupations.			
Source: Alabama Department of Labor and Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama.			

Table: Selected Fast-Growing Occupations (Base Year 2018 and Projected Year 2028)

Occupation	Employment		Percent Change	Annual Growth (Percent)
	2018	2028		
Occupational Therapy Assistants	NA	NA	44	3.73
Information Security Analysts	1,190	1,620	36	3.13
Computer Numerically Controlled Machine Tool Programmers, Metal and Plastic	460	620	35	3.05
Electrical and Electronics Installers and Repairers, Transportation Equipment	220	290	33	2.89
Physician Assistants	780	1,040	32	2.85
Orthotists and Prosthetists	160	210	30	2.67
Speech-Language Pathologists	1,710	2,190	28	2.50
Operations Research Analysts	650	830	27	2.46
Software Developers, Applications*	6,580	8,370	27	2.43
Statisticians	200	250	27	2.39
Counselors, All Other	150	190	26	2.35
Physical Therapist Assistants	1,920	2,410	26	2.32
Biological Science Teachers, Postsecondary	NA	NA	26	2.32
Home Health Aides*	5,370	6,700	25	2.23
Nurse Practitioners*	3,800	4,720	24	2.19
Physical Therapist Aides	1,080	1,330	23	2.09
Computer and Information Research Scientists	NA	NA	23	2.07
Industrial Engineers*	5,740	7,040	23	2.06
Athletic Trainers	570	700	23	2.05
Transportation Inspectors	NA	NA	22	2.03

Note: Employment data are rounded to the nearest 10 and job openings are rounded to the nearest 5.

* Qualify as both high-demand and fast-growing occupations.

Source: Alabama Department of Labor and Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama.

Table: Selected High-Earning Occupations (Base Year 2018 and Projected Year 2028)

Occupation	Employment		Annual Growth (Percent)	Average Annual Job Openings	Mean Annual Salary ($)
	2018	2028			
Obstetricians and Gynecologists	210	200	-0.20	5	287,553
Anesthesiologists	NA	NA	0.20	5	279,939
Surgeons	610	600	-0.15	15	263,456
Family and General Practitioners	850	920	0.70	30	240,945
Pediatricians, General	450	440	-0.13	10	218,653
Internists, General	250	240	-0.24	5	218,212
Physicians and Surgeons, All Other	5,540	5,870	0.58	200	200,726
Chief Executives	2,390	2,270	-0.51	155	197,595
Psychiatrists	170	180	0.65	5	171,826
Nurse Anesthetists	1,290	1,500	1.53	90	160,688
Dentists, General	1,300	1,370	0.56	50	160,296
Law Teachers, Postsecondary	90	100	0.83	10	154,487
Physicists	160	170	0.48	15	146,256
Podiatrists	100	100	0.61	5	146,146
Architectural and Engineering Managers	2,320	2,510	0.80	195	145,799
Dentists, All Other Specialists	40	40	0.00	N/A	133,753
Computer and Information Systems Managers	3,410	3,880	1.30	330	132,872
Petroleum Engineers	90	90	0.00	5	132,145
Financial Managers*	5,310	6,180	1.54	530	132,081
Economics Teachers, Postsecondary	130	140	0.60	10	132,038
Administrative Law Judges, Adjudicators, and Hearing Officers	110	110	0.09	5	130,949
Pharmacists	5,010	4,970	-0.07	220	130,103
Physical Scientists, All Other	130	130	0.31	10	123,112
Aerospace Engineers	4,090	4,510	0.99	320	122,368
Personal Financial Advisors	2,850	3,040	0.66	240	121,711
Actuaries	90	110	1.82	10	120,986
General and Operations Managers*	29,940	32,280	0.76	2,935	120,063

Natural Sciences Managers	140	150	0.42	15	120,028
Engineers, All Other	3,670	3,820	0.42	275	119,864
Marketing Managers	950	1,030	0.82	95	119,153
Optometrists	540	590	0.91	20	117,790
Area, Ethnic, and Cultural Studies Teachers, Postsecondary	10	10	0.74	N/A	117,753
Lawyers	7,670	8,150	0.61	430	116,603
Engineering Teachers, Postsecondary	530	580	0.91	50	115,540
Sales Managers	2,740	2,910	0.61	270	114,529
Computer Hardware Engineers	1,170	1,270	0.77	95	113,796
Electronics Engineers, Except Computer	1,740	1,830	0.52	125	112,722
Industrial Production Managers	3,610	4,060	1.19	325	112,319
Computer Network Architects	NA	NA	1.01	85	112,008
Education Administrators, Postsecondary	2,410	2,560	0.59	205	111,121
Human Resources Managers	1,350	1,450	0.74	130	111,028
Training and Development Managers	160	170	0.61	15	110,544
Purchasing Managers	860	930	0.89	85	110,238
Compensation and Benefits Managers	60	60	0.00	5	109,678
Airline Pilots, Copilots, and Flight Engineers	290	300	0.20	30	108,978
Managers, All Other	9,540	9,970	0.44	780	108,937
Business Teachers, Postsecondary	840	970	1.48	90	108,693
Chemical Engineers	490	570	1.55	40	107,995
Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary	1,960	2,390	2.01	225	106,908
Advertising and Promotions Managers	80	80	-0.26	10	106,086

Note: Employment and salaries data are rounded to the nearest 10; job openings to the nearest 5. The salary data provided are based on the May 2019 release of the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) combined employment and wage file. Estimates for specific occupations may include imputed data.

* Qualify as both high-earning and high-demand occupations. NA – Not available.

Source: Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama and Alabama Department of Labor.

The average monthly wage across all industries in the state was $3,817. New hire monthly earnings averaged $2,489 or 65.2 percent of the average monthly wage. The highest average monthly wages were for professional, scientific, and technical services at $6,146; utilities at $6,124; mining at $6,116; and finance and insurance at $5,486. Accommodation and food services paid the least at $1,620. Mining had the highest average monthly new hire wage at $5,411, followed by professional, scientific, and technical services at $4,877 and utilities at $4,649. Accommodation and food services paid newly hired workers the least, $1,163.

The leading employers were not the highest paying sectors. Of the top five employers, only manufacturing paid wages above the state average. The highest wages were in small

employers—mining; professional, scientific, and technical services; utilities; and finance and insurance.

At 21.8 percent, older workers (age 55 and over) constitute a significant and growing part of total nonagricultural employment. The share of older workers for the WDRs ranged from 20.6 percent for Region 3 to 23.2 percent for Region 6. To meet long term occupational projections for growth and replacement, labor force participation of younger residents must increase; otherwise, older workers may be required to work longer.

(iii) Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce

Based on 2017 census figures, 85 percent of the population over age 25 had a high school diploma, but only approximately 33 percent had an associate degree or higher. Furthermore, over 100,000 individuals never received a high school diploma or equivalent, making it nearly impossible in the present day to gain employment. A study initiated by the Alabama Workforce Council estimated that another 16 percent of individuals had some type of credential of value or license, which typically requires some amount of postsecondary training after high school. Using data from multiple sources, the study found that Alabama's present postsecondary attainment level for individuals age 25-64 was approximately 43 percent, when accounting for those with licenses and credentials. In order to meet the demand for the workforce through 2026, postsecondary attainment for working age individuals in the state will need to reach over 50 percent. Due to the older population outpacing the high school age, there is a great need to recruit individuals in that 25-64 age group for additional training and upskilling, so workforce demands can be realized.

In 2016, only 32.0 percent of the people worked in occupations that required formal education beyond high school. In other words, only 32.0 percent of 2016 jobs required at least some college or postsecondary award or certification to qualify them to enter employment. However, around half the people in jobs that didn't require formal training, high school diploma or less, were still required to successfully complete some level of moderate to long term training to learn the specific duties of the job. When looking at the projected employment through 2026, the state is expected to grow 6.9 percent. Analyzing the projected growth by formal training categories, jobs requiring a master's degree are expected to grow the most at 13.4 percent, significantly higher than the state average. Furthermore, all categories from postsecondary non-degree award all the way through a doctoral or professional degree are expected to grow at a rate higher than the state average. This is the norm throughout the country. Those jobs only requiring a high school diploma or less are projected to grow near 5.7 percent over the period.

Looking at projected growth by on-the-job training requirements, jobs requiring internships/residencies are projected to grow faster than the state average, at 7.3 percent. In 2016, in Alabama, the average salary for workers in jobs requiring an associate degree ($51,787) surpassed the state average for all occupations at $43,790. The data also proves that work experience pays more; people holding jobs that required work experience to enter the occupation, received higher than the average wage for all occupations in the state. Those requiring at least five years of work experience received over double the salary of the state average.

In recent years, national attention has been drawn to skills requirements for jobs. Employers can't find people with the skills to fill their open positions. Often employers and public officials will use the term "high skilled jobs" or that they can't find skilled people to fill these jobs. The understanding is that these gaps are often in skilled trades that do require training past high school, some more intensive than others, but don't require as high as a bachelor's degree to enter the job and be successful. Some researchers have begun using terms such as low skill, medium skill, and high skill jobs. Low skill are jobs that require a high school diploma or GED or less and no further training to enter the occupation. High skill jobs require a bachelor's degree or higher. Medium skill jobs have become the focus of workforce development efforts. These are

jobs that may not require a degree, but do require at least some training after high school, whether it's extensive on the job training, or a certification, license, or apprenticeship, or maybe an associate degree. Alabama is experiencing a tremendous challenge filling these middle skilled jobs. Over a third of the jobs in Alabama fall into this category. Furthermore, in ADOL's top forty high demand occupations for the 2016-2026 projection period, there are more people currently employed in high-demand medium-skill jobs than in high- and low-skilled jobs combined. This means that there will be more growth- and replacement-related openings in medium-skill jobs than in high- and low-skilled jobs combined. Medium skilled high demand jobs alone are projected to create over 25,000 new jobs through 2026. These are the jobs that are important to fill, for these grow faster than average, produce many job openings, and provide a sustainable wage

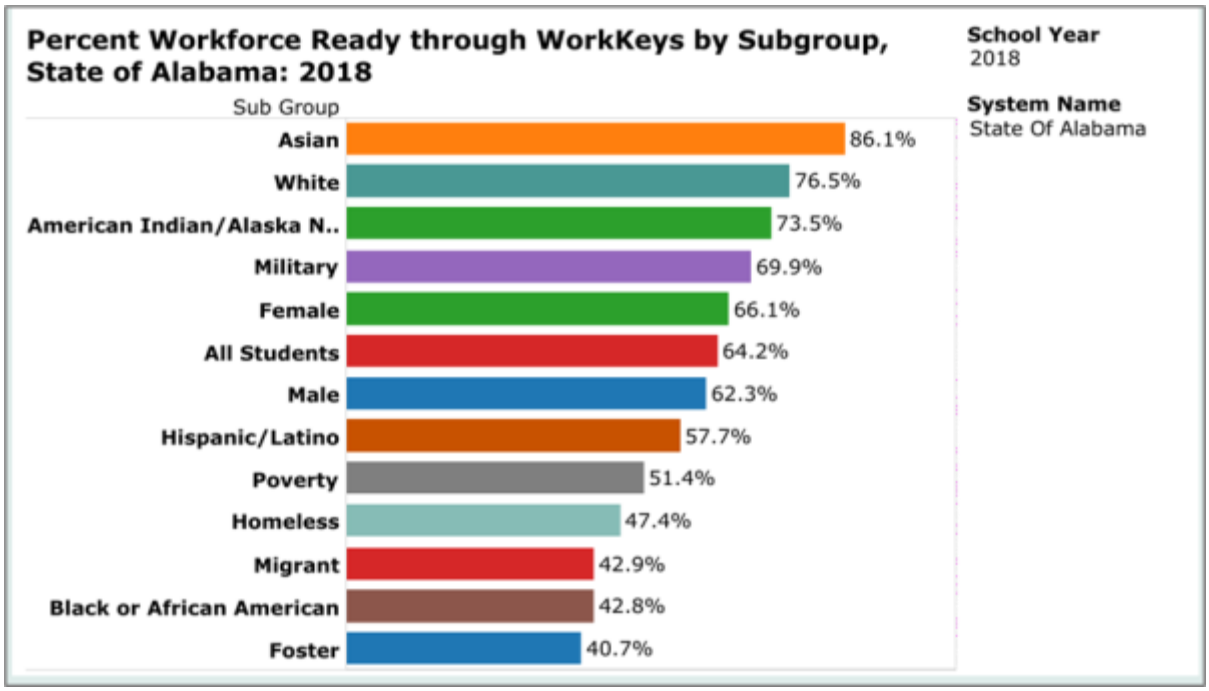
(iv) Skill Gaps

With unemployment rates at a historical low, workforce skill gaps become more apparent. In 2018, the Alabama Workforce Council initiated a study on the state's postsecondary educational attainment level to determine a strategy for increasing skilled workers. Research found that in 2017 Alabama's postsecondary education attainment rate for individuals age 25-64 was 43 percent. Employment projections through 2025 indicate that the attainment level for all workers needs to be at 51 percent to meet occupational demand. Another challenge the state faces is many experienced workers who will soon retire out of the workforce. There are currently over 100,000 workers 65 and older. While some of these may be just working part time to supplement retirement benefits, a majority have not retired yet. Slightly over 300,000 workers are between ages 55 and 64. Furthermore, many young people, who obtain advanced degrees in Alabama, leave the state for better opportunities and higher wages. The state must develop strategies to increase the labor force participation rate and keep Alabama's best and brightest in the state.

Preliminary figures show that the 2018 high school graduation rate in Alabama was 90 percent, increasing from 87 percent in 2016. While reaching 90 percent is significant, leaders in higher education and industry are concerned about the graduates who are not college and career ready (CCR). Graduates are classified as college and career ready in Alabama if they meet at least one of the following standards: 1. Score college ready in at least one subject on the ACT 2. Score silver level or higher on WorkKeys assessment 3. Passing score on an Advanced Placement Exam 4. Earn a career technical education credential 5. Earn dual enrollment credit at a college. 6. Acceptance into Military service. In 2016 there was over a 20 percent gap in the percent of high school graduates (87 percent) and college and career readiness (66 percent). Over two years, CCR rate has increased nearly 10 percent, to 75 percent, and narrowed the gap between CCR rate and graduation rates down to approximately 15 percent. Generally, school systems with lower CCR rates also had lower graduation rates. Systems with exceptionally high gaps between CCR and graduation rates may call for state assistance. Systems with the highest gaps tend to appear in rural counties.

Another challenge is the high rate of students are required to take remedial Math and/or English classes when entering college. In 2018 over 6,000 students, who graduated from public high schools in the state and enrolled in an Alabama college, had to take remedial Math and/or English; 5,000 in Math. 2017 data indicates that in 6 counties, all located in South Alabama, over 50 percent of the students enrolled in college had to take remedial classes; Barbour 69 percent, Butler 61 percent, Wilcox 57 percent, Bullock 55 percent, Crenshaw 53 percent, and Conecuh 51 percent. Data shows an even larger disparity when examining various subpopulations. During 2017-2018 school year, only 22.5 percent of African American students in 11th grade reached level 3 or 4 in Math on the Alabama Scantron ACT statewide. The high percentage of Alabama students required to take remedial classes beyond high school intensifies the gaps in decision making and problem-solving skills. Alabamians who are weak in the basic math and English skills will be less likely to be able to apply these to everyday workplace decisions.

Since 2015, all 12th graders in Alabama's public high schools are given the WorkKeys Assessment, which measures skills proficiency in relation to today's work environment. It consists of 3 tests; Applied Math, Graphic Literacy, and Workplace Documents. Students receive varying levels of certificates, Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum, based on their scores. Bronze certificate indicates that the student should be ready for 16 percent of jobs, while the highest certificate, Platinum, signifies that he student has demonstrated applied skills for 96 percent of the occupations in the ACT database. In Alabama, students earning a Silver, Gold, or Platinum certificate, are deemed as workforce ready; prepared for at least 71 percent of jobs. Since 2015, Alabama 12th graders have shown a slow but steady increase, with 59 percent workforce ready in 2015 and 64 percent in 2018. Students in 15 of the state's 67 counties had workforce readiness below rates below 50 percent, 5 below 30 percent; Greene, Wilcox, Perry, Bullock, and Sumter. The lowest scores were apparent in the most rural counties in the state. A statewide examination of workforce readiness by demographic subgroups clearly shows disparity in workforce readiness among groups with barriers to successful employment. Less than 50 percent of Homeless, migrant, African American, and students in foster care scored as workforce ready on the WorkKeys assessment.



Using the O*NET database, skills were matched to three significant occupational categories from the 2016-2026 projections; high demand, fast growing, and high wage. The table below displays the percentage of the respective occupations in each category where the skill is classified as a primary skill, which is defined as one of the ten skills with the highest importance scores, according to O*NET. Basic skills are required across all occupations as the scores show. The biggest similarity between these three different sets of occupations is all three totals listed the same basic skill with the highest score: critical thinking. Generally, the remaining five skills categories displayed some significant differences across these occupational lists. The high wage occupations had much higher scores in complex problem solving as well as judgement and decision making. Technical skills scores appeared notably higher across the high demand and fast-growing occupations, as opposed to those in high wage occupations all below a score of 8. Another interesting finding is that the high demand and fast-growing occupations had higher scores in time management than the high wage occupations. These are important indications of skill demands in the coming years. The occupations in greatest demand are going to require

significant technical and time management skills, while the highest wage occupations in the state require more problem solving and decision making.

Table Percentage of Selected Occupations for Which Skill Is Primary

	Selected High-Demand Occupations	Selected Fast-Growing Occupations	Selected High-Earning Occupations
Basic Skills			
Active Learning	38	47	56
Active Listening	73	84	88
Critical Thinking	80	89	90
Learning Strategies	3	0	16
Mathematics	10	11	18
Monitoring	58	79	56
Reading Comprehension	73	79	84
Science	8	5	34
Speaking	68	84	86
Writing	33	37	54
Complex Problem Solving Skills			
Complex Problem Solving	50	58	70
Resource Management Skills			
Management of Financial Resources	0	0	2
Management of Material Resources	0	0	0
Management of Personnel Resources	0	0	12
Time Management	25	32	10
Social Skills			
Coordination	38	32	26
Instructing	10	21	16
Negotiation	3	0	10
Persuasion	8	5	10
Service Orientation	28	42	12
Social Perceptiveness	38	47	40
Systems Skills			
Judgment and Decision Making	40	68	80
Systems Analysis	10	16	6

Systems Evaluation	10	16	2
Technical Skills			
Equipment Maintenance	13	11	2
Equipment Selection	8	0	0
Installation	0	0	0
Operation and Control	23	11	4
Operation Monitoring	23	21	4
Operations Analysis	10	5	8
Programming	3	11	0
Quality Control Analysis	13	16	0
Repairing	10	11	2
Technology Design	0	0	0
Troubleshooting	13	11	2
Note: Rounding errors may be present.			
*Source: O*NET Online and Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama.*			

2. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

Alabama devotes significant resources to education and workforce development at the local, regional, and state levels. In 2014, the Governor created and formally established the Alabama Workforce Council. The Council was tasked with advising and supporting core partners in Alabama's workforce development and education system to include, but not limited to, reviewing ways to streamline and align the existing workforce development functions in the State, evaluating regional workforce development, and educational needs by promoting regional workforce councils and evaluating public/private partnerships (sectors) to create a feedback loop for industry and education.

The core public workforce system programs include WIOA Title I-B, Wagner-Peyser, Adult Education, and Rehabilitation Services, which provide a number of educational training activities through their respective programs to populations with barriers to employment. All of these programs are represented on the Alabama Workforce Development Board (AWDB). The AWDB also has cross representation from the private business sector membership on the Alabama Workforce Council. The Alabama Workforce System (AWS) includes the following programs and entities operated through the following agents:

Alabama Career Center System - Operated as a partnership between the Alabama Department of Commerce (WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Alabama Department of Labor (Wagner-Peyser, UI, TAA and Veterans), the Alabama Career Center System also collaborates with Adult Education, Rehabilitative Services, TANF, SNAP, and Title IV of the Older Americans Act (SCESP). Statewide, there are 7 Comprehensive Career Centers and 46 Affiliate Career Centers in the system. In Program Year (PY) 2020, the Alabama Career Center System

provided 8,130 individuals with WIOA training services serving low-income adults, youth, and dislocated workers. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds totaled $40,432,623.

Adult Education Activities - Adult Education services are offered through the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) throughout the state. PY 2017 funding totaled $20,154,737 and had enrolled approximately 20,000 full time and 26,000 part-time students in adult education classes. Adult Education has been an active partner with the Alabama Career Center system since 2001 and continues to expand services within the Career Centers under WIOA.

Alabama Department of Labor - The Alabama Department of Labor (ADOL) houses the Wagner-Peyser program (Employment Service), Unemployment Insurance, Trade Act, and Veterans Services programs. ADOL Wagner-Peyser and WIOA Title I programs have been co-located as part of the Alabama Career Centers since 2001. AlabamaWorks! (AW!) is the online case management data system that provides job seeker skills, abilities and work history with employers posting job openings in the system. ADOL provides Trade Act services and Veteran's employment representatives in the Career Centers. In PY2020 alone, approximately 145,500 job seekers were registered into the AW! system.

Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) - The Department of Rehabilitation Services Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) provides specialized employment and education-related services and training to help teens and adults with disabilities in becoming employable. Services include skill assessments, counseling, training programs, job placement, assistive technology and transportation. For PY 2018, funding for the VRS program totaled approximately $25,000,000. For the same period, 31,244 job seekers with disabilities were provided services. Since 2001, the VRS has been an active partner in the Alabama Career Center System.

Optional Partner Programs

- **Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR)** – The Alabama TANF Program operated by the Alabama Department of Human Resources. TANF provides family assistance to provide income to low income one parent families to furnish basic needs for dependents. The welfare to work component of family assistance is known as the JOBS program. All clients receiving assistance are referred to the JOBS Unit for assessment in regard to their skills, prior work experience, and employability. Individuals on family assistance determined to be ready to engage in work activities will be placed in a work-related activity such as subsidized/unsubsidized employment, job search, job readiness classes, skills training or GED classes. The number of TANF clients in work activities for PY 2015 averaged 4,800 monthly, and TANF expenditures for work activities totaled $12,243,965. The SNAP or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (food stamps), managed by DHR, also operated a work-related program through a contract with the Alabama Department of Labor for job search assistance. The number of clients provided services was 18,089 and expenditures totaled $1,392,000.

- **Alabama Department of Senior Services** - The Senior Community Service Employment Program provides work-based job training for older Americans age 55 and up. For PY 2018, Alabama was allocated $1,599,492 for the program to fund 165 slots for older workers through 16 subgrantees across the state.

- **The Perkins Career and Technical Education component of Alabama's community college system and K-12 public schools** are included as a formal partner to the WIOA combined for the first time through the 2020 Combined Plan, which creates important support for the Alabama workforce system. Alabama's College and Career Ready Standards for all high school graduates play an important role in preparing all students for college and workplace success. The Alabama Community College System is critical to the success of all workforce development activities in the state.

Strengths:

- Strong support from political, education, and business leaders for workforce programs across all agencies and programs.
- Leadership within the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) are aligning training programs with the needs of growing industries. The ACCS with its network of 26 colleges and more than 100 instructional sites provides access to students throughout the state seeking career pathways and credentials to qualify for middle-skills jobs.
- There is a culture of strong communication and collaboration that enhances services throughout the Alabama Career Center System. The Alabama Career Center System provides services to job seekers and employers at comprehensive centers and affiliate sites.

Weaknesses:

- Limited data integration - Core partner programs maintain separate data management systems for participant tracking and case management functions.
- Limited awareness of the public workforce system by job seekers and employers. A unified and universal brand for the Alabama public workforce system is being implemented.
- Lack of a P20-W statewide longitudinal data system to track how job seekers and students are using the Alabama public workforce system and competency-based job training programs to transition from K-12 and postsecondary education to employment. Alabama is working on a new system, the ATLAS on Career Pathways, which will be operation in late 2020.
- The core and partner public workforce system agencies must continue to emphasize soft skills training into all Alabama public workforce system training programs.

The Alabama workforce system's capacity to provide services to both jobseekers and employers is shared by a number of agencies and program providers as summarized in (2A) of this document. The state's network of Career Centers is a shared function among the Alabama Department of Commerce for WIOA Title I services, the Alabama Department of Labor (ADOL) for Wagner-Peyser, UI, Trade Act and Veterans' services, the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services for vocational rehabilitation services and the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) for adult education (ABE) services. The network of 7 Comprehensive Career Centers and 46 Affiliate Career Centers provides broad coverage in all 67 counties in Alabama. The State agencies overseeing Alabama's WIOA core programs and optional partners not only share space and services throughout the Alabama Career Center System but also interact on a regular basis to share program opportunities to best deliver programs on a local and regional basis. The Alabama public workforce system has implemented a number of recent changes, including agency and program consolidation to ensure more efficient and comprehensive access to available services.

The Alabama Community College System (ACCS) consists of 24 community and technical colleges with more than 100 sites to deliver education and training for the citizens of Alabama. The ACCS has more than 150 Career and Technical Education credit programs that may lead to stackable short certificates, certificates, and associate degrees (with most having stackable, nationally recognized credentials as part of the program.) The ACCS works very closely with regional and local business and industry to support programs in high demand to meet capacity

needs. The ACCS also has short term training programs at each of the colleges which target high demand and high wage careers on scheduled and on an "as needed or as required basis." This type of training leads to nationally recognized credentials or licensing, and the curriculum provides a linkage for the individuals to potentially gain college credit should they choose to pursue additional training and education during their careers.

B. STATE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS

(1a.) Competency-Based Career Pathways into the Middle Class: A New Social Compact for Alabama Predicated on Human Capital Development

People in distressed rural areas, people who have been perpetually marginalized socially and economically, and people in cities that have been economically displaced due to structural changes in the economy are not lazy and are not malingering from the workforce. Often, faced with the option of piece work, the on-demand economy, or low-wage temporary work arrangement with no benefits, a braided package of transfer payments often provides more reliable economic security than the labor market. Currently, many Alabamians face a dollar-for-dollar reduction in benefits when entering the workforce. Making work pay for all Alabamians will provide the economic mobility needed to overcome decades of economic stagnation for our most distressed citizens. Ensuring the state and federal workforce and education programs are delivered at the most local level to support the establishment of a wage premium for work and individualized plans to overcome barriers will provide the basis for a revitalization of civil society. Economic mobility and revitalization of civil society, taken together, will provide an opportunity to reestablish the natural equilibrium between individuals and the state, as state and federal support will begin to supplement rather than supplant local associational activity and mediating institutions between the individual and the state as primary vehicles for human capital development.

Enhanced Supportive Service Offerings:

With labor market conditions nearing full employment in Alabama, meeting Governor Ivey's Success Plus postsecondary education attainment goal of adding 500,000 credentialed workers to the workforce by 2025 requires increasing Alabama's labor force participation rate (LFPR). The LFPR represents the number of people 16 and over in the labor force as a percentage of the civilian noninstitutional population. In other words, the participation rate is the percentage of the population that is either working or actively looking for work. Alabama's December 2021 labor force participation rate of 57.3 percent, like many other states, is too low. Alabama's labor force participation high-water mark was 65.1 percent in July 1997. Alabama's LFPR was 56.7 percent in April 2017 when Governor Ivey assumed office. Due to Governor Ivey's focus on developing a no-wrong-door approach to the public workforce system, Alabama's LFPR increased to 57.7 percent on the eve of the COVID-19 pandemic in February 2020. Alabamians who are not in the labor force are not malingering from work. Many people face benefits cliffs when entering the workforce, which are caused when means-tested benefits taper off more quickly than an individual can compensate for through paid employment. Nationally, and in Alabama, many young men are missing from the labor force. In January 1960, 97.1 percent of prime age men (25-54) were participating in the labor force and 42.1 percent of prime age women (25-54) were participating in the labor force. In September 2021, only 88.1 percent of prime age males are participating in the labor force and 75.3 percent of prime-age women were participating in the labor force.

The Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Statistics and the Alabama Workforce Council recently conducted the Alabama Survey of the Unemployed and Underemployed between June 29 and July 14, 2021, which focused on the barriers Alabamians face when reentering the workforce in wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey results underscore the need to provide access to wrap-around and support services, such as transportation, childcare,

and housing assistance. According to the survey results, a lack of childcare causes more than 20 percent of parents to be late or absent from work four or more days a month. Furthermore, just over half of the respondents have lost a job or opportunity because they lack reliable transportation. More than one-third of respondents have declined or delayed a job opportunity because they were afraid that they would lose a government benefit. Alabama's strategy to increase the labor force participation rate centers on providing new modalities of training, including short-term programs that are aligned to traditional degrees and supportive services, such as transportation and childcare, that Alabamians needs to persist in the workforce.

The Alabama Talent Development Capstone Course was designed to provide a survey level understanding of Alabama's Talent Development Strategic plan for public workforce system staff and to foster the collaboration needed to operationalize Alabama's no-wrong-door approach to the public workforce system. The course was delivered as four modules and culminated in assessment and the awarding of the Alabama Talent Developer Micro-Credential for 174 members of Alabama's public workforce system. Alabama led a second Talent Development Capstone Course between May and June 2021. Unbundling and re-bundling degree programs by making non-degree certifications credit bearing is vital to Alabama's pandemic response and long-term talent development strategy.

The Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta and Governor Ivey's Human Capital Development Committee, Chaired by Department of Human Resources Commissioner Nancy Buckner, have partnered to develop a benefits cliff and self-sufficiency tool called the Dashboard for Alabama to Visualize Income Development (DAVID) for Alabama. This dashboard is designed to help individuals understand when they will reach self-sufficiency, based on income, region, occupation, and family dynamics. Commissioner Buckner is focused on expanding access to high-quality, affordable childcare through Alabama's Quality Rating Improvement System for childcare providers and eliminating Alabama's remaining childcare deserts. All staff within Alabama's state and federally funded public workforce system are being trained to utilize a "no-wrong-door-entry strategy." DHR and Commerce are developing pilot sites where DHR staff will enroll participants in WIOA workforce training programs at the same time they are enrolled in human services programs.

(1b.) The Financial Incentives for Pursuing Paid Employment

Alabama must pursue a workforce development strategy designed to engage those Alabamians who remain on the sidelines of the labor force. The touchstone of Governor Ivey's workforce development strategic plan is the Success Plus postsecondary education attainment goal of adding 500,000 credentialed workers to the workforce by 2025. With labor market conditions nearing full employment, meeting the Success Plus postsecondary education attainment goal will require mitigating the factors that result in individuals not entering the labor market and shifting federal resources so that more funding is directly available to Alabamians in need of workforce training. The labor force participation rate includes all persons between 16 and 64 who are employed or who are seeking employment. Furthermore, Governor Ivey's workforce development strategic plan includes an equity-based imperative to close attainment gaps among the special populations Governor Ivey has identified in the 2020 WIOA Combined Plan, including veterans, justice-involved individuals, people recovering from substance abuse and addiction, single parents with dependent children, individuals with a disability, the long-term unemployed, individuals who are basic skills deficient, individuals with significant cultural barriers, and others. Many of the 41.2 percent of Alabamians who are not in the labor force belong to one or more of the aforementioned special populations.

Governor Ivey has identified that one of the greatest barriers to education and workforce training are benefit cliffs. A benefit cliff occurs when means-tested benefits and other forms of public assistance taper off when a household's income from paid employment increases. Due to the benefits cliff, paid employment does not pay for some Alabamians in certain rural and economically-depressed regions. Therefore, the effect of the benefits cliff is to make a low-

income individual just entering the workforce (just the demographic Alabama needs to ensure enters the workforce to meet the Success Plus goal) worse-off when getting an earnings increase. This may seem counterintuitive at first glance; however, it must be described and contemplated in terms of the marginal tax rate for low-income individuals. An effective marginal tax rate specifies the proportion of new earnings owed in taxes, or needed to offset reductions in program benefits, and quantifies the share of new earnings not available to families.

Generally, government-financed, public-assistance programs are designed to phase-out as the recipient's earning increase. In practical terms, however, this often has the effect of causing the loss of benefits to exceed the income gained through the earning increase. This phenomenon, thus, has the simultaneous effects of increasing the effective tax rate for low-income individuals and creating a negative incentive for entering the workforce for some Alabamians. Many other barriers—such as a lack of transportation, child-care, or basic skills—were reported in each region. However, the benefits cliff is the most nefarious, since it impedes access to the other needs identified by stakeholders, such as transportation and childcare. The objective of the public workforce system is to identify the barriers to entry into the workforce and providing the skills training and education needed to overcome those barriers. Alabama will focus its available federal resources over the next four years directly on providing job training to those who most need it, increasing the number of Alabamians who successfully enter and remain in the workforce system. Aligning the benefits provided by the plethora of federally funded, means-tested and categorical workforce, human services, and education programs administered in Alabama around a continuum of services that assist an individual in overcoming the benefits cliff will enable more Alabamians who are currently not in the labor force to persist in a career pathway and ultimately attain employment in an occupation that pays a family-sustaining wage.

Governor Ivey's focus on aligning competency-based career pathways with work-based learning and academic course work has resulted in an intentional development of apprenticeship, credentials of value, empirically driven sequences of workplace competencies and career lattices. These advancements have provided the foundation for economic upward mobility by permitting an individual to progress from an entry-level position to a middle-skills job, to an advanced-level career through the mastery of increasingly rigorous levels of competencies (the mastery of which are denoted by credentials of value.) Competency-based career pathways and credentials of value provide the basis for multiple points of entry and exit into and out of the workforce and education and workforce training to permit an individual to earn progressive wage increases by signaling the mastery of new skills to employers through earning stackable credentials linked to traditional academic coursework while on the pathway to earning a degree or terminal credential. Furthermore, individuals who are reticent to enter the workforce will recognize a positive incentive to enter the workforce through the security of competency-based career pathways linked to credentials of value that provides portability and transferability between and within firms and industries. To achieve Governor Ivey's human capital development strategy of ensuring that all Alabamians are self-sufficient, the work to develop competency-based career pathways must be coupled with a continuum of services approach to provide wrap-around services that generate a negative marginal tax rate for Alabamians who are struggling to overcome the benefits cliff and to persist in a career pathway.

(1c.) The Success Plus Postsecondary Education Attainment Goal

The State of Alabama is undergoing an economic and workforce transformation, which will result in fewer low-skill jobs that require less a high school diploma or less. Labor market projections indicate a growing gap in the supply of qualified employees for middle-skills jobs—those that require training beyond high school but less than a four-year degree. Thirty-four of Alabama's 40 Hot Demand Occupations require secondary and postsecondary Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education. Between 2017 and 2027, STEM

jobs will grow by 9 percent in Alabama, while non-STEM jobs will only grow by 5 percent. The educational and training requirements of high-demand, fast-growing, and high-earning occupations show the significance of education in developing the workforce of the future. Alabama's educational attainment is low compared to the nation as a whole. About 84 percent of Alabamians age 25 and over have graduated from high school, compared to 87 percent for the United States. Of that total population over age 25, about 24 percent in Alabama have a bachelor's or higher degree, which is lower than the nation's 30 percent. Skill and education requirements for jobs keep rising, which highlights a strong need to raise educational attainment in the state.

Governor Ivey wishes to offer a skills- and competency-based framework for developing career pathways for members of the on-demand workforce that will develop their human capital and potentially serve as the foundation for a new social compact for the 21st Century. Governor Ivey has set a postsecondary education attainment goal of adding 500,000 credential holders to Alabama's workforce by 2025. Alabama developed goals by career cluster for each of the seven workforce regions, which will also include projection information for each career pathway along with the average wage for each pathway. In addition, Alabama has created a list of occupations in each cluster that are most in demand. The Regional Workforce Councils will use the ATLAS on Career Pathways to determine each region's share of the 500,000 additional degrees, certificates, and credentials required to meet Alabama's workforce demands by 2025. Annual goals have been established regionally to determine how many degrees, certificates, and credentials must be earned in each career sector to meet the attainment goal. Regional and statewide goals were also set for each special population, aggregately and annually.

In an effort to meet these goals and increase performance in Alabama's seven workforce regions, Governor Ivey will refocus federal workforce funds over the next four years to more directly benefit those region's citizens who are in need of job training. Governor Ivey will ask each workforce region in the state to incrementally increase the percentage of WIOA funds used directly on job training over a four-year period, beginning with at least 45 percent in year one, 50 percent in year two, 55 percent in year three, and 60 percent in year four. This shift to place additional federal resources directly into job training opportunities for Alabamians will help increase performance for workforce regions and decrease the state's growing workforce shortage.

(1d.) Individuals with Barriers to Employment

Across all titles, WIOA focuses on serving "individuals with barriers to employment," defined in WIOA Section 3(24) and seeks to ensure access to quality services for these populations. Each category of individuals with barriers to employment listed in Perkins V and WIOA overlap except two, which have been included by the Governor. The populations included in the "individuals with barriers to employment" in WIOA sec. 3(24) include:

(a) Displaced homemakers (as defined in WIOA sec. 3(16));
(b) Low-income individuals (as defined in WIOA sec. 3(36)) also in Perkins;
(c) Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians (as defined in WIOA sec. 166(b));
(d) Individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities (as defined in WIOA sec. 3(25) (includes individuals who are in receipt of Social Security Disability Insurance) also in Perkins;
(e) Older individuals (age 55 and older) (as defined in WIOA sec. 3(39));
(f) Ex-offenders ("offender" as defined in WIOA sec. 3(38));
(g) Homeless individuals or homeless children and youths (also in Perkins);
(h) Youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system (also in Perkins);
(i) Individuals who are:
(1) English language learners (WIOA sec. 203(7)) also in Perkins,
(2) Individuals who have low levels of literacy (an individual is unable to compute or solve programs, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, or in the individual's family, or in society); and

(3) Individuals facing substantial cultural barriers;
(j) Eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers (as defined in WIOA sec. 167(i)(1-3);
(k) Individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime TANF eligibility;
(l) Single parents, including single pregnant women (also in Perkins);
(m) Long-term unemployed individuals (unemployed for 27 or more consecutive weeks) also in Perkins; and
(n) Such other groups as the Governor involved determines to have barriers to employment.
Perkins Specific
(1) individuals preparing for non-traditional fields;
(2) youth with parents on active duty in the armed forces.

Special Population Groups	Population Estimate
Displaced Homemaker	280,438
Caregiver	114,157
Adult with Aging Dependents	134,990
Unemployed or Underemployed	83,699
Low-Income	849,565
Indians, Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians	27,311
People with Disabilities	775,390
Older Individuals	1,065,625
Ex-Offenders	15,224
Homeless Individuals	17,546
Youth Aged Out of Foster System	572
English Language Learners	20,725
Individuals with Low Levels of Literacy	48,998
Individuals with Substantial Cultural Barriers	106,217
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers	18,266
Individuals Nearing TANF Exhaustion	8,565
Single Parents	178,243
Long-Term Unemployed	15,960
Individuals Preparing for Non-Traditional Fields	N/A
Youth with Parents in Active Duty Military	8,750
Source: Alabama Department of Labor, Labor Market Division estimates, August 2019	

2. Goals

(2a.) Setting Bold Goals: Workforce Development Strategic Plan
Governor Ivey has established a strategic vision for aligning Alabama's education and workforce programs from pre-k to the workforce to provide for a seamless education-to-workforce

continuum for all Alabamians. Governor Ivey's vision begins with aligning federal and state education and workforce funding streams with state funding streams to establish quantifiable goals along the continuum. The goals include pre-k readiness by age four, school readiness by age five, being literate and numerate before the fourth grade, exploring each college and career pathway before ninth grade, and diverging into a rigorous college or career pathway leading to a career or matriculation into a postsecondary education program at the time of high school graduation.

Governor Ivey's plan to shift more WIOA federal funding to direct job training will help accomplish those goals. Governor Ivey established the Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Transformation (GOEWT) to ensure that the attainment and labor force participation goals are met through an equity-based framework. The GOEWT will work to braid Alabama's federal CTE and WIOA funding streams through the combined 2020 state WIOA plan to develop career pathways based on work-based learning and credential attainment. The GOEWT will use data from the Alabama Terminal on Linking and Analyzing Statistics (ATLAS) on Career Pathways, Alabama's P20-W system, to assist the Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways (ACCCP) in establishing competency-based career pathways and stackable sequences.

WIOA Planning Priorities - Data Driven Decisions:

Governor Ivey has set a post-secondary education attainment goal for Alabama of adding 500,000 highly skilled employees to Alabama's workforce by 2025 through the Success Plus postsecondary education attainment goal. The Governor has also set the goal of surpassing the national labor force participation rate by 2025 by braiding resources to help Alabamians overcome benefits cliffs and barriers to entering education or the workforce. To reach the attainment and labor force participation goals, Alabama is using the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) as a key tool to (1) provide a no-wrong-door approach to the public workforce system, (2) reduce the impact of the cliff effect on Alabamians who are transitioning from public assistance to paid employment, and (3) to provide access to competency-based career pathways in a demand-driven talent ecosystem. Alabama's core and partner WIOA agencies are being cross trained on all publicly funded workforce development programs through the Alabama Talent Development Capstone Course that results in the attainment of a micro-credential for participants who pass the assessment.

On June 16, 2021, Alabama amended the WIOA ETPL and credential policies to reflect the Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways (ACCCP) non-degree credentials quality-assurance process. In addition to the two WIOA Effectiveness in Serving Employers performance measures already approved by the State Board, Alabama developed a State-Specific approach that captures a percentage of each special population being served in each of the seven workforce regions (Number of each special population served & employed / Number of eligible Alabamians belonging to each special population). The State Workforce Development Board's bylaws were amended on June 16, 2021.

In addition to many non-substantive, technical revisions, the amended bylaws include a few substantive policy revisions to encourage a stronger policymaking role for members of the State Workforce Development Board, including: (1) raising the requirement for a quorum from 30 percent of the members to 51 percent of the members. (2) instituting term limits for members (members may serve two consecutive four-year terms and may be reappointed after sitting out one term.) (3) ensuring that the Executive Committee is used for emergency matters subject to the call of the Governor, rather than for approving routine business. These amendments are consistent with best practices observed nationally. One factor leading to Alabama exhausting its Title I-b allocations too early in the program year, in addition to the nearly 30 percent cumulative cut since Program Year 2017, was the practice of prioritizing WIOA funding for programs that are Pell Eligible. ETPs that are Pell eligible should prioritize Pell and use WIOA Title I-b funds as the funder of last resort.

The Alabama State Workforce Development Board reaffirmed its policy on June 16, 2021, to prioritize WIOA Title I-b funds to pay the tuition, fees, and books for Pell eligible programs so students may use more Pell funds for supportive services. There is a lifetime cap on Pell eligibility. Promoting the use of Pell for purposes other than mandatory tuition, fees, and books could foreclose further postsecondary learning opportunities for many low-income Alabamians. ETPs that take more than one-year to complete should only be approved for WIOA ITA funds one program year at a time. Increased collaboration is required among stakeholders to ensure that the financial pathways presented to clients of Alabama's public workforce system based on the door they happened to enter.

(2b.) State Plan Development

By braiding federal and state workforce and education funding streams to produce an education-to-workforce pipeline that begins with literacy and numeracy, career exploration and discovery among all 16 clusters, seamless transition from secondary to postsecondary education, multiple entry and exit points for special and disconnected populations, and alignment between secondary and postsecondary CTE and co-enrollment between adult education and postsecondary CTE, Alabama's workforce development system will permit entry into an in-demand career pathway for Alabamians in all seasons of life. The Governor's Office, the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), ACCS, the state workforce development board, and the partner agencies to the WIOA plan participated in a joint state planning meeting beginning in June 2019. The Governor's Office worked to achieve consensus on needs assessments, plans to reach special and disconnected populations, stakeholder input, local and state performance targets, program quality and performance indicators, and alignment of programs in the 2020 Combined Plan to achieve a unified workforce development system for the State of Alabama. The WIOA and CTE needs assessments are aligned. The process for collecting stakeholder input and stakeholder review between CTE and WIOA is aligned through the combined state plan. The 14 WIOA and CTE public hearings held between July and October 2019 were aligned. The combined state plan takes advantage of aligned definitions in WIOA and CTE, including "career pathways," "sector strategies," and "programs of study" to develop fully articulated career pathways in all 16 career clusters that begin with career exploration, transition to pre-apprenticeship, then culminate in a registered or industry-recognized apprenticeship, which will allow secondary CTE concentrators to earn a high school diploma, an associate's degree mapped to industry-recognized credentials, and work-based learning experience in an aligned occupation. The combined state planning process helped explain how career coaches, dual enrollment, and work-based learning, and simulated workplaces will be the lynchpins of ensuring that secondary and postsecondary CTE students have access to align career pathways and placement opportunities. In addition, the process helped make clear the potential benefit of focusing federal WIOA funds directly on job training as a method to increase performance across workforce regions. The state planning process included robust discussions on how the ATLAS on Career Pathways will enable alignment of WIOA and CTE programs around in-demand career pathways and credentials.

(2c.) 2020 Combined Plan: Local Stakeholder Input Meetings

i. Overview

As part of its development of a 2020 Combined Plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (2020 Combined Plan), Alabama engaged local stakeholders in a series of 14 local stakeholder input meetings. Two meeting was held in each of the state's seven workforce council regions from July to October 2019. Meetings served as listening sessions during which participants provided qualitative data in forms of verbal feedback and written response representing the needs and perspective of their community. Stakeholder participation recruitment consisted of individuals and organizations representing: local workforce boards, businesses, labor organizations, economic development, community-based organizations, adult and youth education, higher education, disability services, youth-serving programs, veterans' service organizations, juvenile justice, the general public, and other stakeholders with an

interest in core programs. The data collected through local stakeholder input meetings was utilized to gain knowledge and inform plan development for the 2020 Combined Plan.

ii. Methodology

Qualitative data was collected through meetings with community stakeholders of the seven-regional workforce councils. Approximately 215 stakeholders participated in these meetings providing 193 written feedback forms. Stakeholders participated in identifying needs, barriers, and opportunities for developing Alabama's workforce. Clarus Consulting Group facilitated the local stakeholder input meetings. Each local stakeholder input meeting included introductions of participants and a presentation that informed participants about the background of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the 2020 Combined Plan. Stakeholders were informed of the importance of providing input to the development of the plan. Lead facilitators then provided an overview of the meeting structure:

- Discussion Topics: Two non-directive, open-ended questions prompted discussion and encouraged dynamic and open conversation.
- Discussion Groups: Participants were asked to provide a written individual reflection, discuss in pairs, and then break into small groups of four to six for further discussion of each question. Each small group then reported a key idea to the full group. Participants were encouraged to move to new pairings or groups for each question so they could benefit from listening to a mix of perspectives.
- Facilitation: Facilitators led each meeting, introduced each discussion question, guided discussion to ensure it stayed on topic, and facilitated the whole group sharing and recording of key ideas.

The following questions were asked during each local stakeholder input meeting:

- What services and support do you need to be successful in a strong regional economy and workforce?
- What are the top barriers to accessing services and support you need to be successful in a strong regional economy and workforce?

Each input meeting closed with facilitators providing brief summaries of the highlights and key points covered in the discussion groups, an overview of next steps in the planning process, and opportunities to provide further input into the planning process.

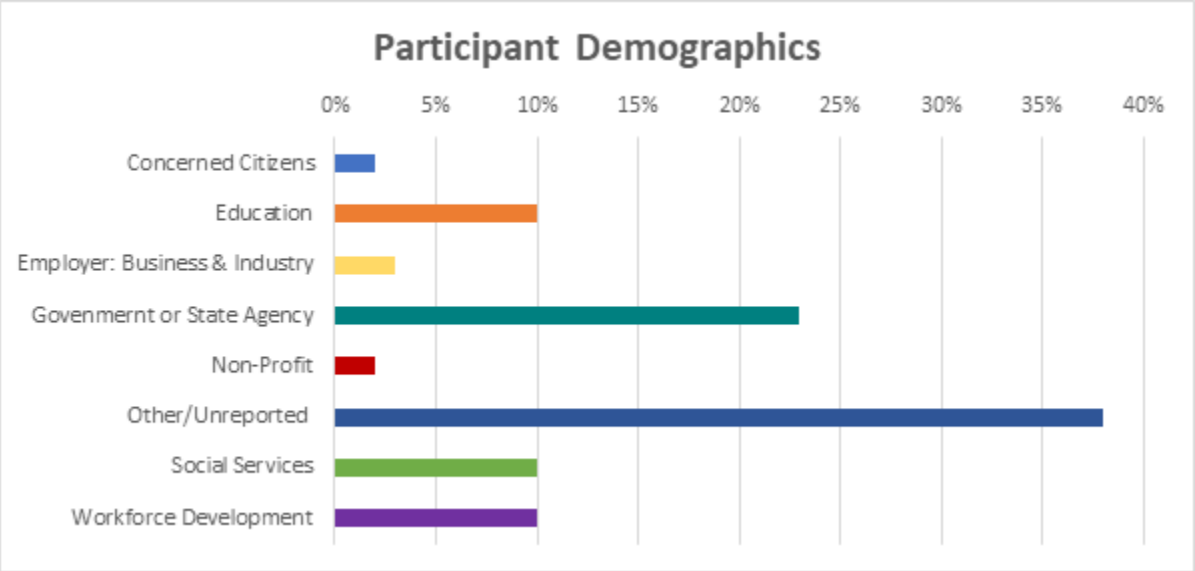
iii. Stakeholder Participation

Stakeholders engaged through local input meetings represented each of the seven workforce council regions and a range of organizations, industries, and sectors. An overview of stakeholder participants is below.



Regional Stakeholder Engagement

Regions represented in stakeholder input meetings, including locations of meetings.



Organizations, industries, and sectors represented in stakeholder input meetings by self-report.

iv. Stakeholder Insights

Stakeholders identified a number of challenges, barriers, and opportunities Alabama must address as it strives to improve the state's workforce. The themes below emerged as top priorities at each of the local stakeholder input meetings.

(1) Transportation

Key Finding: Stakeholders reported the lack of transportation access directly impedes the public's engagement in employment, vocational training, and educational opportunities. Transportation access is particularly difficult in rural areas.

(2) Childcare

Key Finding: Stakeholders reported limited access to affordable, quality childcare programs

during varied work hours prohibits the public's engagement in employment and training opportunities. Childcare programs need to be available and appropriately funded to promote access to quality childcare at affordable rates for Alabama's workforce.

(3) ADA Compliance and Disability Accommodations
Key Finding: Stakeholders reported accessibility for disabled populations must be a priority to develop an inclusive plan for Alabama's workforce. Employees and employers need direct training and support on work sites in order to ensure all current and potential employees are able to meaningfully participate and remain in the workforce. Service providers, employers, educational programs, transportation, websites, and application processes must all adhere to and sometimes go beyond ADA standards to promote inclusivity and accessibility.

(4) Internet and Technology
Key Finding: Stakeholders reported the lack of access to broadband and up-to-date computer skills training is a barrier to Alabama's workforce and employers. Limited broadband access, particularly in rural areas, was noted as a substantial barrier for workforce of all ages and abilities to access educational, training, and employment opportunities.

(5) Education and Training
Key Finding: Stakeholders reported direct access to quality and equitable education and training must exist in every community to strengthen Alabama's future workforce. Entry-level jobs need adaptable education requirements as an alternative to the GED. Education programs should include life skills or soft skills training as well as vocation specific training for all ages and abilities.

(6) Communication and Accessibility
Key Finding: Stakeholders reported that a unified, common message about all available services and supports is necessary. As part of this unification, Alabama needs a solidified system of access for providers, employers, and the general public to easily access and engage with available information and resources in one place. Communication systems and strategies should promote communication among potential employees, employers, and providers, as well as within the community of providers at the state and local levels.

(7) Service Providers
Key Finding: Stakeholders reported that service providers need a shared system of accountability for reaching measurable goals. Services providers need updated processes to streamline access and information distribution as well as greater connection to community resources outside of their own organization. Alignment and accountability to shared goals and simplified processes will help services providers work together with greater ease.

(8) Health, Healthcare, and Benefits
Key Findings: Stakeholders reported that Alabama's workforce needs a system to ensure housing and food security stability while working to obtain employment. This system must provide an interim or gap coverage for those on Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)/SNAP benefits who are indirectly discouraged from entering the workforce due to the risk of losing benefits. Alabama's workforce needs increased access to health care and healthy living resources including physical health, mental health, and substance abuse services.

(9) Employer Support
Key Findings: Stakeholders reported difficulty engaging local employers. Employers need a streamlined process to access information and engage with local service providers. Continuing to increase employer incentives would recruit new businesses to Alabama and result in the growth of employer engagement with workforce development processes.

(10) Equitable Access and Success
Key Findings: To ensure every Alabama resident possesses the skills and knowledge to succeed, the state should focus on populations with significant barriers to career attainment

opportunities. This includes disabled and special needs individuals, English Language Learners (ELL), GED students, first-generation college students, low-income individuals, minorities, rural residents, and single parent heads of household.

(2d.) State Plan Indicators of Performance and Program Quality and Accountability Metrics

The combined state plan also aligns the core indicators of performance for the six core WIOA programs, the four secondary CTE indicators of program performance, and the postsecondary CTE indicators of program performance. Under section 113, accountability for the core secondary CTE indicators of performance, for the fourth indicator (program quality), Alabama selected recognized postsecondary credential attainment. The ACCS and ALSDE will use the ATLAS on Career Pathways to align CTE programs to in-demand career pathways. Perkins V made amendments to the Wagner-Peyser Act (WIOA Title III), which establishes the labor market information and employment service. Thus, Alabama will be using consistent data to evaluate, align, and adjust all programs in the combined workforce system.

(2e.) State Plan Goals

The Alabama Workforce Development Board has adopted the following goals for Alabama's public workforce system:

- The State of Alabama will align the public workforce system to the Governor's Economic Development Strategic Plan (Accelerate Alabama 2.0) and the Success Plus postsecondary education attainment goal.
- Develop a longitudinal data system to adjust workforce programs based on data-driven decisions.
- Develop a network of Regional Workforce Councils (RWCs) that match business needs with talent.
- Implement a streamlined funding system that enables each program to meet the needs of business and the needs of citizens in, or preparing for, the workforce.

Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce in Alabama include the following:

- Align and the programs and activities of the ACCS and RWCs with the state's vision and goals.
- Align the activities and programs of colleges, universities, and training agencies with the Accelerate Alabama 2.0 plan and the Success Plus postsecondary education goal.
- Serve individuals with barriers to employment by increasing awareness of solutions for individuals with barriers to employment by vertically integrating all workforce programs to meet individual needs.)

Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers in Alabama include the following:

- Implement a RWC system that provides feedback to education programs (community colleges and K-12 CTE programs) and to WIOA training providers.
- Align the activities and programs of local Workforce Investment Boards with the activities and programs of the state RWC system.
- To develop public/private partnerships that provide direct engagement between public and private entities to increase the capacity for meeting employers' workforce needs.

Alabama's core workforce development programs and WIOA partner programs are gathering and analyzing data on performance indicators to report for the current reporting period. All programs will reach an agreement with the Secretary of Labor in conjunction with the Secretary of Education on state adjusted levels of performance for the indicators for Program Years 2018 and 2019. To affect an orderly transition to the performance accountability system in Section 116 of the WIOA, the Departments will continue to use the transition authority under WIOA Section 503(a) to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators. Alabama is committed to collecting and reporting on all indicators as required by WIOA for current and future years using the reporting system prescribed.

3. Performance Goals
(See Performance Goals for Adult, Youth, Dislocated Worker, Adult Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation)

4. Assessment
Assessment goals and goals for using assessment feedback to make improvements in programs and activities are as follows: 1) The ATLAS (Alabama's Terminal on Linking and Analyzing Statistics) on Career Pathways, the state longitudinal data system us being developed and will be used to provide workforce and educational attainment reports to the State Workforce Development Board; 2) the State Workforce Development Board will make recommendations to the Governor to meet business needs and improve training/education activities and programs; 3) local workforce investment boards are implementing the Success Plus plan based on the numbers being served in the target populations with barriers to employment in each area; 4) each local workforce investment board is responsible for ensuring the local area and each career center is serving those most in need through data from the new integrated workforce system.

C. STATE STRATEGY

The State of Alabama workforce system has set many ambitious goals including establishing a statewide longitudinal database, strengthening career pathways, expanding apprenticeship programs, producing 500,000 new credential holders within the next five years, and many others. Each of the agencies in the workforce system are aligned to support these goals. Workforce system partners include the Alabama Department of Commerce (Title I), Alabama Department of Postsecondary Education – (Title II, Perkins V), Alabama Department of Labor (Title III, Trade Act, JVSG), Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (Title IV), Alabama Department of Human Resources (TANF, SNAP E&T), Alabama Department of Senior Services (SCSEP), and the Alabama Department of Education (Perkins V).

There is a high level of cooperation among the agencies to serve their common client base. This includes communication and planning activities through various State Workforce Board and Local Area Workforce Board committees. The level of communication and data sharing will be strengthened as the longitudinal database is implemented. Currently Title I, Title III, Trade Act, and JVSG is operating together in a new shared case management and data tracking system, which started in April 2020. There are plans for other programs such as apprenticeship to be added. Each partner agency will have the opportunity to join in this data sharing system as it progresses. Agreements for data sharing of the common elements have been put in place with the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Service (Title IV) and the Alabama Department of Postsecondary Education - Adult Education (Title II). The Alabama Department of Human Resources (TANF and SNAP E&T) historically has had an existing data sharing agreement with the Alabama Department of Commerce and Alabama Department of Labor to share data and coordinate shared client services. Details are now being worked out on how to transfer this to the new data system.

The Alabama Department of Human Resources' TANF program is an especially important partner in the workforce system. The JOBS Program, which is DHR's welfare to work program, is operational in all 67 Alabama counties. The Program provides services and work supports to parents receiving cash assistance to help them find and retain employment. These services and supports seek to address barriers such as lack of adequate childcare, poor access to transportation, domestic violence and substance abuse, all which greatly limit the ability to obtain and retain employment. Services also include employability assessments, job readiness and job skills training, disability assessments and adult education. Following an initial interview which involves individual and family assessments, JOBS case managers provide services directly or by referral to other agencies. This program continues to operate its own separate physical locations, but there is close coordination between it, the Alabama Career Centers, and other

workforce partners to serve common clients and ensure that current and potential clients have access to all of the workforce programs available through initial screenings for eligibility and referrals.

Alignment of these programs will support the following state workforce strategies and goals:

State Strategy: State Strategies to Achieve Goals
Alabama's current strategies for achieving its strategic workforce development goals evolved from a two-year task force study conducted by the Alabama Workforce Council appointed by the Governor on July 2, 2014. The study by Alabama's leaders of industry, business, education and government, recommended the following strategies in their report to the Governor on January 31, 2015:

- Develop and implement a robust longitudinal data system (P-20W) for use by all stakeholders to inform decision-making and planning to meet changing workforce training and education needs. The P-20W data system will collect data from state education agencies, the Department of Labor, industries, and other parties to evaluate education and workforce trends. The system will serve as the centerpiece of the education and industry "feedback loop."
- Create and launch an awareness campaign to change generational misperceptions about long-term careers in the skilled trades and raise awareness about long-term career opportunities in Alabama. The campaign will serve as the marketing centerpiece for the state's workforce development efforts to educate students and adults about career pathways and opportunities, and to direct them to a one-stop-shop online resource for more information about educational programs, industry websites, and other workforce development programs.
- Develop and implement a "One Stop Shop" online workforce information resource -- a single online resource for all information about state workforce development efforts and career opportunities. Separate portals within the main site will deliver content relevant to each of the identified target demographic groups - (1) students, (2) adults seeking to re-enter the workforce, (3) parents, and (4) educators.

Since 2015, Alabama has accelerated efforts toward strengthening the state's education and workforce development systems. This work has incorporated and aligned the efforts of many partners in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors, as well as citizens and stakeholders across the state. The State of Alabama's 2020 Combined Plan for WIOA represents a moment of opportunity to not only record and build on the success and collective impact of these efforts to date, but also to articulate a vision and priorities for collaborative work over the next four years. Alabama's 2020 WIOA Combined Plan was designed to braid federal and state workforce and education funding streams to produce an education-to-workforce pipeline that provides a seamless transition from secondary to postsecondary education, alignment between secondary and postsecondary CTE, and co-enrollment between adult education and postsecondary CTE. The Governor's Office and the partner agencies to the combined state WIOA plan participated in 14 joint state planning meetings beginning in June 2019. The plan was developed after the 14 public meetings were conducted in each of the seven workforce areas (regions). Two meetings were held in each region between July and October 2019. The 2020 Combined Plan includes Perkins CTE for the first time and provides a vision to align Alabama's public workforce system to provide in-demand career pathways and supportive services for individuals with barriers to employment.

The Governor's Office achieved consensus on needs assessments, plans to reach special and disconnected populations, stakeholder input, local and state performance targets, program quality and performance indicators, and alignment of programs in the combined state plan to achieve a unified workforce development system for the State of Alabama. The WIOA and CTE needs assessments were aligned. The process for collecting stakeholder input and stakeholder review between CTE and WIOA were aligned through the combined state plan. The WIOA and CTE public hearings were aligned. The combined state plan took advantage of aligned definitions in WIOA and CTE, including "career pathways," "sector strategies," and "programs of

study" to develop fully articulated career pathways in all 16 career clusters that begin with career exploration, transition to pre-apprenticeship, and culminate in a registered or industry-recognized apprenticeship, which allow secondary CTE concentrators to earn a high school diploma, an associate's degree mapped to industry recognized credentials, and work-based learning experience in an aligned occupation. The combined state plan explicates how career coaches, dual enrollment, and work-based learning, and simulated workplaces will be the lynchpins of ensuring that secondary and postsecondary CTE students have access to align career pathways and placement opportunities.

The 2020 WIOA combined state plan aligned the core indicators of performance for the six core WIOA programs, the four secondary CTE indicators, and the postsecondary CTE indicators. Under section 113, accountability, for the core secondary CTE indicators of performance, for the fourth indicator (program quality), Alabama selected recognized postsecondary credential attainment for federal accountability and will monitor all three as the basis for career pathways at the state level, since all three of these activities are critical to the develop of the education-to-workforce pipeline. Across all titles, WIOA and Perkins focus on serving "individuals with barriers to employment." Each special population category listed in Perkins V and WIOA overlap except three (out-of-workforce individuals is a Perkins definition with three subcategories [one of the three subcategories contains a WIOA special population [displaced homemakers]). Individuals preparing for non-traditional fields and youth with parents on active duty are both exclusive to Perkins but were added to WIOA by the Governor to make all special populations aligned. The Alabama Success Plus postsecondary education attainment goal and the goal of reaching the national labor force participation rate by 2025 are focused on reaching each special population's share of the attainment and labor force goals annually by each of the states seven workforce regions, by each county, and for each of the 16 career clusters. Alabama submitted the 2020 WIOA Combined Plan on February 3rd, 2020. The plan was approved by the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor on June 7, 2020.

(a.) The Career Cluster Strategy

The Alabama Committee on Credentials and Career Pathways (ACCCP) was created by Alabama Act 2019-506 to identify credentials of value associated with in-demand occupations within the 16 career clusters. The ACCCP is tasked with promulgating regional and statewide list of in-demand occupations and credentials of value associated with those occupations. The ACCCP also is tasked with identifying career pathways by connecting occupations in a sector from entry-level to advanced level. The career pathway approach connects levels of education, training, counseling, support services, and credentials for specific occupations in a way that optimizes continuous progress towards the education, employment, and career goals of individuals of all ages, abilities, and needs. Career pathways fully engage businesses to help meet their workforce needs. In turn, customers are encouraged to choose among a full range of education and work-based learning opportunities that allows them to earn marketable credentials. Ultimately, the goal is to connect the customer to a career pathway that taps their talents and leads to long-term economic security. Career pathways are most effective when they are highly informed by businesses in a regional economy and when they are supported by system partners. These pathways can offer a mechanism for those with barriers to employment to move more efficiently into jobs. The workforce development partners can identify potential participants and provide the support services for these job seekers to succeed in their education and training. Business input can help the education system better tailor and update curriculum based on regional industry needs and trends.

(b.) Secondary to Postsecondary Transition & Alignment

Alabama offers dual enrollment and statewide articulation to ease the transition from secondary to postsecondary through the Accelerated High School program, the Early College Enrollment Program, and general dual enrollment opportunities.

Alabama has statewide articulation agreements in the following Career Clusters:

- Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources Career Cluster
- Architecture & Construction Career Cluster
- Arts, AV Technology & Communications Career Cluster
- Business Management & Administration Career Cluster
- Education & Training Career Cluster
- Human Services Career Cluster
- Information Technology Career Cluster
- Manufacturing Career Cluster
- STEM Career Cluster
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics Career Cluster

Recognizing a major shortage of craft professionals within Alabama and a need for better career pathways for students, Alabama's legislature signed into law a requirement for all of ALSDE's CTE programs to have industry-supported advisory programs to ensure students are career ready upon graduation.

(c.) Industry Collaboration

In 2013, ALSDE created industry committees in response to new legislation requiring Alabama CTE programs to have advisory programs to ensure industry has influence on the training process. Feedback from all industry advisory committees indicated a strong demand for industry-recognized credentials, so the committees established Career Readiness Indicators, which equate to credentials or certifications that demonstrate a student is ready for career placement.

(d.) Career Preparedness

To better facilitate career-based decision making among its students, ALSDE requires every student to take a one-credit career preparedness course in ninth grade that focuses on academic and career planning prior to graduation. The career preparedness course has three integrated areas of instruction: academic planning and career development, financial literacy, and technology. Students define their career goals and plan their coursework through grade 12. This four-year plan is a dynamic document that can be updated, but it serves as a compass for students' career paths. The course allows students to spend a year looking at careers and what it takes to get there. In addition, ALSDE employs career coaches to better educate students on the options available to them. Career Coaches in Alabama high schools act as liaisons between industry, students, and parents in each of ALSDE's schools. More students are earning in-demand industry credentials than ever before. The ACT WorkKeys assessment is administered to all high school seniors in Alabama public schools.

As baseline data for Alabama's CTE programs the following information for the 2014-15 school year is presented in the table below.

Item/Feature of CTE in Alabama	Number, Amount or Percentage
Number of public high schools	376
Number of public high school offering CTE courses	72
Students enrolled in public high schools	262,062
Students enrolled in CTE courses	170,448
Students identified as high school CTE concentrators	81,341

Item/Feature of CTE in Alabama	Number, Amount or Percentage
Number of public community colleges	26
Number of full and part-time students enrolled in public community colleges	125,477
Number of post-secondary CTE concentrators	39,932
Total Perkins funds received	$19,175,065
Percentage of Perkins funds distributed to secondary schools	70%
Percentage of Perkins funds distributed to post-secondary	30%

The Department of Commerce's Workforce Development Division (WDD) is dedicated to assisting the growth of Alabama businesses and the workers that sustain their operations. By directing individuals toward job skills improvement programs, education, and training, the Workforce Development Division equips workers with the tools and talents that employers demand. The Workforce Development Division has two prongs to serve businesses and industry, job seekers, and employees. The Alabama Industrial Development Training agency (AIDT), one of the nation's top state workforce training agencies, offers comprehensive pre-employment selection and training, leadership development, on-the-job training, and assessments — all specific to each company's needs. AIDT has worked with thousands of businesses and trained more than 600,000 workers. The second prong of the Workforce Development Division is the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and are responsible for several workforce programs, including the Alabama Career Centers (Which are jointly funded by the Alabama Department of Commerce and managed by the Alabama Department of Labor) and various training programs.

WDD also oversees five (5) of the seven (7) Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs). The five Local Workforce Development Areas that are administered by the Workforce Development Division currently contain some of the same membership as the Regional Workforce Councils, which provides the integration and consistency desired at the local level. Each of the LWDAs works with their corresponding Regional Council to share information and seek information from local businesses and industry to ensure WIOA training programs are targeting the skills and gaps identified in each local area. Career Centers, Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), employers, and other partners will collaborate to develop pathways for populations that may have barriers to entering the workforce. The Alabama Department of Labor manages the Alabama Career Center System that is funded by WIOA in Alabama. The respective staffs of these agencies are fully engaged and integrated as we serve the citizens.

ACCS Adult Education Office is Alabama's eligible agency for adult education and is responsible for the administrative and programmatic oversight of the Title II AEFLA funds distributed to eligible, competitively selected providers. Under WIOA, ACCS Adult Education eligible providers' services may include all of the following:

- adult education and literacy;
- workplace adult education and literacy;
- family literacy;
- English language acquisition;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- workforce preparation;
- integrated education and training (IET).

ACCS Adult Education will focus on expanding low-skilled individuals' access to career pathways in high-demand occupations. With this focus, the integrated education and training (IET) activities and the contextualized curriculum and materials used for IET will be aligned to Alabama's College and Career Readiness standards for ELA/Literacy, science, and math. In addition, workforce preparation activities will align to OCTAE's Employability Skills Framework, and any occupational training components provided will be based on business and industry standards. All low-skilled job seekers will have access to these Pathways through a "no wrong door" approach to career center services.

(e.) The Strong Start, Strong Finish Initiative

Governor Ivey launched the Strong, Start Strong Finish education initiative in July 2017 to integrate Alabama's early childhood education, K-12 education, and workforce development efforts into a seamless educational journey for all Alabamians. Strong Start, Strong Finish is composed of three major strategies: Pre through Three (P-3); Computer Science for Alabama (CS4AL); and Success Plus. Pre to Three is focused on securing state-wide saturation for the Alabama First-Class Pre-K Program and ensuring that all of Alabama's third-graders are proficient readers by 2022. CS4AL will ensure that a rigorous computer science course is offered at all of Alabama's middle and high schools by 2022. Success Plus will prepare 500,000 more Alabamians to enter the workforce with high-quality postsecondary degrees, certificates, and credentials by 2025. With the passage of the Strong Start, Strong Finish legislative agenda (Act 2019-523, Act 2019-389, and Act 2019-506), Governor Ivey has delivered on the most sweeping and transformative education agenda in over 50 years.

Governor Ivey's strategic vision Alabama's education and workforce system includes five benchmarks to ensure that all Alabamians are prepared for a strong start and a strong finish to their education journey—no matter what phase of life they may find themselves. The five Strong Start, Strong Finish benchmarks are:

- pre-k readiness to ensure that all of Alabama's four-year-old children are prepared for an excellent early childhood education experience;
- school readiness to ensure that all of Alabama's five- and six-year-old students enter kindergarten and/or first grade with advanced skills;
- literacy and numeracy by age eight to ensure that all of Alabama's students are prepared to persist through difficult coursework;
- career exploration and discovery so that all students understand how to connect their interests and aptitudes with academic skills they learn in the classroom; and
- college and/or career readiness so that all students graduate high school prepared to enter into postsecondary education or into an in-demand occupation.

The three Strong Start, Strong Finish strategies—P-3, CS4AL, and Success Plus—are composed of initiatives designed to make progress against two or more of the five benchmarks. P-3 is composed of strategies that address the first three benchmarks—pre-k readiness, school readiness, and literacy and numeracy. CS4AL is focused on benchmarks three through five (literacy and numeracy, college and career exploration, and college and/or career readiness). Success Plus highlights fourth and fifth benchmarks of career exploration and discovery and college and career exploration.

(f.) Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Transformation (GOEWT)

Governor Ivey established the Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Transformation (GOEWT) to coordinate Alabama's education and workforce systems in 2018. The GOEWT was charged with three goals: (1) to increase the labor force participation and to decrease the unemployment and underemployment rates; (2) to surpass the Alabama post-secondary attainment goal; and (3) to create career pathways in all 16 career clusters for in-school youth, out-of-school youth, adults, and disconnected populations. The GOEWT was assigned three objectives to achieve its three goals: (1) to braid Alabama's federal education and workforce development funding streams to support an education-to-workforce pipeline; (2) to create and

manage the Alabama Terminal for Linking and Analyzing Statistics (ATLAS) on Career Pathways as Alabama's state longitudinal database system; and (3) to create the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship.

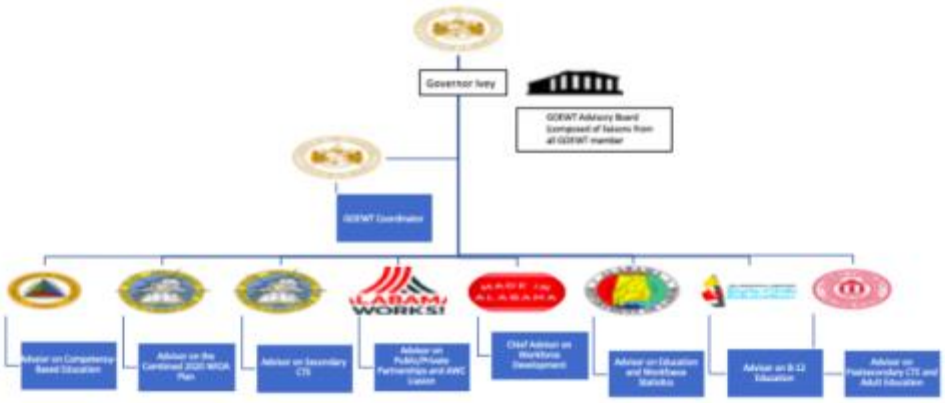
The GOEWT is led by the Director of the GOEWT, who also concurrently serves as the Governor's Education Policy Advisor. The Director of the GOEWT is charged with nine tasks for achieving the goals and objectives of the GOEWT. The Director of the GOEWT is charged with (1) braiding Alabama's federal education and workforce funding streams; (2) leading the Governor's P-20W Council that governs the ATLAS on Career Pathways; (3) managing the development of the ATLAS on Career Pathways; (4) developing the Alabama College and Career Exploration Tool (ACCET); (5) identifying valuable credentials and career pathways aligned to secondary, post-secondary, and adult education programs of study; (6) coordinating the development of the combined WIOA 2020 State Plan; (7) coordinating the establishment of the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship as Alabama's state apprenticeship agency; (8) creating a unified workforce marketing, outreach, and incentive strategy; and (9) coordinating Alabama's federal education and workforce development grant applications.

The GOEWT Advisory Board consists of the 24 state agencies involved in education, workforce development, and human services in Alabama. The GOEWT Advisory Board provides advice and consent on the recommendations of the Director of the GOEWT. The Director of the GOEWT presents recommendations to implement the goals and objectives of the GOEWT to the GOEWT Advisory Board. The GOEWT Advisory Board is chaired by the Chief Advisor to the GOEWT. During each called meeting of the GOEWT Advisory Board, there is an official meeting followed by a work session. During the official meeting, the Council may vote to confirm or disapprove of recommendations presented by the Director of the GOEWT at the previous called work session. The Chief Advisor on Workforce Development presides over the GOEWT Advisory Board business meetings, and the Director of the GOEWT holds the floor during the work sessions.

The GOEWT Advisory Board Member Agencies

Alabama Medicaid Agency	Alabama Department of Mental Health	Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs
Department of Human Resources	Alabama Department of Commerce	Alabama Department of Senior Services
Alabama Department of Corrections	Governor's Office of Minority Affairs	Alabama Office of Information Technology
Alabama Department of Labor	Alabama Department of Youth Services	Alabama State Senate
Alabama State House of Representatives	Alabama State Department of Education	Alabama Community College System
Alabama Commission on Higher Education	Alabama State Workforce Development Board	Alabama Workforce Council
Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services	Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs	Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education
Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention	Alabama Governor's Office Volunteer Services	Alabama Department of Revenue

GOEWT Organizational Chart



The GOEWT Director is supported by a team of advisors who represent key partner state agencies. The advisors include: (1) a chief advisor on workforce development, who is the director of the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship; (2) an advisor on outreach and workforce statistics, who is the director of the Office of Education and Workforce Statistics; (3) an advisor on pre-k-12 education, who is an employee of the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education; (4) an advisor on secondary career and technical education, who is an employee of the Alabama State Department of Education; (5) an advisor on public/private partnerships, who is recommended for appointment by the chairperson of the Alabama Workforce Council; (6) an advisor on competency-based education, who is the state higher education executive officer; (7) an advisor on the combined 2020 WIOA plan, who is an employee of either the Alabama State Department of Education, the Alabama Department of Commerce, or the Alabama Community College System; and (8) an advisor on postsecondary career and technical education, who is an employee of the Alabama Community College System. The GOEWT is funded by braiding funds through memorandum of agreement between the Governor's Office and the Alabama Department of Commerce, the Alabama Community College System, and the Alabama State Department of Education to transfer state leadership and administration funds to the GOEWT.

(g.) Alabama's Education and Workforce Transformation

To achieve the Alabama attainment goal and to ensure that participants in Alabama's workforce development programs have access to in-demand career pathways that lead to valuable, portable, post-secondary degrees, certificates, and credentials, Governor Ivey is committed to meeting the Alabama postsecondary attainment goal of adding 500,000 credential holders to the workforce and raising Alabama's labor force to the national average by 2025 through human capital development, shifting more federal resources to directly support job training, and a new social compact between the workforce and Alabama's employers. Stackable, trackable, portable, and transferable industry-recognized credentials that are linked to fast-growing, high-wage, and high-demand career pathways. This will create career pathways for in-school youth based on work-based learning and credential attainment and will provide multiple points of entry and exit from the workforce for adults who need to earn competency-based credentials to reenter the workforce or upskill. A currency of credentials of value will create a reciprocal feedback loop between employers and the workforce by signaling progressive wage increases, upward mobility within a firm, and the potential for lateral transfers within and between industry sectors. A credential currency will also signal to many people who are disengaged from the workforce, who are also economically disadvantaged and socially at-risk, that entry into a skill- and competency-based career pathway is also a path into economic security.

(h.) The Alabama Attainment Goal

Governor Ivey has set a postsecondary education attainment goal of adding 500,000 credential

holders to Alabama's workforce by 2025. Alabama is committed to meeting the Alabama postsecondary attainment goal through human capital development, shifting more federal resources to directly benefit job training, and a renewed social compact for Alabamians. Using the combined 2020 WIOA plan and the Alabama Career Pathways Model, Alabama is working to establish a wage premium for individuals who presently are unable to enter the labor force due to barriers such as a lack of childcare or transportation or disillusionment regarding the prospects of upward mobility. The career pathway model will provide a feedback loop between employers and employees that will signal to individuals who currently are not betting on work to take a chance on a competency-based career pathway. A currency of credentials of value will also signal progressive wage increases, upward mobility within a firm, and within and between industry sectors. The 2020 WIOA Combined Plan will ensure that Alabama's workforce system is driven by data and by the needs of industry and special populations to serve two customers: employers and job seekers.

The global economy is changing rapidly, and there is an increasing need for workers who possess skills and training beyond a high school diploma. Workers with a post-secondary credential have taken 8.4 million jobs since 2011 in the United States, but workers with a high school diploma or less took only 80,000 jobs, after losing 5.6 million jobs in the last recession. The Lumina Foundation, a non-profit organization committed to increasing the number of Americans who hold quality post-secondary credentials, has set the goal that 60 percent of Americans will hold a high-quality degree, certificate, or credential by 2025. Between now and 2025, assuming current rates of degree and certificate production continue, about 24.2 million Americans will earn postsecondary credentials. To reach the 2025 goal, 16.4 million more high-skilled workers need to be added to that total. Alabama's attainment gap is similar to the national numbers. Alabama's 2017 attainment rate was 43 percent, while the experts project that Alabama's demand for post-secondary education attainment in 2025 will be 51 percent.

Based on recommendations from the Success Plus plan, Governor Ivey has set five absolute priorities for reaching the post-secondary educational attainment goal: 1) All Alabama residents will understand the importance of earning certificates, credentials, and degrees and will know how to find information and resources to start or continue their education and training; 2) all Alabama residents will have access to education and will receive the continuous support they need to complete certificates, credentials, and degrees; 3) career pathways from education and training to high-demand jobs will be defined; 4) partners at the state, regional, and local levels will work together to increase post-secondary educational attainment in Alabama; 5) progress toward Alabama's goal for post-secondary educational attainment will be tracked and shared regularly using data and evidence-based practices. To measure progress against each of the Success Plus absolute priorities, five key metrics have been identified, which will be tracked and shared regularly: 1) post-secondary educational attainment rate; 2) college and career readiness; 3) participation in work-based learning; 4) enrollment and completions for all levels of education and training by population, race/ethnicity, gender, and workforce region; and 5) the employment and workforce participation rate. Alabama's attainment efforts will focus on high school students (Grades 9–12); out-of-school youth; post-secondary students (18-24 years old); adult learners; veterans; individuals in the corrections system; and populations with significant barriers to post-secondary educational attainment opportunities in Alabama, including disabled and special needs individuals, English language learners, first-generation college students, low-income individuals, minorities, rural residents, and women. Governor Ivey's Consolidated State Workforce Development Strategic plan will help achieve each of the Success Plus absolute priorities by aligning federal workforce development funding streams, increasing the amount of federal funding workforce regions must use to directly support job training opportunities, enabling data-driven workforce development decisions, and by scaling access to valuable credentials and work-based learning.

	Success Plus Metrics	Purpose	Data Source
1	Post-secondary Educational Attainment Rate	Measures progress toward overall post-secondary educational attainment goal	Educational Attainment Data Dashboard
2	College and Career Readiness	Indicates readiness of high school graduates to continue along pathways to continuing education opportunities and high-demand jobs	ALSDE College and Career Ready Dashboard
3	Participation in Work-Based Learning	Serves as an indicator for career success	Alabama Community College System, Alabama Department of Commerce, and Alabama State Department of Education
4	Enrollment and Completions for All Levels of Education and Training by Population, Race/Ethnicity, Gender, and Workforce Region	Measures progress toward closing attainment gaps for particular populations and regions	Alabama Commission on Higher Education
5	Employment and Workforce Participation Rate	Demonstrates alignment between workforce preparedness and business/industry demand	Alabama Department of Labor

(i.) Braiding Federal Workforce Development Funding Streams

Governor Ivey braided federal funding streams to fund the Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Transformation (GOEWT). The GOEWT is tasked specifically with braiding Alabama's federal education and workforce development funding streams to support an education-to-workforce pipeline, which involves modifying ESSA, Perkins, and WIOA state plans to support the Alabama Career Pathways Model. The GOEWT also lists a significant number of local supports to be provided as part of this system, funded in large part by braiding WIOA and Perkins State Leadership and Administration dollars. These local supports include development of staff, providing technical assistance in carrying out activities described in the Perkins state plan, and supporting local development of industry and sector partnerships.

(j.) The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which succeeded the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), is the primary federal legislation that supports workforce development. The five titles of WIOA include six core programs—adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs (Title I of WIOA), adult education (Title II), the employment service program (Title III), and the vocational rehabilitation program (Title IV). The six core programs are administered by multiple agencies. The Department of Commerce is responsible for implementing the Title I programs, the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) manages Title II, the Alabama Department of Labor oversees Title III, and the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) oversees Title IV.

WIOA Core Agencies
- Alabama Department of Commerce (Title I youth, adult, dislocated worker)
- The Alabama Community College System (Title II adult education)
- The Alabama Department of Labor (Title III Wagner-Peyser and the Employment Service)
- The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (Title IV Rehabilitation Services)

WIOA Partner Agencies
- The Alabama State Department of Education (Perkins CTE)
- The Alabama Department of Human Resources (SNAP and TANF)
- The Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs
- The Alabama Department of Senior Services

WIOA Priorities
More strategic local boards, creation of career pathways and sector strategies that allow the business community to engage with all education and workforce agencies to create aligned opportunities for special populations across all agencies; data-driven decision making; validate data and provide work-based learning opportunities aligned to labor market data; allowing the employer community to tell their story once throughout the entire system rather than having to go to each agency.

Planning
State and local boards must be composed of at least 51 percent business and industry and at least 20 percent worker organizations, which means 71 percent of the board is composed of customers. WIOA also creates planning regions. Each state determines whether the planning regions and local areas are concurrent.



Alabama's Talent Needs

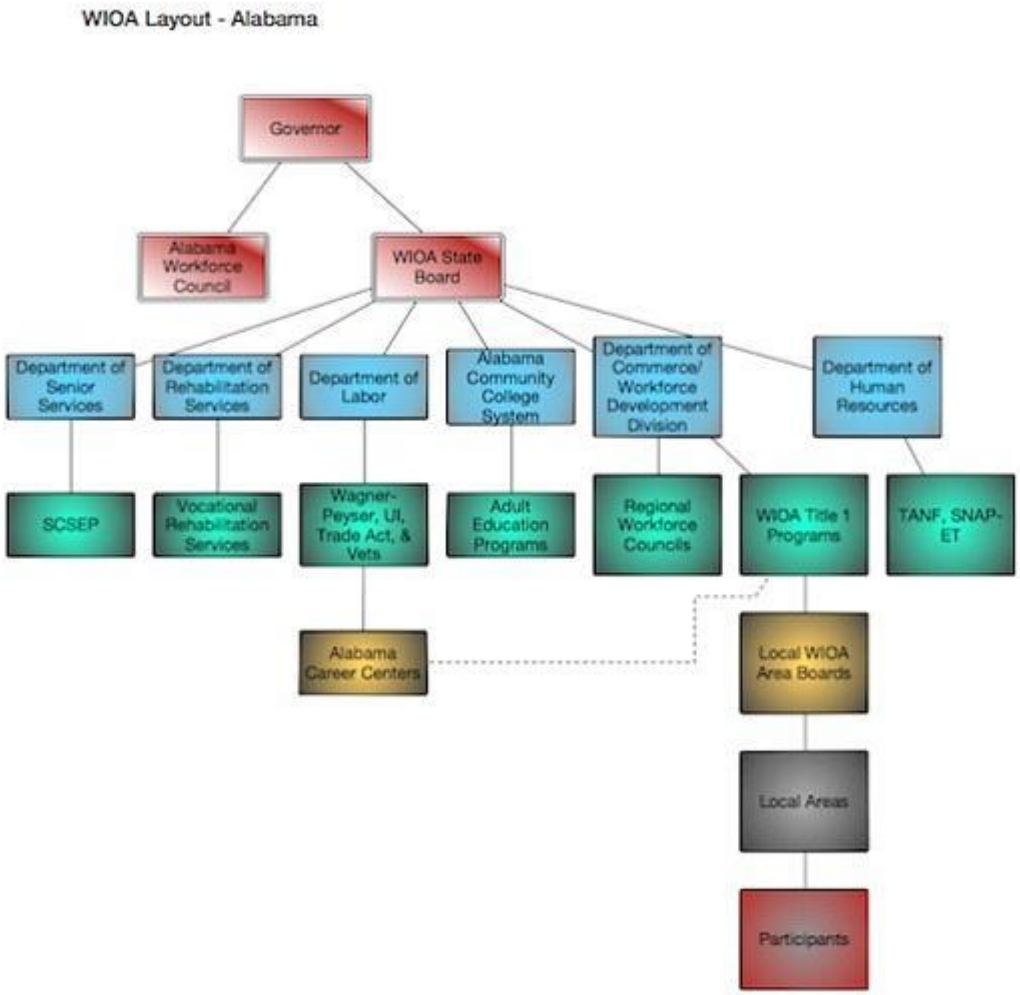


Figure: WIOA Layout - Alabama

WIOA includes five titles:

- Title I—Workforce Development Activities—authorizes job training and related services to unemployed or underemployed individuals and establishes the governance and performance accountability system for WIOA;
- Title II—Adult Education and Literacy—authorizes education services to assist adults in improving their basic skills, completing secondary education, and transitioning to postsecondary education;
- Title III—Amendments to the Wagner-Peyser Act—amends the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 to integrate the U.S. Employment Service (ES) into the One-Stop system authorized by WIOA;
- Title IV—Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973—authorizes employment-related vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities, to integrate vocational rehabilitation into the One-Stop system; and
- Title V—General Provisions—specifies transition provisions from WIA to WIOA.

The five titles of WIOA include six core programs—adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs (Title I of WIOA), adult education (Title II), the employment service program (Title III), and the vocational rehabilitation program (Title IV). In Alabama, the Department of Commerce is the fiscal agent for WIOA. The Department of Commerce Workforce Development oversees the data collection and performance indicators for all six core programs. WIOA adopted six uniform performance indicators for all of the WIOA core programs. The six primary indicators of performance in WIOA are:

A. the percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
B. the percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;
C. the median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
D. the percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential (or secondary school diploma or equivalent) during participation or within one year after program exit;
E. the percentage of program participants who 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
F. the indicators of effectiveness in serving employers established by the Secretaries of Labor and Education.

Service or Program	Programs and Activities
Alabama Career Center System	Operated as a partnership between the Alabama Department of Commerce ((WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Alabama Department of Labor (Wagner-Peyser, UI, TAA and Veterans). The Career Center System also collaborates with Adult Education, Rehabilitative Services, TANF, SNAP and Title IV of the Older Americans Act (SCESP). Statewide there are 7 Comprehensive Career Centers and 46 Affiliate Career Centers in the system. In PY 2020 Alabama Career Center System provided 8130 individuals with WIOA training services, serving low-income adults, youth, and dislocated workers. PY 2020 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds totaled $40,432,623.
Adult Education	The WIOA Title II Adult Education array of educational and training services are administered through the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) network of twenty-five eligible, competitively selected providers. The overarching goals focus on attainment of a high school credential or it's recognized equivalent, college and career readiness to promote successful transition to postsecondary education, training, and/or employment. Adult Education services, includes integration of basic literacy and numeracy skills, employability skills, integrated English literacy civics education and career pathway skills leading to industry-recognized and in-demand credentials. Adults are afforded opportunities for apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs. The myriad of adult education services are also extended to the incarcerated or institutionalized population in a limited, yet targeted format. Adult Education is a central core partner within the local workforce board areas and an active member of

Service or Program	Programs and Activities
	the Alabama Career Center system.
Alabama Department of Labor - Wagner-Peyser, Unemployment Insurance, Trade Act, and Veterans Services	The Alabama Department of Labor (ADOL) houses the Wagner-Peyser program (Employment Service), Unemployment Insurance, Trade Act, and Veterans Services programs. ADOL Wagner-Peyser and WIOA Title I programs have been co-located as part of the Alabama Career Centers since 2001. AlabamaWorks! (AW!) is the online case management data system that provides job seeker skills, abilities and work history with employers posting job openings in the system. ADOL provides Trade Act services and Veteran's employment representatives in the Career Centers. In PY2020 alone, approximately 145,500 job seekers were registered into the AW! system.
Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS)	The Department of Rehabilitation Services Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) provides specialized employment and education related services and training to assist teens and adults with disabilities to become employable. Services include skill assessments, counseling, training programs, job placement, assistive technology and transportation. For Program Year 2014 funding for the VRS totaled approximately $25,000,000; and for the same period 31,244 job seekers with disabilities were provided services. Since 2001 the VRS has been an active partner in the Alabama Career Center System.

(k.) The Carl D. Perkins Act

The Carl D. Perkins Act (Perkins V) is the preeminent source of federal funding for secondary and post-secondary career and technical education. The Perkins Act provides nearly $1.3 billion annually to CTE programs across the nation. Perkins Basic State Grants provide formula funding to states. The basic grant awards are divided between high schools and community colleges. States are given discretion on how to split the funds between secondary and postsecondary education, but a minimum of 85 percent of these grants must be distributed based on a formula to local secondary and postsecondary institutions that target disadvantaged students. The Division of Career and Technical Education and Workforce Development at the ALSDE is responsible for overseeing secondary Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs in Alabama's middle and high schools. Secondary CTE standards are designed for specific "career clusters," which organize CTE programs of study to prepare students for further education or employment in pathways such as health care, business, and manufacturing. Alabama has adopted the National Career Clusters Model and is implementing standards and programs across all 16 career clusters. At the postsecondary level, CTE is delivered through Alabama's community colleges. With 24 colleges and 76 locations, the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) reaches almost every corner of the state. The Alabama Community College System offers dual enrollment and statewide articulation agreements to ease the transition from secondary to postsecondary CTE programs. The Alabama Commission on Higher Education coordinates transfer agreements between Alabama's community and technical colleges and the four-year public institutions for advanced CTE programs.

(l.) The Combined 2020 State WIOA Plan

Under WIOA, the Governor of each state must submit a Unified or Combined State Plan to the U.S. Secretary of Labor that outlines a four-year strategy for the state's workforce development system. At a minimum, a state must submit a Unified State Plan that includes a plan for the six core WIOA programs. However, a state may also submit a Combined State Plan that includes other workforce development programs, such as secondary and postsecondary CTE programs funded under the Carl D. Perkins Act. Alabama submitted a combined state plan for 2016-2019; however, CTE programs were not included in the plan.

The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (H.R. 2353), the fifth reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins V), reduced the length covered by a state's CTE plan from six years to four years to encourage alignment between the core WIOA programs and the optional partner programs, such as CTE. Prior to the recent reauthorization, the divergent number of years covered by the WIOA and CTE state plans created a barrier to including CTE in a combined state plan. Although all States have approved WIOA Unified or Combined State Plans for Program Years (PYs 2016- 2019), WIOA requires that states review their plans every two years and update state plan strategies based on changes in the labor market, economic conditions, or other factors affecting the implementation of the state plan. Alabama will include Perkins CTE programs in the 2020 Combined Plan, which will produce the alignment necessary for apprenticeships for in-school youth to flourish in Alabama. Furthermore, Alabama recently requested and received a waiver from the U.S. DOL to allow in-school youth to receive ITAs. Allowing at-risk, in-school youth who are participating in an apprenticeship program to access WIOA funding will enhance the viability of pre-registered youth and industry-recognized apprenticeships that are aligned to credentials of value and in-demand career pathways. Including CTE in the consolidated state WIOA and expanding apprenticeships by allowing in-school youth to receive ITAs will align Alabama's workforce development programs around in-demand career pathways linked to credentials of value.

(m.) The Alabama College and Career Exploration Tool (ACCET)

Reemployment

Governor Ivey's focus on aligning competency-based career pathways with work-based learning and academic course work has resulted in an intentional development of the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship, a process for validating the quality of non-degree credentials, and a system for developing profiles for Alabama's in-demand occupations. These advancements have provided the foundation for economic upward mobility by permitting an individual to progress from an entry-level position, then to a middle-skills job, and finally to an advanced-level career. Over the next year, Governor Ivey will launch a series of technology solutions to operationalize Alabama's Talent Development Strategic Plan. The Alabama Talent Triad consists of the Alabama Credential Registry, which will be used to provide full transparency for each credential awarded to Alabamians and will tag credentials to the competencies that compose Alabama's in-demand jobs. The Credential Registry launched in September 2021. The Alabama Skills-Based Job Description Generator will allow employers to create customized job descriptions based on the "DNA" of the jobs in their firms. The ACCET learning and employment record will allow job seekers to develop verified resumes and to link directly to skills-based job descriptions generated by employers. The Alabama will develop an add-on to the ACCET for virtual career coaching. The GOEWT is developing a virtual coaching platform will triage jobseekers and students through the ACCET using artificial intelligence (AI) and chat bots. Individuals will be referred to a cadre of Career Pathways Navigators recruited from Alabama's public workforce system, who will be trained to respond to referrals from the AI to provide human assistance.

The Alabama College and Career Exploration Tool (ACCET) will be an interactive online dashboard available to students, employees, and employers. Jobseekers will be able to seek training and open positions using the ACCET, and employers will also use the tool to find

potential employees. The ACCET will be designed to serve as a one-stop digital dashboard, which will enable Alabamians to compare all college and career options before choosing a career pathway. The ACCET will guide students through a digitally-delivered exploration and survey all 79 pathways within the 16 CTE industry clusters, an interest and career profile, and a graduation plan. The ACCET will allow CTE concentrators to map career pathways that will lead to graduation with industry-recognized credentials, postsecondary credit, and work-based learning experience. The ACCET will include a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion and college application tool. Students will be able to access the WIOA eligible training provider list (ETPL) through the ACCET in order to receive WIOA funding for postsecondary education and training. Employers will begin including recognized non-degree credentials in job descriptions and providing pay increases for attaining those credentials, which will reduce employee turnover and increase the productivity and skill level of the workforce. The ACCET will also serve as a verified, digital resume to display industry-recognized credentials and progress against established competency models. Credential information displayed through the ACCET will signal to employers that a worker or student possesses the requisite skills for either an entry-level job or progressive wage increases as a result of mastering the next competency within a stackable sequence. The ACCET will allow employers to auto-populate a list of the individuals who possess the credentials and competencies best suited for each job posting, which will reduce hiring costs and will incent employers to add credentials to job descriptions. The ACCET will also serve as an integrated case-management and intake system for the public workforce system that will faciltate the cross training of employees and a no-wrong-door approach to the public workforce system.

(n.) Expanding Competency-Based Career Pathways in Alabama

(i) Developing Pathways to the Middle Class by Developing a Currency of Quality Non-Degree Credentials

Non-degree credentials (NDCs), such as certificates, industry certifications, apprenticeship certificates, and occupational licenses are a key component of meeting the Success Plus postsecondary education attainment goal of adding 500,000 credential workers to Alabama's workforce by 2025. In 2016, the Adult Training and Education Survey (ATES) found that 27 percent of adults held an NDC, with 18 percent holding licenses, 8 percent holding postsecondary certificates, and 6 percent holding certifications. The number of workers nationally participating in registered apprenticeship programs increased by 56 percent between 2013 and 2018. Postsecondary certificate holders earn 30 percent more than individuals with a high school diploma alone, on average, but not all NCSs are created equal. Making the value of NDCs in the labor market transparent is key to ensuring NDC quality assurance. There are four types of NCDs:

- Certificates are credentials awarded by an educational institution based on completion of all requirements for a program of study, including coursework and tests. They are not time-limited and do not need to be renewed.
- Apprenticeship certificates are credentials earned through work-based learning and postsecondary learn-and-earn models. They are applicable to industry trades and professions. Registered apprenticeship certificates meet national standards.
- Industry certifications are credentials awarded by a certification body (not a school or government agency) based on an individual demonstrating, through an examination process, that he or she has acquired the designated knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform a specific occupation or skill. It is time-limited and may be renewed through a re-certification process.
- Licenses are credentials that permit the holder to practice in a specified field. An occupational license is awarded by a government licensing agency based on pre-determined criteria. The criteria may include some combination of degree attainment, certifications, assessment, apprenticeship programs, or work experience. Licenses are time-limited and must be renewed periodically.

Developing an aligned definition of an NDC of value can help provide for a common accountability framework for knowing whether a credential meets the definition of a "recognized postsecondary credential" under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the Carl D. Perkins Act, or the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program. Alabama participated, along with Iowa, New Jersey, Tennessee, Virginia, and Washington, as a round one state in the National Skills Coalitions NDC quality assurance project. The National Skills Coalition's NDC Quality Assurance Project led to the acceptance of several general principles for the definition of a NDC of quality, including the need for the definition to be student-focused, to support equitable credential attainment, to be flexible while safeguarding quality, and should include a public process for determining which credentials are quality credentials.

The National Skills Coalition has developed the following consensus definition for a quality NDC. A quality non-degree credential is one that provides individuals with the means to equitably achieve their informed employment and educational goals. There must be valid, reliable, and transparent evidence that the credential satisfies the criteria that constitute quality. The criteria that constitute quality include three required and one that is strongly preferred but need not always be in place. The three required criteria include (1) substantial job opportunities, (2) transparent evidence of the competencies mastered by credential holders, and (3) evidence of the employment earning outcomes of individuals after obtaining employment. The strongly preferred criterion is stackability to additional education or training. Some quality credentials required to obtain employment in an in-demand occupation are stand-alone credentials, such as a registered apprenticeship completion certificate, which is not stackable but is also quality. Setting earnings thresholds is an important tool for maintaining quality as well. Often, earnings thresholds are based on a wage premium above the average earned by someone with a high school diploma alone. According to the U.S. Department of Education, the average annual earnings of an individual in the United States with a high school diploma alone between the ages of 25 and 34 is $28,000. The Lumina Foundation recommends at least a 20 percent wage premium over a high school diploma, or $33,600 nationally.

Alabama has focused on non-degree quality assurance and transparency to develop a credential currency that enables Alabamians to progress through a career pathway and earn wage increases by earning a sequence of stackable credentials that denote mastery of workplace competencies aligned to occupations that are part of a career pathway. By identifying credentials of value that are portable, trackable, stackable, provide a wage premium, are recognized by employers, and are integrated into a career pathway progression, Alabama has developed a competency-based approach to human capital development that helps Alabamians with weak labor force attachment due to benefits cliffs or others barriers to entering the workforce use credentials of value as a means of attaining economic mobility by progressing from an entry-level position, to middle-skills jobs, to advanced-level occupations.

(ii) Using Data to Establish Employer Signals and Career Pathways Based on Stackable Credentials

Alabama is collaborating with the Lumina Foundation, the National Skills Coalition, and the Workforce Data Quality to establish a standardized protocol to inventory and publish credentials. The ATLAS on Career Pathways, the state's longitudinal database system, will serve as Alabama's credential registry. Alabama won a grant from Credential Engine in June 2019 to establish a standardized protocol to inventory and publish credentials. As part of the process of vetting a credential for inclusion on the state's list of credentials of value (the Alabama compendium of valuable credentials), relevant credential data will be published to the ATLAS on Career Pathways. Each credential application submitted to the ACCCP for review will be referred to a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The TACs will publish information on each credential, whether or not it is selected for inclusion on the Alabama compendium of valuable credentials. Each industry sector is represented by a TAC, and each TAC has developed an industry-endorsed competency model for each occupation within its purview. The competency models developed by each TAC will establish credential attainment as the "common

denominator" between progression from secondary to postsecondary education and training programs. Alabama will reach the "tipping point" goal of publishing over half of the credentials in the state to the ATLAS on Career Pathways by 2022. Enhancing credential transparency is key to Governor Ivey's workforce development strategic plan. By providing a standardized process for vetting and publishing data on credentials of value and mapping credentials to workforce competencies, stackable sequences mapped to competencies, and traditional degrees will make non-degree credential attainment an indelible component of Alabama's workforce system and labor market. Vetting credentials through the ACCCP, publishing data on credentials submitted to the ACCCP to the ATLAS on Career Pathways, and then enabling students and workers to display credentials of value they have earned through their profile on the ACCET will provide for a credential currency in Alabama that could result in a paradigm shift in relations between individuals and the education and workforce training system and between the workforce and employers by signaling to employers that they should reward employees with progressive wage increases and increased responsibility for mastering advanced competencies. Creating a market language for credentials through credential transparency will produce a more intentional pathway for Alabamians determined to pursue a competency-based education as a pathway into the middle class.

(iii) The Five-Star Rubric Test for In-Demand Occupations

The state list of in-demand occupations will be compiled by first assigning each occupation regionally, and then statewide, with one to five stars, based on a rubric that awards one star for occupations that include one or more of the five criteria included on the rubric for evaluating the regional lists of in-demand occupations. Occupations that are awarded three or more stars will be included on a regional list. The state list will include all career pathways that appear on at least two of the regional lists. The TAC for each career cluster shall evaluate each occupation within each of the career pathways under its purview with the rubric below. The rubric contains five categories. Occupations that possess the characteristic in the category are awarded a star for that category. An occupation will receive one to five stars based on how many of the five characteristics the occupations possess on the rubric. The five criteria are whether an occupation: (1) pays at least 70 percent of the mean regional wage; (2) the occupations to career cluster with an annual regional Success Plus attainment goal that is ranked in the top eight out of the 16 clusters; (3) the occupation is projected to have positive annual growth and positive growth over the next decade (2016 to 2026); (4) the occupation is on the regional "Top 40 In-Demand Jobs List" or the occupation is in at least the 75th percentile of the average regional wage; and (5) the occupation requires a postsecondary degree, certificate, or credential for initial employment. Earning a star for three of the criteria is mandatory. For the first two required criteria, earning a star for criteria (1) and criteria (3) is mandatory, and an occupation must possess one or both of criteria (4) or (5) to pass the five-star rubric test. Passing the five-star rubric test with three, four, or five stars does not imply value. Whether an occupation receives three, four, or five stars only provides the TAC with additional information needed to make decisions regarding the final list on in-demand occupations. Furthermore, a TAC may determine not to include an occupation that has passed the five-star rubric test on the final list of in-demand occupations if the occupation is deemed to not provide adequate economic mobility or progression across a career pathway.

Characteristic	Criteria I Occupation Must be at Least 70 percent of Mean Regional Wage	Criteria II The Occupation Belongs within a Career Cluster that is ranked in the top eight for the annual regional Success Plus attainment goal	Criteria III Positive Annual Growth Over Decade	Criteria IV Occupation is on the Regional To Forty In-Demand Jobs List or occupation is at least in the 75th Percentile of the Average Regional Wage	Criteria V The Occupation Requires a Post-Secondary Degree, Certificate, or Credential for Initial Employment
Earning a star for three of the criteria is mandatory. For the first two required criteria, earning a start for criteria (1) and criteria (3) is mandatory, and an occupation must possess one or both of criteria (4) or (5) to be included on a regional or statewide compendium of valuable credentials.					

(iv) Developing Competency Models and Career Lattices

Once the TACs have reviewed the list of occupations for each region that have passed the five-star rubric test, then each TAC will determine how the occupations in each cluster fit into a career pathway that progresses from an entry-level occupation, to middle-skills occupations, and then onto advanced level occupations. In the process of developing career pathways, the TACs may choose to include an occupation that forms part of a career pathway sequence but did not pass the five-star rubric test on the final list of regional or statewide in-demand occupations.

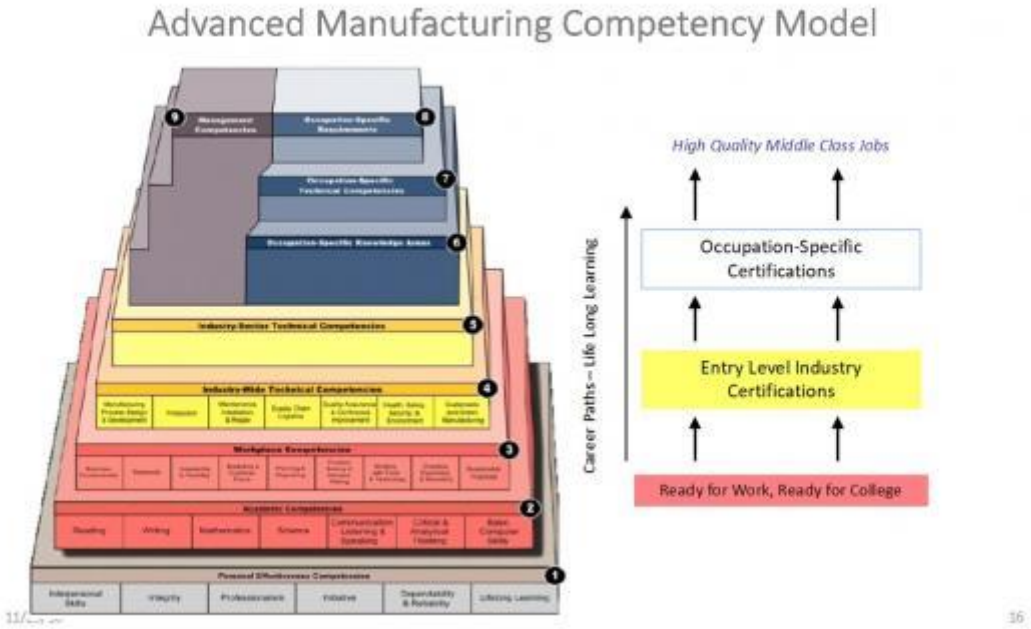


Figure: Advanced Manufacturing Competency Model

Each TAC will develop a regional and statewide list of in-demand occupations. The statewide list will be composed of occupations that have been included on two or more regional lists. After identifying the regional and statewide in-demand occupations, the TACs must create an industry competency model and a competency-based career lattice for each of the occupations among the 79 career pathways within the 16 career clusters on a regional or statewide list of in-demand occupations. Each TAC shall commission a statistically-significant survey to determine which workplace and academic competencies are required by employers for each occupation within its purview no later than March 30, 2020. The survey shall also determine whether there are industry-recognized credentials associated with each of the occupations under the TACs purview.

Each TAC shall recognize an industry-recognized credential of value, which shall be submitted to the ACCCP for approval, for each occupation with three or more stars on a regional or the statewide list of in-demand occupations no later than December 31, 2020. No later than 30 June 2020, each of the sixteen (16) Technical Advisory Committees shall create an industry competency model and competency-based career lattice for each occupation on its regional and statewide lists of in-demand occupations. Each of the industry competency models and competency-based career lattices must include:

- A description of the progression of coursework and industry-recognized credentials needed to ascend from entry-level to higher-level jobs within the occupation;
- The sequence of personal effectiveness competencies, workplace competencies, industry-recognized technical competencies, sector-specific competencies, occupation-specific competencies, and management-level competencies in that occupation;
- The curricula, skills assessments, and certifications needed to develop incremental training modules as a sequence of courses leading to industry-recognized credentials or certifications that also progressively lead to a traditional postsecondary degree to provide participants with multiple points to enter and exit the training and education programs over the course of a career to earn progressively advanced certificates and credentials that lead to positions of increased responsibility and higher wages.

(v) The Alabama Competency Taxonomy
The ACCCP will develop a five-tier credential taxonomy that will include the following

information: Career Cluster (each of the 16 career clusters will be given a numeric code); Career Pathway (each of the career pathways will be given a numeric code); Division (Secondary of Postsecondary); Category (Basic or Advanced); and Classification (Complementary, Regional, or Statewide). The TACs will also map all related competencies to the credential during stage two review.

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Career Cluster-Career Pathway-Occupation-Competency	KNO-Knowledge SPE-Specialized Skill PER - Personal Skill SOC - Social Skill COM - Competency	Rate of Decay (in months)	Level of Proficiency	Date of Current Assessment	Summative Assessment Format A - Artifact E - Exam P - Performance	D-U-N-S Number

Alabama has developed the Alabama Competency Taxonomy, which is a seven-tiered system for coding each individual skill, or competency, that composes an occupation. There are personal effectiveness competencies, academic competencies, workplace competencies, industry-wide competencies, sector-specific competencies, occupation-specific competencies, and management competencies. Through the Alabama Competency Taxonomy, each of them can be coded, organized, and mapped onto a credential of value so that the credential of value can be recognized as certifying the mastery of that competency. The first tier of the competency taxonomy details the career cluster, career pathway, and specific occupation in which the knowledge, skill, attitude, or competency exists. The competency identifier consists of four alphanumeric digits that are specific to the assigned competency. The code will be assigned as follows: career cluster—career pathway—occupation and occupation-specific competency model—occupation-specific competency (0-0-0-0). The second tier of the competency taxonomy consists of three alphanumeric characters that reflect the knowledge, specialized skills, personal skills, and social skills as articulated in the Lumina Beta Credential Framework. They include: (1) KNO – Knowledge – What a learner knows, understands and can demonstrate in terms of the body of facts, principles, theories, and practices related to broad general or specialized fields of study or work; (3) SPE – Specialized Skill – Skills that are occupational and discipline-specific; (2) PER – Personal Skill – Competencies required to act in an independent and responsible manner in various situations, to exercise judgment, demonstrate critical thinking and problem solving, reflect on one's own actions and on the actions of others, and to continue to develop his/her own competencies; (4) SOC – Social Skill – An individual's ability to be aware of the behavior of others and of differing viewpoints, to communicate with others effectively, and to work effectively with people from diverse backgrounds and points of view; and (5) COM – Competency – A learnable, measurable, role-relevant, and behavior-based characteristic or capability. The third tier of the competency taxonomy includes a two-digit rate-of-decay code will be reflective of the number of months between the time of initial certification or recertification of the competency and the time that the individual earning the competency will need to be recertified. The fourth tier of the competency taxonomy is the proficiency indicator, which is based on an eight-level proficiency system identified in the Beta Credential Framework. The scale of proficiency from one to eight does not reflect the level of individual mastery, but, rather, it reflects the level of proficiency needed to adequately perform the underlying occupation. The fifth tier of the competency taxonomy reflects the last date on which proficiency for the competency was assessed, if applicable. These eight characters represent the date, using Gregorian calendar notation, on which the proficiency was assessed by the validating agency, credential provider, or TAC, as determined by each TAC. The data format follows a

yyyymmdd date schema. The sixth tier of the competency taxonomy details the type of assessment used to determine the proficiency achieved by the learner. There are three assessment types identified: artifact, exam, or performance. These three methods represent the majority of assessments that would measure and validate proficiency of a knowledge, skill, or competency. The seventh tier of the competency taxonomy includes a nine-digit Dun & Bradstreet (D-U-N-S Numbers.) Because there is no central repository for all institutions, organizations, and employers, this portion of the code is difficult to detail. For this reason, the Dun & Bradstreet (D-U-N-S Numbers) system will be used, as these are both international and non-sector specific. This nine-digit number is required of all entities that do business with the federal government. Because these numbers are assigned without a fee, it would appear to be a strong solution for many of the institutions and employers likely to verify knowledge, skills, and competencies.

(vi) The Alabama Compendium of Valuable Credentials
Based on the regional and state in-demand career pathways, labor market information, and program completion and employment data, the ACCCP will also create annual Compendia of Valuable Credentials. The Alabama Compendium of Valuable Credentials will be composed of the regional and state lists of credentials that are mapped onto the regional and state in-demand career occupations with three or more stars. The ACCCP will adopt the procedures by which the TACs shall review and vote to recommend credentials to the regional and statewide compendia of valuable credentials in accordance with the procedures as follows:

- An industry or trade association group, the Alabama Workforce Council, the Alabama State Workforce Investment Board, the Alabama State Department of Education, the Alabama Community College System, the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship, and the Alabama Commission on Higher Education may apply to the Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways to include a credential possessing one or more of the ten characteristics of a valuable credential, described in tier-one review, on a regional or statewide Compendium of Valuable Credentials.
- The ACCCP will refer each application, by career cluster and pathway, to a TAC for stage one review.

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Career Cluster (01-16)	Career Pathway (01-79)	Division (Secondary or Postsecondary)	Category (Advanced or Basic)	Complementary (C), Regional (R), or Statewide (S)	Competencies Mapped to the Credential (Not included as part of the five-digit taxonomy for the compendia of valuable credentials.)

Each credential undergoes a two-tier review process by the TAC. Tier one review includes reviewing the credential application against the following criteria:

- The TAC shall classify the underlying credential referenced in the application as either required by law, including any credential mandated by the laws or regulations of the State of Alabama or the United States of America; mandated by industry, which shall include any credential mandated by two (2) or more firms within an industry sector; or preferred by industry, which shall include any credential endorsed, but not required, by two or more firms within an industry sector.
- The TAC shall determine whether the credential is required to obtain a job (counts toward

attainment goal and is an advanced credential on the compendium of valuable credentials); part of stackable sequence leading to a credential that is required for employment (included on the compendium of valuable credentials as a basic credential, but these credentials do not count towards the attainment goal); complementary credentials with skills that are affiliated with the career pathway but are not directly aligned to the credential sequence (can be included on the compendium of valuable credentials as a complementary credential but are not included in credential sequences and do not count towards the attainment goal);

- Accredited or recognized by a statewide or national industry-recognized accrediting bodies, such as a sector or industry association;
- Aligned to an occupation on a regional or statewide list of in-demand occupations;
- Achievable by students in a secondary and/or the postsecondary level of study;
- Earned after a minimum number of hours of instruction time, as determined by the Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways, and awarded after achieving a passing score, as determined by the sponsoring industry sector, on a proctored examination;
- Stackable in a sequence of aligned competencies that progress along with the rigor of advanced training programs;
- Valuable as determined by leading to at least a twenty (20)-percent wage premium over a high school diploma;
- Traceable and trackable by the ATLAS on Career Pathways; and
- Portable across or within an industry sector to establish the qualifications of individuals in multiple geographic areas, among multiple education and training institutions, and by diverse employers.

Credentials that possess one or more of the characteristics reviewed during tier one review and that are vetted and receive a majority vote of approval by the TAC proceed to stage two review. Each TAC should make the following considerations when moving a credential forward for two-tier review if the credential is not complementary, if the credential does not possess the following tier-one criteria:

- If a credential is not mandated by industry, required by law, or preferred by industry, the credential must be complementary.
- Only credentials that are required to obtain a job can be counted towards the attainment goal and to be counted as an advanced credential for tier-two review. Stackable credentials that are not required to obtain a job are counted as basic credentials for tier-two review.
- A credential is complementary if it does not denote mastery of one or more competencies required for one or more occupations on one or more regional or the statewide list of in-demand occupations.
- A credential is complementary if it is not nationally, regionally, or locally recognized by business or industry.
- A credential that is not achievable at the secondary or postsecondary level is complementary and a credential only achievable at the secondary level is basic for tier-two review.
- A credential that is not achievable through 130 hours of coursework or through a proctored examination should include an artifact or performance-based examination to move forward for tier-two review. A TAC may, on a case-by-case basis and with the recommendation of relevant members of industry, lower the required number of hours for a time-based credential.
- A credential is either complementary or a stand-alone credential of value, such as an apprenticeship completion credential or a long-term certificate, if it is not stackable.
- A credential is either complementary or basic if it does not provide at least a 20-percent wage premium over a high school diploma.
- A credential is trackable by the ATLAS on Career Pathways if it has been registered into the Alabama Credential Registry, which is required before Tier One review may begin. Credential providers who refuse, or who cannot provide the information necessary to register credentials onto the Alabama Credential Registry, will not be able to process an application for inclusion on the Compendium of Valuable Credentials.

- A non-portable credential is either regional or complementary. A non-portable credential may be basic or advanced.

During stage two review, credentials are placed in the five-level credential taxonomy:
- credentials are categorized by career cluster;
- credentials are categorized by career pathway;
- credentials are categorized into either the secondary or postsecondary division of the Alabama Compendium of Valuable Credentials. Secondary are high school credentials and below, and postsecondary credentials are at the college level;
- credentials in both the secondary and the postsecondary divisions will be classified as either basic or advanced. Basic certifications are the first level or industry certification, or a relevant stand-alone certification. Advanced credentials are part of a stackable sequence of credentials that are linked to an occupation on the ACCCP's list of regional and state in-demand career pathways;
- basic and advanced credentials will be categorized as either a statewide, regional, or complementary credential. Statewide credentials must be linked to an in-demand career pathway on the ACCCP's state list of in-demand career pathways. A regional credential must be linked to a career pathway on the ACCCP's regional list of in-demand career pathways. Complementary credentials, such as first aid or digital literacy, have value across industry sectors.

A subgroup of credentials on statewide or regional compendia of valuable credentials classified in the secondary, basic and complementary divisions may be endorsed by the relevant Technical Advisory Committee as a "Success Credential" that may be designed to provide basic, foundational, or essential skills. Credentials deemed as "Success Credentials" shall be duly noted. A subgroup of credentials on statewide or regional compendia of valuable credentials classified in the secondary or postsecondary, advanced, and the regional or statewide divisions of the compendia of valuable credentials, that also lead to no fewer than 12 postsecondary credit hours towards a postsecondary degree aligned to a career pathway on a regional or statewide list of in-demand career pathways, may be designated by the relevant Technical Advisory Committee as a "Success Plus" credential. Credentials deemed "Success Plus" credentials shall be duly noted.

For each year, except the first year after the organizational meeting of the ACCCP, each of the 16 Technical Advisory Committees shall complete the stage one and two review of all credential applications referred by the Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways for review and shall compile a final list of credentials for recommendation for the regional and statewide compendia of valuable credentials no later than the 30th day of September in each year. No later than the 31st day of the month of October in each year, except the first year after the organizational meeting of the ACCCP, the Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways shall vote to adopt or reject, in whole, the final list of recommended credentials for submission to the regional and statewide compendia of valuable credentials from each Technical Advisory Committee. A Technical Advisory Committee may resubmit a revised list of recommended credentials to add to the regional and statewide compendia of valuable credentials within 30 days of notice from the Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways that the Technical Advisory Committee's initial recommendations were rejected. Credentials included on a Regional or Statewide Compendium of Valuable Credentials do not require an initial application or stage one review but must undergo stage two review for inclusion on the next iteration of the same Regional or Statewide Compendium of Valuable Credentials. Furthermore, credential providers must report annually, at the time of annual review for inclusion on a regional or statewide compendia of Valuable Credentials, data on the number of individuals who earned the credential in the previous year, the number of people who were employed in an occupation that requires the credential in the previous year, and the percentage of successful completers who attempted a written or competency-based assessment required for the attainment of the credential in the previous year. Credentials shall be removed

from a regional or statewide compendium of Valuable Credentials when the provider of credential fails to provide a report to the ACCCP, under the provisions of this subsection, within sixty (60) days of the annual deadline established by the ACCCP. The aggregated approved lists of Technical Advisory Committees shall be promulgated by the Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways as the Regional and Statewide Compendia of Valuable Credentials no later than the 1st day of January in each year. The Regional and Statewide Compendia of Valuable Credentials promulgated on the 1st day of each year shall become effective on the first day of July in each calendar year, except the first year after the organizational meeting of the ACCCP. The final Regional and Statewide Compendia of Valuable Credentials shall be available for access to the general public at no cost and shall include a unique code, based on the five-tier credential taxonomy to provide for common identification for each credential included on the Regional and Statewide Compendia of Valuable Credentials, which shall also include the codes for each competency (based on the Alabama Competency Taxonomy) for which the credential denotes mastery.

(vii) The Alabama Integrated Career Pathways Model

The Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Transformation (GOEWT) is working to establish the two-pronged Alabama Career Pathways Model. Post-secondary credential attainment, dual enrollment, and work-based learning will be used as strategies to establish the two-pronged Alabama Career Pathways Model. Under the first prong, in-school youth may participate in a registered- or industry-recognized apprenticeship program, earn their associate degree, and earn stackable credentials at the time of high school graduation. Under the second prong, adults who are disconnected from the workforce or those who are underemployed may upskill or become basic skills proficient through multiple on and off ramps from workforce training and employment through stackable credentials mapped to a traditional associate degree. Shortened career pathways for in-school youth will hasten their ability to enter the workforce and lengthened career pathways, with multiple points of entry and exit, for adults will enable a flexible progression and persistence through a competency model and career pathway.

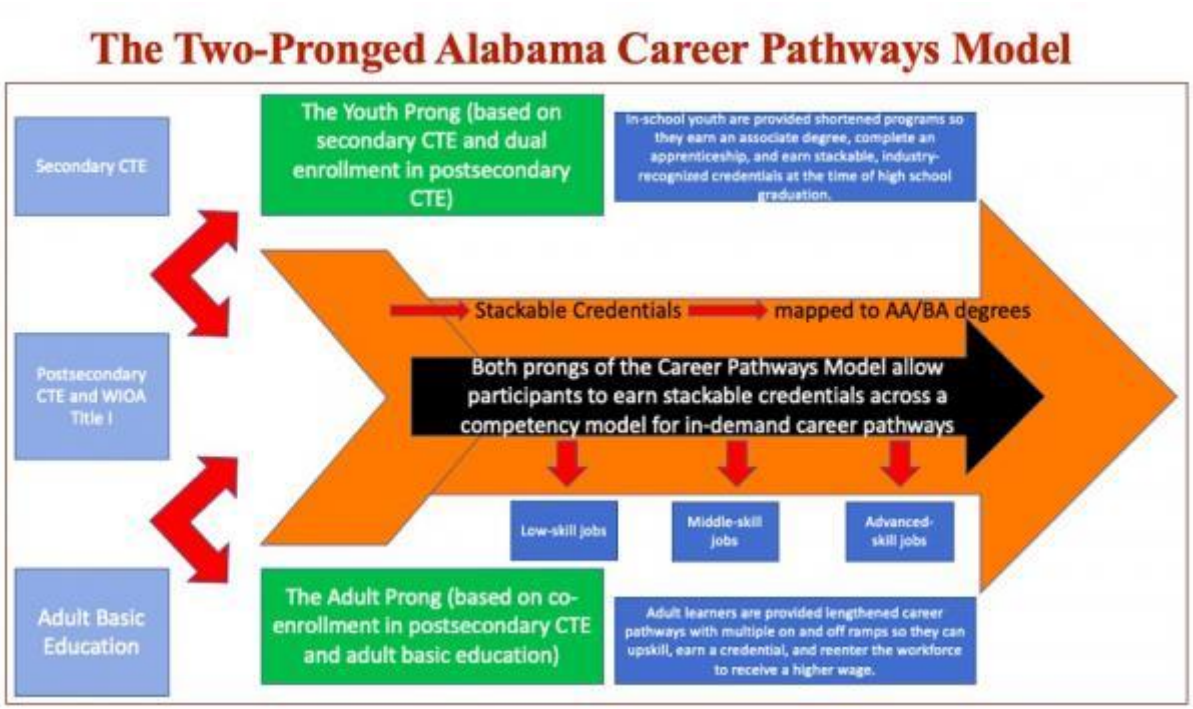


Figure: The Two-Pronged Alabama Career Pathways Model

The purpose of the Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways (ACCCP) is to develop career pathways that lead students to employment in the in-demand occupation. That is the "why." The "how" component is met with the process of identifying the occupations that are in-demand at the regional and statewide levels through the five-star occupational taxonomy. Identifying the in-demand occupations is necessary, yet not sufficient to developing career pathways, however. Once the in-demand occupations have been identified, they must be "stacked" in a series of occupations within the same occupational pathway that increase in the level of skill and knowledge required to perform the occupation as one advances from the entry-level occupation within a pathway, to middle-skills occupations, and then onto to occupations that required advanced postsecondary education and training. Once the progression of occupations for a career pathway has been identified, the underlying competencies related to each occupation must be identified and coded, using the Alabama Competency Taxonomy, and developed into a competency model for each occupation within the pathway.

(o.) Alabama's Apprenticeship Expansion Efforts

(i) The Alabama Industry-Recognized and Registered Apprenticeship (AIRRAP) Act (Act 2019-506)
To enable Alabama to meet the post-secondary attainment goal and to surpass the national average labor force participation rate, the Alabama Industry-Recognized and Registered Apprenticeship Program, or "AIRRAP," Act established the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship to serve as Alabama's state apprenticeship agency, established the Alabama Registered and Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship Program to expand access to apprenticeships for in-school youth and adult learners, and enhanced the Apprenticeship Alabama Tax Credit to incent employers to hire in-school youth apprentices. The Alabama Industry Recognized and Registered Apprenticeship Program Act (Act 2019-506) passed the Senate 32-0. It passed the House 97-0-4. Act 2019-506 was sponsored by Sen. Orr. Governor Ivey signed Act 2019-506 into law on May 30, 2019.

(ii) Provisions of the Alabama Industry-Recognized and Registered Apprenticeship (AIRRAP) Act (Act 2019-506)
Act 2019-506 provides for the establishment of the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship (AOA) to register Alabama's registered apprenticeships. On March 12, 2020, the AOA was granted status as the State's Apprenticeship Agency and thus took over responsibilities for registered apprenticeships in Alabama. Act 2019-506 established the Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways is established as a subcommittee of the Alabama Workforce Council, which includes 16 technical advisory councils (one for each career cluster) that will create annual lists of regional and statewide in-demand career pathways and regional and statewide lists of valuable credentials. Act 2019-506 increased the per capita Apprenticeship Alabama Tax Credit from $1,000 to $1,250; increased the cap on the number of eligible apprentices for each employer from 5 to ten apprentices; provided for a $500 tax credit enhancement for hiring in-school youth apprentices; increased the aggregate Apprenticeship Alabama Tax Credit from $3,000,000 to $7,500,000; and extended the Apprenticeship Alabama Tax Credit through 2025.

(iii) The Apprenticeship Alabama Tax Credit Act 2016-314
In 2016, Senator Orr sponsored the precursor to the AIRRAP Act—the Apprenticeship Alabama Tax Credit Act 2016-314. The Apprenticeship Alabama Tax Credit Act, which was signed into law by Governor Robert Bentley on May 10, 2016, provides for tax credits for employers who employ apprentices and also established the Apprenticeship Alabama Office within the Alabama Department of Commerce, Workforce Development Division. Act 2016-314 provided for a $1,000 tax credit for up to five apprentices per employer. Act 2016-314 provided for a rapid expansion of apprenticeship throughout Alabama. Apprenticeship Alabama increased Alabama's 2015 talent pool of 3,995 apprentices to more than 5,030 apprentices in 2018. Prior to this act and the creation of Apprenticeship Alabama, the USDOL Office of Apprenticeship averaged less

than 9 newly registered programs per year. However, with the partnership with Apprenticeship Alabama 20 programs were created in 2017 and 15 were added in 2018.

(iv) Act 2019-527, the Eliminating Legal Barrier to Apprenticeship (ELBA) Act
Act 2019-527, the Eliminating Legal Barrier to Apprenticeship (ELBA) Act, sponsored by Rep. Terri Collins, provides that if a licensing authority requires an examination for a license, the authority may not impose higher testing standards for apprenticeship completers than it does for any other applicant. Act 2019-527 removes existing legal barriers that currently are preventing 14- and 15-year-olds from participating in pre-apprenticeship programs, and the law lifts existing restrictions on apprenticeable occupations for 14- and 15-year-olds who are participating in pre-apprenticeship programs. Act 2019-527 removes existing legal barriers that prevent 16- and 17-year-olds from completing registered- and industry-recognized apprenticeship programs in apprenticeable occupations currently barred to them by law.

(v) The Alabama Office of Apprenticeship (AOA)
Under the provisions of the National Apprenticeship Act (50 Stat. 664; 29 U.S.C. 50) and 29 CFR Part 29 § 29.1-14, a state may use the National Office of Apprenticeship governed by the U.S. Department of Labor or may seek permission from the U.S. Department of Labor to establish a state apprenticeship agency (SAA) to register registered-apprenticeship programs operating within the state. Twenty-five states and territories currently operate an SAA.

(vi) Approving the AOA as Alabama's State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA)

Since taking office, Governor Ivey has collaborated with the legislature to expand access to quality work-based learning programs for all Alabamians, which is helping us to reach our Success Plus absolute priorities. Act 2019-506 established the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship established the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship as Alabama's State Apprenticeship Agency.

In March 2020, the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship was approved by the U.S. Department of Labor as the first new State Apprenticeship Agency in over 20 years.

Upon Governor Ivey's request, Alabama was granted a waiver from the U.S. Department of Labor to allow to allow in-school youth, aged 16-24, who are participating in a pre-apprenticeship or a youth apprenticeship program to access Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act Individual Training Accounts to support the required technical instruction component of youth apprenticeship. On September 18, 2019, Alabama adopted a formal definition for work-based learning, which was modeled from the definition for work-based learning in Perkins V.

As of December 2021, there are 418 registered apprenticeship employer sponsors who are employing 3,033 active registered apprentices in Alabama.

(p.) The Alabama Terminal on Linking and Analyzing Statistics (ATLAS) on Career Pathways and the Alabama College and Career Exploration Tool (ACCET)

Governor Ivey has charged the Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Transformation (GOEWT) to finish the work of developing Alabama's SLDS. As part of her Strong Start, Strong Finish education-to-workforce strategic plan, Governor Ivey directed the establishment of the Alabama Terminal on Linking and Analyzing Statistics (ATLAS) on Career Pathways ATLAS as Alabama's SLDS to enable education and workforce data to be analyzed to develop data-informed adjustments to the workforce development strategic plan to provide aligned expectations from the earliest years of a child's development, through the K-12 system, through postsecondary education, and into the workforce. The ATLAS on Career Pathways is a is an inter-agency data-sharing system that will permit education and workforce agencies to share data for the purposes of creating reports for internal use. The system will be governed by the P20-W Council (a body composed of each agency head that is a partner to the ATLAS on Career Pathways data-sharing agreement) and will be managed by the Office of Education and Workforce Statistics (OEWS). Tonya Lee is the Director of OEWS. The "P" represents preschool,

the “20” represents grade 1 through graduate school, and the “W” represents the workforce. On December 21, 2021, the final ATLAS on Career Pathways data-sharing memorandum of agreement was signed by all members of the P-20W Council. On February 8, 2021, the P-20W Council held its first meeting. On April 12, 2021, the P-20W Council adopted bylaws. On May 10, 2021, the P-20W Council formed committees and selected committee chairs and members. On June 1, 2021, the Office of Education and Workforce Statistics (OEWS) was officially formed under the leadership of Tonya Lee.

State Longitudinal Database System (SLDS) Grant

The U.S. Department of Education has stimulated state SLDS efforts through the SLDS Grant Program. As authorized by the Educational Technical Assistance Act of 2002, the SLDS Grant Program has awarded competitive grants to states since 2005. The grants extend for three to five years for up to twenty million dollars per grantee.[1] In 2015, the Alabama Workforce Council recommended that Alabama should establish a P20W longitudinal database system, and the ALSDE applied for the U.S. Department of Education’s SLDS Grant Program. However, Alabama was not awarded the grant in 2015.[2] Alabama applied for a four-year U.S. Department of Education statewide longitudinal database system (SLDS) grant on September 17, 2019, and Alabama received official notification on March 4, 2020 of an award in the amount of $3.25 million.[3] The SLDS grant will be used to support the expansion of the infrastructure for the ATLAS on Career Pathways.

Development of the ATLAS on Career Pathways

The OEWS developed an agreed statement of work with the Alabama Supercomputer Authority (ASA) to develop the infrastructure and data-sharing, security, and deidentification process needed for the ATLAS on Career Pathways. OEWS met first met with ASA on August 13,2020 to discuss the ATLAS on career pathways statement of work and memorandum of agreement.[4] On August 26, 2019, ASA presented OEWS with a proposed memorandum of agreement (MOA).[5] On September 18, 2019, OEWS determined that ASA would develop the ATLAS on Career Pathways and that a vendor would be procured to develop the ACCET.[6] On September 27, 2019, the ASA presented OEWS with a revised MOA that only included the ATLAS on Career Pathways.[7] On October 7, 2019, a meeting was held between OEWS; ASA; and the Alabama Office of Information Technology (OIT) regarding ATLAS on Career Pathways project governance.[8] An ATLAS on Career Pathways project charter for OIT was signed by Governor Ivey on October 30, 2020.[9] On October 29, 2019, an agreement was signed between ASA and ADOL for the work on the ATLAS on Career Pathways.[10] On December 26, 2019, the ASA completed the ATLAS on Career Pathways security plan.[11] Alabama Supercomputer Authority (ASA) was selected in October 2019 to develop the ATLAS, due to its vast experience working with partner agencies on data systems and other projects. ASA has experience matching data from various agencies, and already works with both Adult Education and the Alabama Community College System. To date, ASA has developed a version of a Security Document, to outline security measures for file transfer, data processing, server configurations, test procedures, training, and employee authorization to confidential PII data. The ATLAS on Career Pathways is being developed by incorporating the Common Education Data Standards (CEDS), which is a national collaborative effort to develop common data standards for a key set of education data elements to streamline the exchange, comparison, and understanding of data within and across P20W agencies and sectors. ASA is currently building the infrastructure for database processing. They are using test data to convert from the typical source data to a CEDS format. In addition, they are addressing data security by removing personal identifying information from data and creating a two-factor authentication procedure for staff. The ATLAS version of CEDS will allow ASA to process all data imported into ATLAS from partner agencies, even if the agencies’ data does not have a direct CEDS equivalent. ASA and the OEWS Director are coordinating with the CEDS Stakeholder Group to take advantage of CEDS tools, such as CEDS Align and CEDS Connect, to develop a data dictionary with elements and definitions

common to other agencies and partners. Aligning to CEDS will allow Alabama to have the resources to duplicate research being conducted in other states and compare results.

Using the ATLAS on Career Pathways

Agencies will submit a request to the P20-W Council to generate a report. Once a report is generated by OEWS, the P20-W council must vote unanimously to approve a report before it may be released. All partner agencies in this federated system will warehouse their own data. Partner agencies will not have access to data maintained by other agencies, even if that data is shareable. During the data-matching process for the purposes of producing longitudinal reports, encrypted data sets will be transferred via a secure site in a password protected file. Once data is downloaded, it will be run through a vigorous automated matching procedure, as the quality of the data is dependent on the match rate success for producing accurate and informative longitudinal analysis. The P-20W Council's policies and procedures will strictly comply with FERPA regulations in every use of education data. After data is matched, and the system creates a unique ID, files transferred from the agencies will be destroyed.

[1]*About the SLDS Program,* National Center for Education Statistics, accessed on 4 August 2018 <https:// nces.ed.gov/programs/slds/about_SLDS.asp>.

[2] Powell, Trisha Crain, "Alabama Moving Forward on P-20W Database Without Federal Grant Money," 28 September 2015, accessed on 4 August 2018 <http://alabamaschoolconnection.org/2015/09/28/alabama-moving-forward-on-p-20w-database-without-federal-grant-money/>.

[3] National Center for Education Statistics, Statewide Longitudinal Data System Grant Program, 2019 Alabama Grant Application, accessed on 11 April 2020 <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/slds/state.asp?stateabbr=AL>.

[4]*Ibid.*

[5]*Ibid.*

[6]*Ibid.*

[7]*Ibid.*

[8]*Ibid.*

[9] Alabama Office of Information Technology, Alabama Terminal on Linking and Analyzing Statistics (ATLAS) on Career Pathway, Project Charter, 30 October 2019.

[10] Alabama Department of Labor, Memorandum of Agreement Between Alabama Department of Labor and Alabama Supercomputer Authority, 29 October 2019.

[11] Alabama Supercomputer Authority, ATLAS Security Plan, Version 1.0, 26 December 2019.

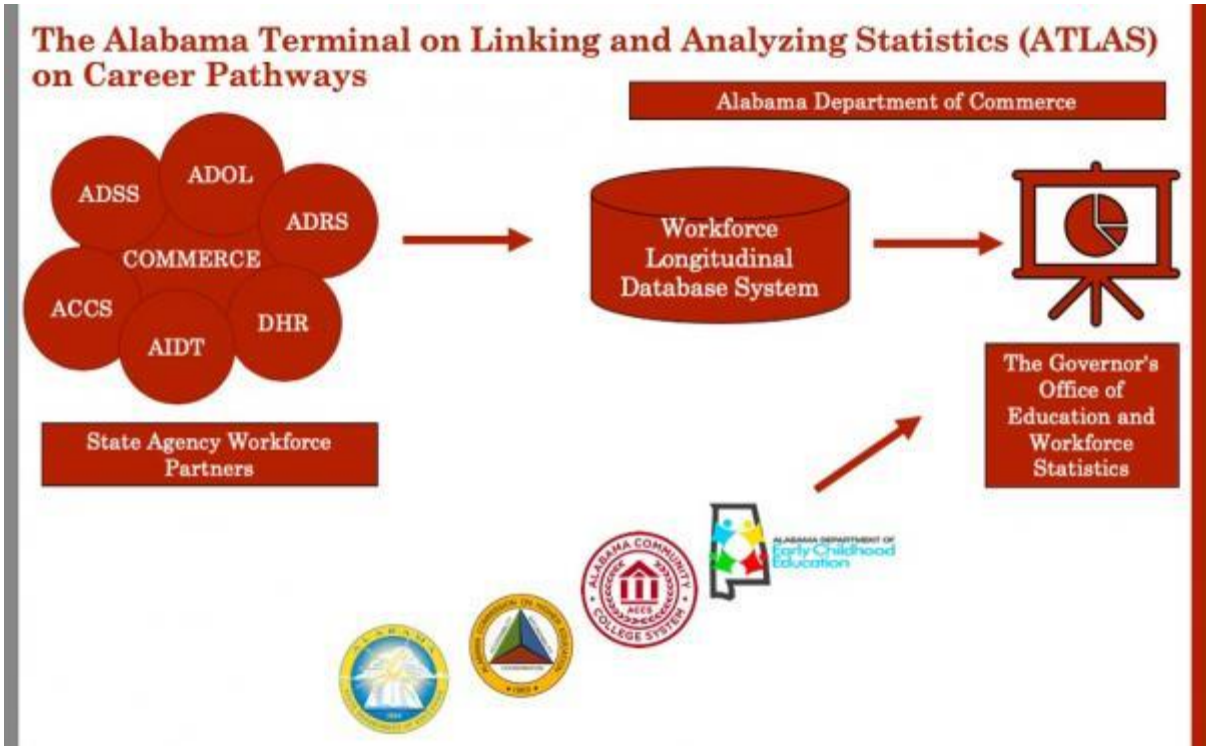


Figure: ATLAS on Career Pathways

(q.) WIOA Supportive Services

One area the State of Alabama has increased emphasis on is supportive services. In April 2021 the state developed a concept and conducted a pilot for providing supportive services for WIOA participants such as reimbursement of exam and licensing fees and training materials not covered by ITAs or OJTs. This program was fully implemented in PY2021. The initial annual budget is $40,000, and we expect to serve 140 participants by the end of the program year at an average cost of $285 per participant. For PY2022 and PY2023 the expected budget will be approximately $40,000 per year to provide these services to WIOA participants.

(r.) Project Strengthen Alabama: Strengthening Alabama's Workforce Through Training, Recovery, and Employment

The Alabama Department of Commerce is utilizing funds made available from the U.S. Department of Labor-Employment and Training Administration to implement a National Dislocated Worker/Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) National Emergency Grant to address the Opioid Crisis impacting Alabama's Workforce Delivery System. The Alabama Department of Commerce (ADC) selected Local Workforce Development Areas 2,3,4 and 5 because these thirty-five (35) counties include the state's capital city of Montgomery, the economically progressive Jefferson County, and several promising counties slated for industry expansion. These areas are primed and ready for economic growth and are part of Alabama's top priority in economic and workforce development, yet opioid abuse is threatening this progress. Because of the numerous economic opportunities, in addition to ample state and federal training facilities in these areas, they should benefit the most from this funding. Intervention is necessary to help people recover from opioid addiction and become trained, skilled workers who are ready to return to the workforce as engaged, productive members of their communities. Affordable basic medical care such as dental check-ups, physical examinations, and mental health programs are sometimes difficult to obtain in a vast majority of these communities, exacerbating the effects of opioid

abuse. Most of the larger counties have only one public health facility available, some of the smaller counties have none, which means most people needing assistance must travel long distances to get help, which results in them only seeking help when their condition worsens. Therein lies another problem
transportation. Local health and mental health officials maintain that transportation, following t he lack of formal recovery facilities, are the top two concerns for residents seeking assistance with opioid addictions.

Project Strengthen Alabama seeks to address the humanitarian needs caused by the steady presence of opioid misuse. In keeping with the Governor's Success Plus plan to add 500,00 highly-skilled Alabamians to the State's workforce by 2025, Project Strengthen Alabama seeks to expand jobs throughout the state, especially within these targeted regions, by creating employment and training opportunities and supportive recovery services which are essential in preparing this segment of the workforce for obtainable job opportunities provided through current workforce development efforts. The supportive services that opioid sufferers need to ascend out of opioid misuse need to be established at the community level. Communities also need to create a robust basic social services network so that others will not fall prey to opioid addiction in the future.

Recovery, support, and education are essential to successful workforce relevance for this special population prior to training and employment. Grant partners will assist program participants with employment and training referrals while offering wraparound services that includes needs assessment, group and individual counseling, peer recovery support, and drug intervention support, all designed to help participants and their families eliminate barriers and achieve success. Local Workforce Development Areas 2,3,4 & 5 will maximize workforce efforts throughout twenty-nine (29) of the thirty-five (35) counties within the project area and ensure the alignment of necessary resources to address project priorities. Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) will deliver a pool of project participants to the grant program by coordinating with area partners to access and enroll eligible grant participants. The LWDBs will administer all resources for services rendered through the Opioid Grant. This collaborative and multifaceted strategy will provide for a successful project to mitigate the numerous and varied obstacles generated by opioid misuse.

(s.) Reemployment

Individuals who were employed in retail or hospitality jobs prior to the COVID-19 pandemic were often unable to contemplate enrolling in training or upskilling into a new position. Many of these individuals are now unemployed, or underemployed, which presents an opportunity for them to upskill or retool into a resilient, in-demand occupation. In February 2020, Alabama's unemployment rate was 2.4 percent and a skills gap caused thousands of jobs to remain unfilled. Many of Alabama's industries have proven resilient during the COVID-19 pandemic, including manufacturing, health care, information technology, construction, and transportation. In February 2021, many of the jobs that were open in February 2020 remain open and unfilled in Alabama. Alabama is focused on retraining and supporting Alabamians with transitioning into resilient occupations through rapid reskilling and wrap-around supportive services.

The GOEWT is partnering with the Treasurer's Office to develop a Financial Literacy Course for Alabama that will be six asynchronous, online modules. The program will be used by WIOA participants who are reentering the workforce. The program will launch in late 2022.

The Alabama Skills-Based Recovery Initiative will aim to adopt the concepts piloted through the AWSP into the workflow of Alabama's public workforce system.

(t.) Alabama Workforce Stabilization Program (AWSP)

The Alabama Workforce Development Board was awarded a three-year, $17.8 million Reimagine Workforce Preparation (RWP) grant from the U.S. Department of Education on

September 25, 2020, to scale the Alabama Workforce Stabilization Program (AWSP). The AWSP is a first-of-its-kind, non-traditional, short-term educational program, which is potentially significant for gathering data on the quality and efficacy of short-term, competency-based education programs that articulate to traditional postsecondary programs. The AWSP provides funding for short-term programs that are not currently eligible for Federal Pell Grant and student loans under Title IV of the Higher Education Act. The AWSP focuses on connecting short-term programs for rapid entry or reentry into the workforce, coupled with a focus on the Ability to Benefit Program for AWSP participants to continue their post-secondary education and articulate AWSP credits towards a long-term certificate or associate degree. The AWSP is bolstered by the Alabama Human Capital Development Fund, which extends the individual training accounts funded by Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) for AWSP participants to offset costs associated with transportation, childcare, housing, and equipment costs.

The Alabama Workforce Stabilization Program (AWSP) is a needs-based workforce training program that awarded $17,827,178.11 through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Re-Imagine Workforce Program (RWP) provided through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

The purpose of the AWSP program is to provide opportunities for 7,080 Alabama workers that have been displaced by COVID-19, to develop new skills in high demand industries: Healthcare, Advanced Manufacturing, Information Technology, Transportation, distribution/logistics and Construction. The method for participation in AWSP is employer driven, but the ultimate goal is to assist the individual worker. The program also seeks to help 200 Alabama Businesses avoid lay-offs, up-skill current employees, and to develop talent pipelines.

The Alabama Workforce Stabilization Program (AWSP) seeks to offsets the costs to participants for short-term education programs. It is designed to provide integrated education for participants who co-enroll in adult education and CTE courses. AWSP also awards college credit through the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) to students who need assistance in meeting requirements for the Ability to Benefit (ATB) program, which allows low-skilled individuals to access necessary workforce training and education that can help lift them out of poverty. This program allows adults who have not yet earned a HS Diploma or GED to access Pell Grants by either passing an ability to benefit assessment of basic skills or by completing at least two, 3-hour credit college courses.

The competitive preference of the grant award is to prioritize programs serving individuals who reside/work in rural communities or Opportunity Zones. Participants will work with Career Center representatives to determine level of services and the best career advancement path. All participants will be provided integrated Case Management by Alabama Career Center Staff; including Individual Employment Plan, Comprehensive Needs Assessment, and Personal training equipment. The Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR) will assist in identifying state and local organizations to provide personalized support for the AWSP Participants successful transition into education and training courses. The AWSP program is a joint effort being coordinated between nine of Alabama's departments and agencies.

III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

A. STATE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

1. STATE BOARD FUNCTIONS

1. State Board Functions
The Alabama Workforce Development Board (AWDB) was appointed by the Governor in November 2015 in compliance with Section 101(a) of WIOA. The AWDB carries out its WIOA required functions as provided in Section 101(d) of WIOA to ensure the alignment of Alabama's

workforce development programs. The Alabama Workforce Development Board meets quarterly and provides feedback on policies, programs, and system effectiveness to core workforce partners and employers.

The Board has one (1) working committee in addition to the Executive Committee. The working committees are:

Innovation and Accountability Committee: The Innovation and Accountability Committee assists the Board in developing a strategy to increase external growth and to leverage available existing resources to improve the quality of services.

The State Workforce Development Board's decision-making process generally starts with the Board committee discussed above. State Board committees will meet between quarterly Board meetings to review recommended state policies, Department of Labor or Other Federal partner agency guidance, and core partner staff proposals for operational guidance. Committee recommendations will be submitted to the Executive Committee or the Full Board with recommendations for action via vote. State Board support staff may also provide policy recommendations and /or operational guidance recommendations electronically to the Board or Board committees for Board feedback and input. Any Board member may also present recommendations to the Executive Committee or the Full Board for consideration and vote by the Board. All actions and recommendations by the Board are presented as a motion and a second before a vote is taken. All motions and the Board decisions via vote are maintained in the official Board minutes available on the Department of Commerce website (www.madeinalabama.com).

The staff support for the Alabama Workforce Development Board will be provided by the Alabama Department of Commerce's Workforce Development Division; however, the Board and its Committees will also utilize core partner staff to assist in carrying out required Board functions outlined in WIOA.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGY

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

(2a.) Core Program Activities to Implement the State's Strategy

The six (6) core programs under the major core components of WIOA are in four (4) different agencies: Title I is in the Alabama Department of Commerce; Title II is in the Alabama Community College System; Title III is in the Alabama Department of Labor; and, Title IV is in the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services. These agencies, however, have partnered with each other since 1992 in providing coordinated or co-located services in the Alabama Career Center System. These agencies have met on a regular basis throughout WIA to provide and improve services to job seekers and employers through the system. WIOA has renewed these agencies to ensure coordinated and cooperative services.

Core program and optional plan partners' activities to carry out the state strategies identified in the plan are based on unique partnerships between the partners, the Alabama Workforce Development Board, and the Governor's Alabama Workforce Council. All core partners participate at the executive level and the senior management level and the volunteers participating on the Board. Also, the ACCS and the ALSDE participate during senior staff meetings and Board meetings. The activities funded to implement the State's strategies includes enrollments in Title I activities for adult, youth and dislocated workers, adult education activities provided in the Comprehensive Career Centers, Wagner-Peyser employment services, and Rehabilitation Services staff referrals to any appropriate services.

However, the state has reorganized the local areas based on a newly developed plan that divides the state into 7 workforce regions. The 3 previous local areas (Jefferson, Mobile, and 65

counties) were re-organized and developed into 7 local areas that match the workforce regions. The purpose is alignment across all the partners. Not only Core Partner agencies, but all sub-partners will have access to local data and strategic decisions will be made in each local area regarding solutions to workforce needs and especially those populations to be served. This reorganization was fully implemented as of July 1, 2017.

Five of the new local workforce development areas, which were formerly part of the 65-county balance of state, operate policy-wise and with administrative support from the Alabama Department of Commerce 's Workforce Development Division, which had administered the 65-county local workforce development area. Policy support and the coordination of services will continue from the other core partners for the five new local workforce development areas in order to ensure continuity of established policies such as priority of services to public assistance recipients. Senior level staff from core and non-core partners will continue to target groups of job seekers with the most significant barriers to employment. The five new local workforce development areas will not be without experienced senior level guidance and support.

SNAP E&T services will be expanded from 10 to 38 Alabama Career Centers across Alabama. The focus of the Career Centers will be on job search activities for Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWDS). Referrals to the Career Center's come to AlabamaWorks! (AW!) electronically and allow for any SNAP E&T ABAWD to have access to services immediately at any of those 38 Career Centers. The plan is to work with local DHR offices and Career Centers in those 38 counties to continue to establish policies, priorities, and outreach for this population within the first quarter of 2017. SNAP E&T is also in the planning stages of a partnership with the Alabama Community College System Adult Education program. This partnership started with a pilot program for 50/50 Administrative match program in Mobile County. This partnership will include two community-based organizations in this area, as well as the local Career Center. The focus of this partnership is to look at barriers ABAWDS may have to employment in this area and match the services needed to overcome employment barriers and match them to the local workforce needs of that area.

The TANF Program is a cash assistance and work program operated by the Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR). There are approximately 5,000 clients receiving TANF and participating in DHR's work program called JOBS. JOBS clients are required to register with AlabamaWorks! (AW!). The plan is to create an interface with DOL whereby a record is automatically created or updated in AW! for JOBS clients. This will allow case managers to track TANF clients as they progress through the Career Center System and other workforce partner programs. The automated referral to DOL will expedite receipt of services for TANF clients and will not have to go to another office to register in AW!, and they will be clearly identifiable as TANF clients so they will receive assistance according to the mandated priority of service. As a result of the automated referral DHR will receive performance outcome data that will be used to modify policies and procedures as appropriate. In the interim, there will be monthly contacts between the JOBS case manager and Career Center case manager to ensure TANF clients are receiving full benefit of workforce services.

For clients that access the Career Center office first but may be interested in services provided by TANF, there are information packets available at the Career Centers for any clients who inquire about the TANF program. Additionally, the long-term goal is to develop an online application process for TANF which will be easily accessible by the client from any computer.

B. ALIGNMENT WITH ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE PLAN

(2b.) Alignment with Activities outside the Plan

As noted above, the Alabama Workforce System (AWS) includes programs and activities outside the Plan to include Community Services, HUD and Reintegration Services. Coordination and collaboration for programs not included in the Plan are provided through a strong partnership

supported by the workgroups such as the Alabama WIOA Roundtable Workgroups. Workgroups also have been formed around career clusters, registered apprenticeships, career pathways and career tech at the secondary levels, Executive senior management and council member level to ensure activities are not duplicated. These workgroups allow members to discuss the needs of each local area or industry sector using data collected through labor market information, business and workforce leaders' feedback. They then propose solutions to be presented to either the state or local board as appropriate and implement solutions. As noted above, partners from outside of the WIOA plan consistently participate.

WIOA core partners and other non-core programs will be integrating their information systems within the state's new longitudinal data system known as, Alabama Terminal on Linking and Analyzing Statistics (ATLAS), starting in PY 2021. The new ATLAS data system will assist in the coordination of efforts by both core and non-core programs to serve WIOA participants, business and industry, while providing detailed feedback by industry sector. The State of Alabama also recognizes the need for additional technical assistance for the workforce system to reach its full potential for alignment of activities and services. The state will seek technical assistance starting in PY 2021 and continue using technical assistance resources as needed throughout the four-year period.

C. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS

(2c.) Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals

Customer-focused services to individuals is a priority for the Alabama Workforce System. Enhanced services to individuals have and are occurring by providing major media marketing such as TV Job Bank programs, Career and Job Fairs in rural high employment areas and Hiring Fairs in labor shortage areas. The State is also looking at providing a website portal that will give any individual how to access partner services for Workforce or supportive services in a few mouse clicks. The Alabama Workforce Development Board and Alabama's Workforce Council are empathic that services to individuals are provided in an effective, efficient and responsive manner. A "process flow" that identifies and visually communicates how individuals pass through the various processes will be developed. Based on where the individual enters the process they and each partner will know where the individual should go next and with what information or actions are required at each step. All partner employees will be trained to assist individuals on the specific steps required and with no duplication of efforts by the individual. The main goal is a "user friendly" process and experience through each step and that the individual receives the needed and necessary assistance.

D. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS

(2d.) Coordination, Alignment, and Provision of Services to Employers

The Alabama Workforce System partners will ensure that there is a coordinated, aligned, delivery model for services to employers. Partners, who meet on a regular basis, will continue to meet and align their resources and support to the local needs of employers. The melding of the partners and employers safeguards the coordination of educational and training services in alignment with the performance measures established by the boards and through each partner's governing authority under WIOA.

With this in mind, and in order to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs, and to achieve the goals of industry sector partners in the state, Alabama Workforce System (WFS) core partners will coordinate their activities and resources to determine a set of "core principles" in regard to the collaborative delivery of business services. The core principles will include the following:

- WIOA Core Partners will serve as the lead, and equal, providers of services to business, particularly in each programs' area(s) of expertise.
- Business partner input will be an important consideration in the collaboration and alignment

of services.
- No core partner will be excluded from direct interaction with the business customer, as needed and appropriate.
- Existing partnerships with business will be respected in order to address the preferences and needs of the business within the purview of that partnership.
- Whenever possible, collaboration and alignment will drill down to the local level but will consider recommendations from each core partner's leadership in regard to this focus.

WIOA core partners will form an executive-level leadership team with a representative from each partner's program who have expertise in, and responsibility for, the design and delivery of services to business customers at the state, regional and local level.
- This executive team will meet quarterly to address collaborative strategies and alignment with business customers.
- This executive team will also identify agency local representatives with similar expertise to serve on regional or local teams that focus on collaboration and alignment of engagement with existing or potential business customers.
- This executive team will also initiate on-going cross-training to enhance core partners' understanding of each partners' expertise so that the core partners are aware of the "go-to" agency to best address the unique needs of the business customer.

In order to make it easier for businesses to access these unique services, while developing and sustaining a trusted partnership, the Alabama Workforce System core partners will establish a "lead point of contact" from each core partner program with each business at the state and/or local level to build the capacity to be responsive to each business in a collaborative and timely manner to meet their needs. The following strategies will be used to engage in the collaborative delivery of business services based on the needs of the business. ·
- Identification of Business Services deliverable by each WIOA core partner.
- Facilitated quarterly meetings among each of the Core Partners at the state and regional/local levels as noted above.
- Cross-training internally for the regional/local business service representatives who will focus on:
- Familiarity with the business services deliverable by each core partner
- Consideration of the methodology of service delivery to business for appropriate referrals when special business needs arise with core partner business relationships
- Sharing of "subject-matter expertise" to acquaint core partners with the many resources available to businesses to meet their needs
- Jointly funded initiatives with Core Partners and businesses coordinated through each core partner's representative on the executive team to ensure appropriate alignment and collaboration.
- Customized services to employers based on special populations and core partner expertise to address new or emerging needs of business.
- Other strategic approaches will be added to this list over time and will be generated by the collaborative engagement at the executive level core partner meetings noted above along with input from the local collaboration gatherings.

MORE SPECIFICALLY: The team members, who have expertise in the delivery of services to businesses, will convene to identify specific business services offered by their program for each of the "Employer Services" enumerated in the "WIOA/Effectiveness in Serving Employers Report Template." Those six (6) areas are:
- Employer Information and Support Services
- Workforce Recruitment Assistance
- Strategic Planning/Economic Development Activities
- Untapped Labor Pools Activities
- Training Services
- Incumbent Worker Training Services

- Rapid Response/Business Downsizing Assistance
- Planning layoff response

During the time period covered by the 2020 Combined State plan, the team members plan to support and assist the Governor's Office on Disability and Vocational Rehabilitation in their efforts to encourage the Governor to issue an Executive Order requiring state agencies to model the way for hiring, retaining, and advancing Alabamians with disabilities through special recruiting, hiring, accommodation and inclusion initiatives. By being a a model state employer of individuals with disabilities, Alabama's state agencies will set a precedent and example to private business and industry that Alabamians with disabilities are a valuable source of talent, skill and creative ability.

For Title I partners, the State and the State Workforce Development Board will continue to refine and assess how services to employers are carried out through the Career Center system. Also, the Alabama Workforce Council is a primarily employer-led advisory council appointed by the Governor in 2013 to assist in coordinating all resources in Alabama to provide high-quality, comprehensive services to employers. The Alabama Workforce Council has recommended, and plans are underway to establish a strong network of funded and empowered regional workforce entities that will be tasked with the central role of bridging business needs with a "talent supply chain." These regional entities which will include representatives of the core partner agencies will report to a board of regional business, industry and education leaders. Plans are also underway to establish a new online "one-stop" resource to serve clear and focused needs while being accessible by a number of users including employers.

Title II Alabama Adult Education programs will coordinate with all of the WIOA required partners and the Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Transformation to ensure services are aligned to the needs of employers. Adult Education programs will integrate education and training services that place each student on a career pathway with credentials of value that lead to sustainable employment. The career pathways and credentials will be vetted by education and industry leaders through the state established Technical Advisory Committees (TAC). As employment opportunities arise at the varied levels of qualifications, the adult education students will be informed and included in the pool of potential candidates to fulfill the workforce demands in their local labor market. Adult Education students will be able to matriculate into pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship opportunities with employers in each local area. If students gain employment before all credentials have been earned, they will have opportunities to continue their adult education services via distance learning or in evening classes. The goal of adult education is to provide the skills, and abilities for someone with or without a high school diploma that lacks the basic academic understanding, or ability to read write or speak the English language, to transition and be successful in, postsecondary education, training, and sustainable employment.

The Title IV Vocation Rehabilitation Program will work collaboratively with the WIOA required partners to provide effective services to employers on a state, regional, and local level. In addition to the business services provided by the WIOA partners, there are additional categories of services that can be provided by ADRS as part of the collaborative effort to meet business needs. These services will continue to be identified by our business customers, and ADRS will receive input from our business customers in developing these services so that the needs of businesses will be met. These services include customized Disability and Employment training, such as Disability etiquette and Disability bias training; Awareness of specific disabling conditions; and Emergency Preparedness for employees with disabilities. With Federal legislation and specific mandates for compliance around disability matters, ADRS also provides relevant training on the successful methodology and resources for implementation of Federal regulations such as Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act for Federal Contractors.

Retaining valued workers whose job is affected by illness, injury, or disability has been a major concern of business, and ADRS has customized stay-at-work and return-to-work services to

increase the likelihood that workers with disabilities will continue in their current jobs. And finally, ADRS will continue to provide services to address personnel processes, job descriptions, website accessibility, targeted recruitment, and the use of the ADRS rehabilitation technology specialist team and, of course, the statewide Business Relations Consultants who provide VR Business services at the local level. Whenever possible, the Core partners will continue to refine and assess how services to businesses can be delivered collaboratively to employers through the Career Center system. Variations will occur in the collaborative delivery of services when those services are unique to the expertise of the core partner and the targeted populations they are mandated to serve and in deference to the specific needs of the business.

E. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

(2e.) Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions

Core and non-core programs have strong partnerships with the Alabama Community College System and the Alabama Department of Education's Career Tech system. Representatives of both entities are members of the Alabama Workforce Development Board along with the Executive Director of the Alabama Commission of Higher Education (ACHE). Partner representatives from Alabama Community College System, Alabama Career Department also participate in quarterly WIOA Roundtable meetings which includes State Board staff, One-Stop Career Center regional management staff, Local Workforce area staff, and non-core partner staff such as TANF, SNAP and unemployment insurance (UI) senior management. These Roundtable participants represent senior and mid-level management and have access to information related to activities of the core programs and opportunities for collaboration, coordination and partnering. At the regional level, there are quarterly RWC meetings that include business, local community college workforce development coordinators, local career tech directors, one-stop career center managers and economic development staff. The community college and local career tech representatives at these meetings provide program updates and seek core partner and business input into training processes and equipment needs.

In Alabama the core and additional partners have a very close relationship with the ACCS. The ACCS not only provides the academic and technical training but also is the entity responsible for operating the Title II Adult Education grant. This allows for the full array of skills from basic skills to specialized skills training. There are several Workforce Career Centers located on community college campuses and adult education is represented in all of the Comprehensive Career centers. The close-knit relationship streamlines the process to move the jobseekers into training and supportive services for skill development and to connect with local employers. Core and additional partners are able to connect their customers to training that leads to the high demand occupations. Adult education provides additional state funding to local programs to increase partnerships with Career Technical Education to expand Integrated Education and Training (IET) Career Pathway initiatives. Core partners and additional partners such as TANF, SNAP, ABAWDS, veterans, English Language Learners and Senior Services refer jobseekers into the IET training pathway programs. Alabama has adopted a dual enrollment integrated adult career pathway model. An increased focus will be placed on expanding short term training, Ready to Work, Bridge programs, and Adult Career Pathways that target high demand, high wage sector strategies in the regional areas.

For the state of Alabama Title II Programs, 93 percent of the providers are located on the campus of the community college system. This integration allows increased discussion, access and engagement within the state's educational system. In addition, most campuses also have transitional counselors that can connect students to additional educational opportunities. The ADRS representation will collaborate with all secondary educational institutions in the State of Alabama by providing Pre-Employment Transition Services and Transition Services to students with disabilities (ages 16-21) to assist with transitioning into the state's workforce. Pre-Employment Transition Services activities will focus on:

- 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 are provided in an integrated environment to the maximum extent possible.
- Counseling and guidance on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institutions of higher education
- Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living
- Instruction in self-advocacy, which may include peer mentoring.

The ADRS has Transition Counselors assigned to each of the 136 high schools in our state. Through collaboration with each Local Education Agency (LEA), the ADRS will develop and improve transition partnerships, programs and service models by implementing and expanding the following services/programs.

- Summer work program - Job Exploration Training (JET) Students are provided training in the areas of job exploration, career assessment, social skills training, mock interviewing, resume preparation, and self-advocacy training. Paid work experiences in a community setting are arranged for each student satisfactorily participating in the training.
- Smart Work Ethics Training (SWE) - SWE is a social skills curriculum that addresses communication skills and workplace behaviors (attitude, work ethic, image and appearance, interpersonal skills, teamwork, time management, accountability) needed to obtain and maintain successful competitive employment. This curriculum is provided to the student in the LEA by a certified trainer from a Community Rehabilitation Program.
- Jointly Funded Job Coach - ADRS is committed to providing jointly funded job coaches in local education agencies to assist with the provision of pre-employment transition services. The jointly funded job coaches provide pre-employment transition services which are not typically or customarily provided by the LEA. These pre-employment transition services are designed to increase the likelihood of independence and inclusion of students with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, in communities, as well as, maximize opportunities for these students for competitive integrated employment. Currently, ADRS has 27 jointly funded job coaches in place through third-party cooperative agreements.
- Career Interest Inventories - ADRS transition counselors will expand the delivery of career interest inventories to students with disabilities earlier in the transition planning process to assist with identify the student's interests, abilities, aptitude, and values.

ADRS also has a liaison to two secondary educational institutions housed within the Alabama Department of Corrections (DOC). This liaison collaborates with DOC staff to ensure referral to ADRS is made within 90 days of release. The goal of this collaboration effort is to ensure that the inmates will have an appointment with a VR counselor within one week of community re-entry to avoid any delay in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services. Post-Secondary- ADRS also collaborates with two-year colleges and universities across the state to provide college preparation programs to prepare individuals with disabilities in entering post-secondary education. Typically, classes are held for one week on the college/university campus. Topics of discussion include note taking, finding your best study style, time management, how to better prepare for college tests, and how to access student support service.

F. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS

(2f.) Partner Engagement with Other Education and Training Providers

Alabama's WIOA partners are working on several strategies to engage other education and training (including providers on the State's Eligible Training Provider List) as partners in the workforce system. These efforts include engaging the state-funded training program for new and expanding businesses known as Alabama Industrial Development Training (AIDT) for short term training and referral to new jobs. We are working with AIDT to utilize the one-stop career

centers in finding workers for their start-up projects entering the labor market from dislocation events.

The Alabama Technology Network (ATN), the Manufacturing Extension Partnership, often provides Incumbent Worker Program Training as part of its role in improving manufacturing processes. The AFL/CIO Labor Institute for Training (LIFT) aids Registered Apprenticeship programs to be added to the State's ETPL. The Construction Education Foundation of Alabama (CEFA) is a private non-profit training provider established by the construction industry to provide pre-employment and pre-apprenticeship training for skilled trades. The Alabama Community College System (ACCS) also works with other education providers to ensure students can choose a seamless pathway from secondary through the community colleges to four-year institutions with multiple entry and exit points.

ADRS currently engages the following educational and training providers as partners in the workforce development system to create job-driven education and training systems: Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind (AIDB), EH Gentry. These educational entities are focused on training individuals with visual and/or hearing impairments in curricula that are geared towards labor market needs. In addition to engaging with other educational entities, ADRS has partnered with other training providers, to include community rehabilitation programs and Alabama businesses to provide industry-specific training that is geared towards the learning styles of individuals with cognitive disabilities. ADRS will continue to seek out job-driven educational and training opportunities to enhance the skills attainment of individuals with disabilities and meet the workforce needs of Alabama's businesses. ADRS will also work closely with all education and training providers to assess the need for and provide accommodations for the successful completion of training programs.

G. LEVERAGING RESOURCES TO INCREASE EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

(2g.) Leveraging Resources to Increase Educational Access

The Alabama Community College System (ACCS) has implemented streamlined Prior Learning Assessments for those individuals that have gained skills while on the job, military, or through other means. This allows the students to earn college credit for prior learning and accelerates their entry into the chosen career pathway. This program is also available for those Adult Education students that may have several years of experience and are looking to improve themselves and increase their earning capacity. Our plan is to develop a working "focus group" of all the workforce resources within the state to develop strategy for leveraging the current funding sources and plan collaboratively on how we can link our programs in a resource pipeline. The purpose, to assist our underserved populations to get in the pipeline at the appropriate access point and exit when they reach their goal or where they are comfortable to exit with employment that provides a living wage for their family. The group meets now in various venues, but not formally for the purpose we propose. Our action step will be to formalize the "focus group" with specific tangible goals and objectives.

Funding for Adult Basic Education (ABE) courses is distributed according to the targeted needs of an area and how many instructors are needed. Funding for ABE programs is provided through a competitive grant award and is based on the annual appropriation from the ACCS Office of Adult Education. Grantees will be aligned with system-wide goals and labor market needs of local program areas and will have the capability to provide Career Pathway services throughout the state. ACCS community colleges also provide training through the state's Workforce Development Fund.

The Alabama legislature currently allocates ten million dollars to the ACCS for CTE dual-enrollment scholarships for high school students. The ACCS workforce development division also has funds allocated for training special populations. The construction industry will be contributing financial resources for training Alabamians through the Construction Industry

Craft Training Act. The new law will add $1 per $1,000 of project value onto the cost of building permits in the state. It is expected to raise between $3 million and $5 million each year, money that will be dispersed in the form of grants to qualified craft education programs such as community colleges, private schools, and unions.

The Alabama Community College System's Adult Education office has established Integrated Education & Training Adult Career Pathway models by leveraging the expertise and resources of the core and additional partners. The IET programs are available to eligible job seekers at no cost through the braiding of financial resources from the partners. Partners can expand their presence in an area by taking advantage of career center partner facilities with a "no wrong door" approach to service. Cross-training in the intake procedures and the administration of assessments is one of the many areas of leveraging human and financial capital. Adult Education continues to provide online TABE assessment access and training to all Career Centers for assisting in the proper educational placement of participants.

The ACCS - Title II-Adult Education programs are coordinating with all of the WIOA required partners to create formalized referral processes, local linkages to information and resources, as well as creating efforts for a uniformed intake and/or assessment process to streamline and expedite the provision of services. Title II Adult Education through the Alabama Community College System has created an educational and workforce skills path for Title I, SNAP ABAWDS, TANF, Rehabilitation Services, and Senior Services. A participant will receive the basic academic skills, essential workforce skills, and specific technical skills needed to attain the stackable credentials which will enable them to compete for and attain employment. These participants will include any and all eligible populations as defined under WIOA for each of the core and additional partners. English language learners and participants with disabilities and/or significant barriers to employment will be targeted.

As a partner in the workforce development system, the Alabama Community College System, Adult Education (Title II) programs are administering integrated education and training (IET) career pathway opportunities. The implementation of career pathways programming throughout the state will be guided by local labor market information and reflective of the local industry needs. The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) federal funds support the advancement of individuals into postsecondary education and work. The grants to eligible providers require states to consider "whether the eligible provider's activities provide learning in context, including through integrated education and training (IET), so that an individual acquires the skills needed to transition to and complete postsecondary education and training programs, obtain and advance in employment leading to economic self-sufficiency, and to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship" (Section 231(e) (8)). The integration of literacy instruction and occupational skills training is an allowable activity that states can use leadership and federal funds to support.

Adult Education funds are used to support Integrated Education and Training (IET) career pathway programs that provide instruction in reading, writing, mathematics, or English proficiency that is below the postsecondary level. This instruction in basic literacy skills and the English language should be contextualized to support the occupational skills portion of the program. The Career Pathway curriculum address both the basic literacy skills and the occupational competencies needed for the participant to complete the program successfully. AE funds are used to plan, develop, and deliver the portions of the curriculum that address basic literacy skills in a contextualized way to ensure the application of the knowledge and skills.

H. IMPROVING ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS

(2h.) Improving Access to Postsecondary Credentials

WIOA training services often lead to recognized credentials such as high school equivalency, Career Readiness Certificates, and certificates from partner community colleges. The ACCS is

implementing and will continue to execute several strategies to improve access to postsecondary credentials. The ACCS has long been a nationally recognized leader in the number of articulated CTE courses between secondary and postsecondary, enabling high school students an edge in accessing college credentials. In addition to articulation, Alabama has become a national leader in providing high school students dual credit for dual enrollment in CTE and academic courses. Alabama has increased the numbers of students taking advantage of this opportunity each year and has realized tremendous growth in the last five years as more students and parents learn of the significant savings that are available in both time and money. Tremendous momentum is in place and should continue as more systems, parents, and students learn of the advantages of these opportunities. Our funding for CTE dual enrollment scholarships has tripled in the last three years, and we anticipate increased funding, so students will have greater access to post-secondary credentials.

Alabama has also established a process for creating a compendium of valuable postsecondary credentials. Credentials deemed as valuable for employment in high-demand high-skill occupations will be placed on this list and will be recognized as part of Alabama's attainment goal, known as Success Plus. Those credentials of value will receive recognition and funding support from the state. Completion certificates for Registered Apprenticeships (RAs) are being included as credentials of value in that compendium. The newly established Alabama Office of Apprenticeship (AOA) is actively working with employers and education providers across the state to expand the use of RA as a workforce training tool. RAs increase the access to postsecondary credentials by providing a path for individuals to work while they complete training. RAs in Alabama are built in a way that removes financial barriers to access for apprentices because the apprentice can earn a livable wage and the training is provided by the employer at no cost to the apprentice. The AOA partners with the Alabama Community College System as well as Alabama's four-year institutions to provide much of the related technical instruction for the RAs. This ensures apprentices are completing college credit bearing coursework as the related technical instruction component of their RA. These college credits earned through the RA position an apprentice to complete further academic training culminating in post-secondary degrees.

Additionally, programs that contain an exit point of occupations requiring degreed employees can also begin with a culmination of short-term or long-term certificates offered with job relativity and competency mastery at an early learning stage. This provides an opportunity not only for youth but also for adults with barriers to employment for engagement as pre-apprenticeship participants. Employer-valued certification, reflected through the state-developed compendium of valuable credentials, will allow for early on-ramps toward career pathways that require a level of employability attainable by any adult engaged in adult basic education programs through local Community Colleges. Alabama delivers postsecondary credentials with entry-level employment by not only identifying the list of competencies required for occupation mastery, but also instructing students on the entry-level competencies by embedding them into adult basic education curricula. In this event, students who have been identified as having a barrier to the workforce can progress as their skill set allows, perfecting their mastery of embedded competencies and integrating job relativity into all courses. Alabama also integrates a variety of support services into these programs by providing access to things like childcare and transportation paid for by WIOA, ITAs, and other local workforce development grants. As adults progress through career pathways toward identified in-demand employment opportunities, case managers and career counselors carefully monitor progress relative to employability ensuring pathway progression is seamless and uninterrupted where at all possible. These pathways are not only developed by public and private partnership, but they are also published in state-wide advertising displaying the multiple entry and exit points available for student progression and ensuring articulation of courses, prior learning awards, and access to postsecondary credentials and in-demand occupations.

Equity in service delivery and educational programming

Governor Ivey set a postsecondary education attainment goal for Alabama of adding 500,000 credentialed Alabamians to the workforce by 2025. This will equate to approximately 60 percent of Alabamians holding post-secondary credentials, degrees, and certificates of value. Alabama's current attainment rate is 45.1 percent (7.8 percent of Alabamians hold short-term credentials and 37.3 percent hold an associate degree or higher). With the inclusion of workforce certificates (beginning in 2014) and certifications (in 2018), Alabama's postsecondary attainment rate has increased by 13.5 percent since 2008. The national attainment rate for African Americans is 32.4 percent, yet the attainment rate for African Americans in Alabama is only 27.7 percent. The national attainment average for Hispanic Americans is 25.5 percent, but the attainment rate for Hispanic Americans in Alabama is 23.6 percent. The national attainment rate for Native Americans is 25.1 percent, and the attainment rate for Native Americans in Alabama 27.4 percent. To reach the Success Plus postsecondary education attainment goal, Alabama must maintain current rates of attainment and significantly increase the number of people, and particularly people of color, who enroll in programs and earn all types of postsecondary credentials. Governor Ivey established annual and aggregate special populations, career cluster, and career pathway attainment targets, by region and statewide, as a strategy for surpassing the postsecondary attainment goal by 2025. Alabama's attainment efforts are focused on high school students; out-of-school youth; post-secondary students; adult learners; veterans; individuals in the corrections system; and populations with significant barriers to post-secondary educational attainment opportunities in Alabama, including disabled and special needs individuals, English language learners, first-generation college students, low-income individuals, minorities, rural residents, women, and "individuals with barriers to employment" in the 2020 WIOA Combined State Plan in accordance with WIOA sec. 3(24). The Alabama postsecondary education attainment goal and the goal of reaching the national labor force participation rate by 2025 are focused on reaching each special population's share of the attainment and labor force goals annually by each of the seven regions, by county, and for each of the 16 career clusters.

Alabama is creating bespoke competency and credentialing taxonomies that provide for competency-based career pathways predicated on stackable, transparent, recognized, postsecondary credentials of value that are aligned to in-demand occupations. Career-specific education in shorter-term programs has strong short-term value because it prepares people for immediate employment. At the same time, career-specific programs can be a risky investment, as they convey knowledge and skills that are most useful in specific occupations and industries. In contrast to career-specific credentials, general associate degrees or bachelor's degrees confer marketable general skills regardless of a student's field of study or major. Ultimately, the most valuable education over the long term is the one that provides the most marketable combination of specific and general skills. The Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways (ACCCP), a public-private non-degree credential quality-assurance entity, is tasked with a two-fold mission (1) to identify Alabama's regional and statewide in-demand occupations and (2) to identify competency models, career pathways, and credentials of value linked to those in-demand occupations using labor market information. The ACCCP developed the Alabama Credential and Competency Taxonomies that, together, produce the Alabama Occupational Ontology. The Alabama Occupational Ontology is the DNA of each occupation at the competency level. Alabama is collaborating with Credential Engine to establish a standardized protocol to inventory, publish, and evaluate credentials. In partnership with Credential Engine, Alabama has developed the Alabama Credential Registry, using the Credential Transparency Description Language, to provide a canonical source of information on degree and non-degree credentials, competencies, quality indicators, outcomes, transfer value, pathways, and links to jobs. Training providers and colleges will add validated credentials to students verified resume on the Alabama College and Career Exploration Tool (ACCET), Alabama's learning and employment scheduled to launch in 2022. The ACCET will allow employers to auto-populate a list of the individuals who possess the credentials and

competencies best suited for each job posting, which will reduce hiring costs and will incent employers to add credentials to job descriptions.

I. COORDINATING WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

(2i.) Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies

The WIOA staff resources have recently been placed within the Alabama Department of Commerce in a newly created Commerce Workforce Division. The Alabama Department of Commerce is the entity responsible for the economic development strategies for the state. By this new alignment, it is the specific job duty of the Deputy Secretary of Commerce Workforce Development Division to make sure the WIOA program is coordinated with the economic development strategies. The Department of Commerce will take the following Action steps;

- Through a new marketing/branding program currently being developed by a 3rd party, Commerce will disseminate current workforce information and program along with projected long-term programs in the future through a monthly newsletter.
- The Deputy Secretary of Commerce for Workforce Development is a standing member of the Economic Development Association of Alabama (EDAA) Board and through various meeting reports and EDAA newsletters and email blasts, communicates across the entire state.
- The Department of Commerce manages and coordinates the state's economic development strategy, Accelerate Alabama. Accelerate Alabama, the economic development strategic plan for the state was developed during a six-month period led by the Alabama Economic Development Alliance, created by Executive Order of the Governor. Accelerate Alabama is meant to provide direction for Alabama's economic development efforts over the next three years. Eleven targeted business sectors, along with areas of focus for each, have been identified for the state of Alabama to focus its recruitment, retention and renewal efforts. The determination of the targets identified for Accelerate Alabama involved thorough research, including the review of the current business/industry base in Alabama, current targeted sectors of state, regional and local economic development organizations in Alabama, as well as the various power providers, recent project activity, and other emerging sectors that have shown growth at the national, state and possibly local level. The strengths of Alabama related to each sector were also considered. The Alliance was created to organize and direct the preparation of a strategic economic development plan for the state to ensure the recruitment, retention, and renewal of business and industry in Alabama. These three economic development drivers serve as the basis for recommendations included in the Accelerate Alabama plan. These drivers are defined as follows: Recruitment—programs that focus on the attraction of new business and industry; Retention—programs that focus on the retention and expansion of existing business and industry. Renewal—programs that focus on job creation through innovation, entrepreneurship, research and development, and commercialization. In order to successfully compete for the jobs of tomorrow in each of the targeted business sectors, the state must diversify its economic development efforts through a balanced emphasis on recruitment, retention, and renewal. Each recommendation in the plan is designed to accelerate the state's economic development efforts with each tactic providing a path to success. The accelerators are organized within the context of the three economic drivers, but most will require collaborative efforts across the full spectrum of Alabama's economic development community. There are some economic development accelerators that transcend the three primary economic drivers. These recommended initiatives have been presented after the three drivers in an "Other" category.
- The Made in Alabama website is currently the "go-to" site for all things economic development within the state of Alabama.
- The WIOA partners will be working closely with our economic development partners to determine labor supply in specific industry sectors to include student enrollment. Part of our strategy is to provide a balance to meet labor supply and demand on a regional basis. In Alabama, Adult Education programs are coordinating with the economic and workforce development strategies by providing an entry way for individuals to become part of the state's workforce pipeline. Jobseekers and low skilled participants can gain the skill level to become

gainfully employed through Career Pathway, Bridge programs, and Ready-to-Work programs that offer industry-recognized credentials and certificates in a stackable format. The One-Stop Career Center partners will provide the support service required for successful completion.

B. STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

The six (6) core programs under the major core components of WIOA are in four (4) different agencies: Title I is in the Alabama Department of Commerce; Title II is in the Alabama Community College System; Title III is in the Alabama Department of Labor; and, Title IV is in the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services. These agencies, however, have partnered with each other since 1992 in providing coordinated or co-located services in the Alabama Career Center System. These agencies have met on a regular basis throughout WIA to provide and improve services to job seekers and employers through the system. WIOA has renewed these agencies to ensure coordinated and cooperative services.

Core program and optional plan partners' activities to carry out the state strategies identified in the plan are based on unique partnerships between the partners, the Alabama Workforce Development Board, and the Governor's Alabama Workforce Council (AWC). All core partners participate at the executive level and the senior management level and the volunteers participating on the Board. Also, the ACCS and the ALSDE participate during senior staff meetings and Board meetings. The activities funded to implement the State's strategies includes enrollments in Title I activities for adult, youth and dislocated workers, adult education activities provided in the Comprehensive Career Centers, Wagner-Peyser employment services, and Rehabilitation Services staff referrals to any appropriate services.

However, the state has reorganized the local areas based on a newly developed plan that divides the state into 7 workforce regions. The 3 previous local areas (Jefferson, Mobile, and 65 counties) were re-organized and developed into 7 local areas that match the workforce regions. The purpose is alignment across all the partners. Not only Core Partner agencies, but all sub-partners will have access to local data and strategic decisions will be made in each local area regarding solutions to workforce needs and especially those populations to be served. This reorganization was fully implemented as of July 1, 2017.

Five of the new local workforce development areas, which were formerly part of the 65-county balance of state, operate policy-wise and with administrative support from the Alabama Department of Commerce 's Workforce Development Division, which had administered the 65-county local workforce development area. Policy support and the coordination of services will continue from the other core partners for the five new local workforce development areas in order to ensure continuity of established policies such as priority of services to public assistance recipients. Senior level staff from core and non-core partners will continue to target groups of job seekers with the most significant barriers to employment. The five new local workforce development areas will not be without experienced senior level guidance and support.

SNAP E&T services will be expanded from 10 to 38 Alabama Career Centers across Alabama. The focus of the Career Centers will be on job search activities for Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWDS). Referrals to the Career Center's come to AlabamaWorks! (AW!) electronically and allow for any SNAP E&T ABAWD to have access to services immediately at any of those 38 Career Centers. The plan is to work with local DHR offices and Career Centers in those 42 counties to continue to establish policies, priorities, and outreach for this population within the first quarter of 2023. SNAP E&T is also in the planning stages of a partnership with the Alabama Community College System Adult Education program. This partnership started with a pilot program for 50/50 Administrative match program in Mobile County. This partnership will include two community-based organizations in this area, as well as the local

Career Center. The focus of this partnership is to look at barriers ABAWDS may have to employment in this area and match the services needed to overcome employment barriers and match them to the local workforce needs of that area.

The TANF Program is a cash assistance and work program operated by the Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR). There are approximately 5,000 clients receiving TANF and participating in DHR's work program called JOBS. JOBS clients are required to register with AlabamaWorks! (AW!). The plan is to create an interface with DOL whereby a record is automatically created or updated in AW! for JOBS clients. This will allow case managers to track TANF clients as they progress through the Career Center System and other workforce partner programs. The automated referral to DOL will expedite receipt of services for TANF clients and will not have to go to another office to register in AW! and they will be clearly identifiable as TANF clients so they will receive assistance according to the mandated priority of service. As a result of the automated referral DHR will receive performance outcome data that will be used to modify policies and procedures as appropriate. In the interim, there will be monthly contacts between the JOBS case manager and Career Center case manager to ensure TANF clients are receiving full benefit of workforce services.

For clients that access the Career Center office first but may be interested in services provided by TANF, there are information packets available at the Career Centers for any clients who inquire about the TANF program. Additionally, the long-term goal is to develop an online application process for TANF which will be easily accessible by the client from any computer.

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

(A) The ATLAS on Career Pathways will integrate the workforce data and the education data into a unified system to create reports requested and approved by the P-20W Council. The ATLAS on Career Pathways is expected to leverage the strengths of education and industry to improve educational outcomes and to promote workforce and economic development by providing the capability to look at educational outcomes and workforce outcomes across entities and over time. It will also maximize existing data assets by utilizing education and workforce training program outcome information from early learning through postsecondary education and into the workforce. The ATLAS on Career Pathways will also provide information on the effectiveness of educational and workforce training programs, not individuals, by doing all of the following: Assessing the availability of a skilled workforce to address current and future demands of business and industry; Providing information to improve the effectiveness of educational programs and educational outcomes; providing information to improve the effectiveness of workforce training and workforce outcomes; Providing timely and actionable information to students and parents to aid in career path decisions; Providing information regarding return on investment of educational and workforce programs; Guiding decision makers at all levels to further facilitate the enhancement of educational and workforce programs.

(B) The Alabama Department of Commerce and the Alabama Department of Labor implemented an integrated database for WIOA Title I and Title III, Trade Act, and Veterans. The new AlabamaWorks! (AW!) system replaced the two old separate systems, Alabama JobLink (AJL) and Alaworks, and is a vibrant system able to provide services to those seeking employment and training. The system also contains data from the Title II and IV core partners via a data sharing agreement. This system is also the main source of workforce data for the ATLAS system. The system has a common registration, intake and reporting and for those participants that are common to all programs in the system will have a common exit from all services in the workforce system. WIOA reporting for Title I and III, TAA, and Veterans will be compiled and fed to the federal reporting system from the new AW! system. This will ensure common

participants, common outcomes, and enhanced reporting for all partners included in the case management system.

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

(2) The Alabama College and Career Exploration Tool (ACCET) will be a Career and College exploration tool that will consist of a web-based dashboard, accessible at no cost to the general public developed from data taken from the ATLAS database. The ACCET will enable the user to compare all education and workforce training programs offered in the State of Alabama, including postsecondary education and training programs, programs offered through the public workforce system, and employment opportunities offered by public and private employers. It will allow users to compare annual and total cost, length of time to complete, graduation rate, median salary, and eligibility for financial aid. It will also provide pertinent information on all 16 career clusters and the 79 career pathways including all related occupations. The ACCET is expected to be operational by October 1, 2020.

State-developed guidelines for State-administered One-Stop partner programs' contributions to the One-Stop delivery system were initially promulgated via Governor's Workforce Innovation Directive (GWID) Number PY2015-10 on January 20, 2016. GWID PY2015-10, Changes 1 – 4 were subsequentially issued. These Directives give guidance regarding infrastructure costs and require each local area, the Local Board, chief elected officials and One-Stop partners to come to an agreement regarding the methodology for determining One-Stop infrastructure cost contributions per WIOA 121(h)(1)(B). If local officials are unable to reach consensus, they will be required to use the infrastructure funding methodology determined by the Alabama Department of Commerce's Workforce Development Division on behalf of the Governor.

Limitations are also placed on how much each partner can contribute to infrastructure costs. These limitations are as follows, by program:

Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth: Shall not exceed 3 percent of the federal funds provided to the State for a full program year.

Wagner-Peyser Act: Shall not exceed 3 percent of the federal funds provided to the State for a full program year.

Vocational Rehabilitation: Shall not exceed .75 percent of the federal funds provided to the State in the second full program year; 1 percent of the federal funds provided to the State in the third full program year; 1.25 percent of the federal funds provided to the State in the fourth full program year; 1.5 percent of the federal funds provided to the State in the fifth full program year and in each succeeding year.

Other Partners: Shall not exceed 1.5 percent of the federal funds provided to the State. Subject to the above limitations, those local areas in which the local board, chief elected officials, and One-Stop partners fail to reach a consensus agreement on methods to fund the infrastructure of the One-Stop Career Centers in the local areas beginning on July 1, 2016 and thereafter, the Governor, after consultation with chief elected officials, local boards, and the State Board, shall determine the portion of funds to be provided by each One-Stop Career Center partner. In making such determinations (for the purpose of determining funding contributions), the Governor shall calculate amounts for the proportionate use of the One-Stop Career Centers in the State consistent with Chapter II of Title 2, Code of Federal Regulations (or any corresponding similar regulation or ruling) taking into account the costs of administration of the One-Stop delivery system for purposes not related to One-Stop Career Centers for each partner.

The Governor shall exclude from such determination of funds the amounts for proportionate use of one-stop centers attributable to the programs of one-stop partners for those local areas of the State where the costs of infrastructure of one-stop centers are funded under the option described in WIOA Section 121(h)(1)(A)(i)(I), e.g. funding methods agreed on by the local board, chief elected officials, and One-Stop Career Center partners (and described in the memorandum of understanding described in WIOA Section 121(c). The Governor shall also take into account the statutory requirements for each partner program and the partner program's ability to fulfill such requirements. Per WIOA Section 121(h)(2)(C) in a State in which the State constitution or a State statute places policymaking authority that is independent of the authority of the Governor in an entity or official with respect to the funds provided for adult education and literacy activities authorized under Title II, postsecondary career and technical education activities authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.), or vocational rehabilitation services offered under a provision covered by Section 3(13)(D), the determination with respect to the programs authorized under that title, Act, or provision shall be made by the chief officer of the entity, or the official, with such authority in consultation with the Governor.

Pursuant to WIOA Section 121(h)(2)(E), the Governor established a process contained in GWID Number PY2015-10, described under WIOA Section 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(IV), for a One-Stop partner administering a program described in WIOA Section 121(b)(1) to appeal a determination regarding the portion of funds to be provided by the One-Stop partner. Such a determination may be appealed under the process on the basis that such determination is inconsistent with the WIOA requirements for One-Stop partners' contributions for One-Stop Career Center infrastructure costs. Such process shall ensure prompt resolution of the appeal in order to ensure the funds are distributed in a timely manner, consistent with the requirements of WIOA Section 182(e).

The Alabama One-Stop system is available to all eligible participants and is designed to offer a variety of services to customers through the coordinated efforts of several agencies, whether on-site or through electronic connections. Fostering partnerships among partner agencies results in a more cost-efficient and seamless environment for those customers who desire services. This is a joint staff effort including members of the Alabama Department of Commerce, Workforce Development Division (WDD), Alabama Department of Labor, Employment Service Division (ES), Alabama Community College System, Adult Education, Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, Alabama Department of Senior Services, Alabama Department of Human Resources, and the Alabama Career Center System staff.

The core programs currently mandated by the WIOA have participated and partnered together in the Alabama One-Stop System since 2001. A culture of strong communication and collaboration by these partners enhances services throughout the Alabama Career Center System. In Alabama, partner collaboration is a "top down" process. Top level partner agency administrators meet quarterly at a WIOA Partners' Roundtable to discuss and share information on new initiatives, progress made toward workforce development goals, process updates, labor market information, local area updates and other issues. This process is mirrored in all Alabama One-Stop Centers where mandated quarterly partner meetings are held to share similar information at the local level. The Staff of these core partners including Wagner Peyser and Title I staff are cross trained to work with clients, employers, and job seekers to connect unemployed customers to jobs, prepare underemployed customers for new jobs, and introduce youth to job readiness skills. These staff members jointly provide intake and enrollment, basic and individualized career services, training services and youth services through core partner collaboration by offering service delivery across multiple programs. This requires One-Stop partner co-location, coordination, and integration of all activities and information. Each partner is required to provide access to its programs or activities through the Alabama One-Stop System in addition to any other appropriate locations and make available a portion of its funds to

partner programs to provide applicable career services and jointly fund the Career Center infrastructure.

3. STATE PROGRAM AND STATE BOARD OVERVIEW

A. STATE AGENCY ORGANIZATION

The Governor of Alabama leads state workforce efforts and organizations for the entire state. The organizational chart for WIOA shows the Governor at the top. Two entities, the Alabama Workforce Council and the WIOA State Board, report directly to the Governor to recommend actions, legislation, initiatives, and operations. These two entities are made up of respected and experienced leaders from all regions of the State. The Alabama Workforce Council has been in place for many years, and its members represent local councils, providing communication and information on local and regional needs and opportunities.

The WIOA State Board, created in accordance with the established WIOA guidelines, reports directly to the Governor and has direct lines of responsibility and communication relationship with all WIOA partner organizations and agencies, namely the Alabama Department of Senior Services, the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, the Alabama Department of Labor, the Alabama Community College System, the Workforce Development Division of the Alabama Department of Commerce, and the Alabama Department of Human Resources.

On the WIOA organizational chart of relationships for WIOA Alabama, these six (6) departments, in turn, oversee their respective programs and agencies and, receive input, data, and information for decision making from local constituencies, citizens, businesses, industries, employers, and members of the current and potential workforce.

The Alabama Department of Senior Services implements Alabama's Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services implements Vocational Rehabilitation Services. The Alabama Department of Labor is the agency administering Wagner-Peyser, Unemployment Insurance, Trade Act, and Veterans programs. The Department of Labor is also the lead agency for the operation of Alabama's Career Centers (One Stops). The Alabama Community College System administers all Adult Education programs for the State. The Workforce Development Division of the Alabama Department of Commerce administers the WIOA Title I programs, organizes and assists the regional workforce councils, and organizes and assists local WIOA area boards and their participants. The Workforce Development Division of the Alabama Department of Commerce also has operational and oversight responsibilities with the Alabama Department of Labor for Alabama Career Centers (One-Stops). The Alabama Department of Human Resources operates the workforce development and employment assistance components of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Employment Training (SNAP-ET) programs for eligible families.

The essential collaborative relationships of representative boards, councils, state departments, agencies, and programs in Alabama are well established. All of the above-described entities participated in the planning of the Alabama WIOA plan and continue to work toward shared data, resources, and personnel to efficiently and effectively serve the employers, employees, and those seeking employment in Alabama. The collaborative planning process has focused attention on those with barriers to employment, to those who may be underemployed, and to the newly-identified growth areas for workforce development. New lines of communication, opportunities and technologies for data-sharing, and the focus and energy of the WIOA Board members are resulting in greater opportunities and resources for the Alabama workforce.

Local-level activities and programs are provided through the Alabama Career Center Systems One-Stop Career Centers. There are currently seven local workforce development areas. The Alabama Workforce Development Board in June 2017 approved a plan to realign five (5) of the Balance of State counties with the former Jefferson County Local Workforce Development Area,

eight (8) of the balance of State counties with the former Mobile County Local Workforce Development Area and the remaining fifty-two (52) counties into five (5) new local areas with Local Workforce Development Boards governing WIOA activities. This realignment took effect on July 1, 2017.

B. STATE BOARD

WIOA Section 101 - The State board shall include	Members	Number
The Governor WIOA Sec 1010(b)(1)(A)	Governor Kay Ivey	1
Representatives of State Legislature WIOA Sec 101(b)(1)(B) A member of each chamber of the **State Legislature** (to the extent consistent with State Law), appointed by the appropriate presiding officers of such chamber;	**Terri Collins - Alabama House of Representatives** **Clay Scofield - Alabama Senate**	2
Representatives of Business WIOA Sec 101(b)(1)(C)(i) Members appointed by the Governor, of which – A majority shall be representatives of businesses in the State, who – **I.** are owners of businesses, chief executives or operating officers of businesses, or other business executives or employers with optimum policymaking or hiring authority, and who, in addition, may be members of a local board described in section 107(b)(2)(A)(i); **II.** represent businesses (including small businesses), or organizations representing businesses described in this subclause, that provide employment opportunities that, at a minimum, include high-quality, work-relevant training and development in in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the State; and	George Clark, Board Chair - President, Manufacture Alabama Ronnie Boles, President, General & Automotive Machine Shop, Inc. Joseph Brown, Area Manager, Alabama Power Company Lawrence Lavender, Owner/Sec/Treasurer, Lavender, Inc. Russell DuBose, HR Director, Phifer, Inc. A.J. Cooper, Attorney, Cooper Law Bobby Humphrey, VP, Bryant Bank Tony Wojciechowski, HR Director, Hyundai Power Transformers USA Mike Reynolds, President, BroadSouth Communications, Inc. Perry Hand, President/CEO, Volkert, Inc. Sandra Koblas, HR Director, Austal U.S.A.	25

WIOA Section 101 - The State board shall include	Members	Number
III. are appointed from among individuals nominated by State business organizations and business trade associations;	Cleveland Poole, VP, Pioneer Electric Cooperative, Inc. Kasey Myers, Manager, CSP Technologies Donny Jones, Chief Operating Officer, Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama Ashley Ramsay-Naile, VP, Crowder Gulf Bruce Willingham, President, Mach III, Inc. Steve Hildebrant, Manager, Alabama Power Company Jim Searcy, Executive Director, Economic Development Association of Alabama Ken Tucker, Director, The Boeing Company Mike Petrus, VP Manufacturing, American Cast Iron Pipe Co. Laura Kappler-Roberts, President, Kappler Manufacturing Peggy Sease-Faith, VP-HR, DCH Healthcare System Myriam Aerts, Chief People Officer, AM/NS Calvert Dr. Phillip Cleveland, Owner, Cleveland Senior Living Chrystal Morgan, Director of State & Local Government Relations, United Launch Alliance	
Representatives of Workforce WIOA 101(b)(1)(C)(ii) Not less than 20 percent (20%) shall be representatives of the	Mike Fields, Director, Alabama AFL-CIO Executive Board Bren Riley, President, Alabama AFL-CIO	11

WIOA Section 101 - The State board shall include	Members	Number
workforce within the State, who - I. shall include representatives of labor organizations, who have been nominated by State labor federations; II. shall include a representative, who shall be a member of a labor organization or a training director, from a joint labor-management apprenticeship program, or if no such joint program exists in the State, such a representative of an apprenticeship program in the State; III. may include representatives of community-based organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training, or education needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including organizations that serve veterans or that provide or support competitive, integrated employment for individuals with disabilities; and IV. may include representatives of organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training, or education needs of eligible youth, including representatives of organizations that serve out-of-school youth; and	Mary Allbritten, Project Director, Alabama AFL-CIO Sydney Raine, President, Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training & Employment Frank Coiro, Center Director, Montgomery Job Corps Matthew Dudley, Director, BEJATC Paulette Risher, Still Serving Veterans Jason Phelps, Executive Director, Alabama Construction Recruitment Institute Lynne Stokley, CEO, Easter Seals Alabama Margaret Morton, Executive Director, Sylacauga Alliance for Family Enhancement, Inc Julie Kornegay, Senior Outreach Advisor, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta - Birmingham Branch	
Representatives of Government WIOA Sec 101(b)(1)(C)(iii) the balance - I. shall include representatives of government who – **aa.** shall include the lead State officials with primary responsibility for the core programs; and	<u>Required WIOA Core Partners</u>: Fitzgerald Washington, Secretary of Labor, Alabama Department of Labor, Title III Ed Castile, Deputy Secretary of Commerce for Workforce Development, Alabama Department of Commerce, Title I Jane Elizabeth Burdeshaw,	12

WIOA Section 101 - The State board shall include	Members	Number
bb. shall include chief elected officials (collectively representing both cities and counties, where appropriate); and II. may include such other representatives and officials as the Governor may designate, such as – **aa.** the State agency officials from agencies that are one-stop partners not specified in subclause (I) (including additional one-stop partners whose programs are covered by the State plan, if any); **bb.** State agency officials responsible for economic development or juvenile justice programs in the State; **cc.** individuals who represent an Indian tribe or tribal organization, as such terms are defined in section 166(b); and **dd.** State agency officials responsible for education programs in the State, including chief executive officers of community colleges and other institutions of higher education.	Commissioner, Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, Title IV Jimmy Baker, Chancellor, Alabama Community College System, Title II <u>Required County Elected Official</u>: Merceria Ludgood, President - Mobile County Commission <u>Required City Elected Official</u>: Tony Haygood, Mayor - City of Tuskegee <u>Other</u>: Nancy Buckner, Commissioner, Alabama Department of Human Resources Alan Baker, Representative, Alabama House of Representatives Keith Phillips, Executive Director ATN, Alabama Community College System James Purcell, Executive Director, Alabama Commission on Higher Education Josh Laney, Director, Alabama Office of Apprenticeship Mickey Hutto, Board Member, Inter-Tribal Council of Alabama	

I. MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

WIOA Section 101 - The State board shall include	Members	Number
The Governor WIOA Sec 1010(b)(1)(A)	Governor Kay Ivey	1
Representatives of State Legislature WIOA Sec	**Terri Collins - Alabama House of Representatives**	2

WIOA Section 101 - The State board shall include	Members	Number
101(b)(1)(B) A member of each chamber of the **State Legislature** (to the extent consistent with State Law), appointed by the appropriate presiding officers of such chamber;	**Clay Scofield - Alabama Senate**	
Representatives of Business WIOA Sec 101(b)(1)(C)(i) Members appointed by the Governor, of which – A majority shall be representatives of businesses in the State, who – **I.** are owners of businesses, chief executives or operating officers of businesses, or other business executives or employers with optimum policymaking or hiring authority, and who, in addition, may be members of a local board described in section 107(b)(2)(A)(i); **II.** represent businesses (including small businesses), or organizations representing businesses described in this subclause, that provide employment opportunities that, at a minimum, include high-quality, work-relevant training and development in in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the State; and **III.** are appointed from among individuals nominated by State business organizations and business trade associations;	George Clark, Board Chair - President, Manufacture Alabama Ronnie Boles, President, General & Automotive Machine Shop, Inc. Joseph Brown, Area Manager, Alabama Power Company Lawrence Lavender, Owner/Sec/Treasurer, Lavender, Inc. Russell DuBose, HR Director, Phifer, Inc. A.J. Cooper, Attorney, Cooper Law Bobby Humphrey, VP, Bryant Bank Tony Wojciechowski, HR Director, Hyundai Power Transformers USA Mike Reynolds, President, BroadSouth Communications, Inc. Perry Hand, President/CEO, Volkert, Inc. Sandra Koblas, HR Director, Austal U.S.A. Cleveland Poole, VP, Pioneer Electric Cooperative, Inc. Kasey Myers, Manager, CSP Technologies Donny Jones, Chief Operating Officer, Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama Ashley Ramsay-Naile, VP, Crowder	25

WIOA Section 101 - The State board shall include	Members	Number
	Gulf Bruce Willingham, President, Mach III, Inc. Steve Hildebrant, Manager, Alabama Power Company Jim Searcy, Executive Director, Economic Development Association of Alabama Ken Tucker, Director, The Boeing Company Mike Petrus, VP Manufacturing, American Cast Iron Pipe Co. Laura Kappler-Roberts, President, Kappler Manufacturing Peggy Sease-Faith, VP-HR, DCH Healthcare System Myriam Aerts, Chief People Officer, AM/NS Calvert Dr. Phillip Cleveland, Owner, Cleveland Senior Living Chrystal Morgan, Director of State & Local Government Relations, United Launch Alliance	
Representatives of Workforce WIOA 101(b)(1)(C)(ii) Not less than 20 percent (20%) shall be representatives of the workforce within the State, who - I. shall include representatives of labor organizations, who have been nominated by State labor federations; II. shall include a representative, who shall be a member of a labor organization or a training director, from a joint labor-management apprenticeship program, or if no	Mike Fields, Director, Alabama AFL-CIO Executive Board Bren Riley, President, Alabama AFL-CIO Mary Allbritten, Project Director, Alabama AFL-CIO Sydney Raine, President, Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training & Employment Frank Coiro, Center Director, Montgomery Job Corps Matthew Dudley, Director, BEJATC	11

WIOA Section 101 - The State board shall include	Members	Number
such joint program exists in the State, such a representative of an apprenticeship program in the State; III. may include representatives of community-based organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training, or education needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including organizations that serve veterans or that provide or support competitive, integrated employment for individuals with disabilities; and IV. may include representatives of organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training, or education needs of eligible youth, including representatives of organizations that serve out-of-school youth; and	Paulette Risher, Still Serving Veterans Jason Phelps, Executive Director, Alabama Construction Recruitment Institute Lynne Stokley, CEO, Easter Seals Alabama Margaret Morton, Executive Director, Sylacauga Alliance for Family Enhancement, Inc Julie Kornegay, Senior Outreach Advisor, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta - Birmingham Branch	
Representatives of Government WIOA Sec 101(b)(1)(C)(iii) the balance - I. shall include representatives of government who – **aa.** shall include the lead State officials with primary responsibility for the core programs; and **bb.** shall include chief elected officials (collectively representing both cities and counties, where appropriate); and II. may include such other representatives and officials as the Governor may designate, such as – **aa.** the State agency officials from agencies that are one-stop partners	<u>Required WIOA Core Partners</u>: Fitzgerald Washington, Secretary of Labor, Alabama Department of Labor, Title III Ed Castile, Deputy Secretary of Commerce for Workforce Development, Alabama Department of Commerce, Title I Jane Elizabeth Burdeshaw, Commissioner, Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, Title IV Jimmy Baker, Chancellor, Alabama Community College System, Title II <u>Required County Elected Official</u>: Merceria Ludgood, President - Mobile County Commission	12

WIOA Section 101 - The State board shall include	Members	Number
not specified in subclause (I) (including additional one-stop partners whose programs are covered by the State plan, if any); **bb.** State agency officials responsible for economic development or juvenile justice programs in the State; **cc.** individuals who represent an Indian tribe or tribal organization, as such terms are defined in section 166(b); and **dd.** State agency officials responsible for education programs in the State, including chief executive officers of community colleges and other institutions of higher education.	<u>Required City Elected Official</u>: Tony Haygood, Mayor - City of Tuskegee <u>Other</u>: Nancy Buckner, Commissioner, Alabama Department of Human Resources Alan Baker, Representative, Alabama House of Representatives Keith Phillips, Executive Director ATN, Alabama Community College System James Purcell, Executive Director, Alabama Commission on Higher Education Josh Laney, Director, Alabama Office of Apprenticeship Mickey Hutto, Board Member, Inter-Tribal Council of Alabama	

II. BOARD ACTIVITIES

The Governor appoints members to the Alabama Workforce Development Board (AWDB) and designates the State Board Chairperson. Per the Board bylaws, the Governor establishes and dissolves standing and ad hoc committees to assist the full Board in carrying out the functions and responsibilities in Section 101(d) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Current committees include, Executive Committee, Innovation and Accountability Committee, and the Rural Transportation Committee. All full Board and committee meetings have Alabama Department of Commerce staff at them to coordinate the details of the meeting and as a designated resource to assist in completing committee objectives as they carry out the responsibilities of WIOA Section 101(d). Committee meetings are held as needed, to consider recommendations and initiatives for submission to the full Board. State Workforce Board meetings are held quarterly and are subject to the Alabama Open Meetings Act.

In 2014 the Governor created the Alabama Workforce Council to enhance industry and education collaboration on an on-going basis and to review ways to streamline and align the existing workforce development functions within the State. Several members on the Alabama Workforce Council have also been appointed to the Alabama Workforce Development Board to provide continuity and to develop common recommendations on policy and workforce alignment needs.

Since its establishment in October 2018, the Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Transformation (GOEWT) has worked to coordinate the combined efforts of Alabama's

education and workforce partners to implement Governor Ivey's workforce development strategic plan, which includes the State Workforce Development Board. The State Workforce Development Board, through the GOEWT, offered training to all State Board members and workforce partner staff in the public workforce system through the Talent Development Capstone Course. The Talent Development Capstone Course included training on the new policies included in the 2020 WIOA State Combined Plan. On March 11, 2021, the Department of Commerce State Board staff conducted a State Workforce Board Orientation for eight (8) new WDB members, as well as any existing Board members that wanted to attend. The training included: an overview of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA); WIOA Oversight and the State Board's Role; and WIOA Fiscal & Performance Requirements.

In June 2021, the State WDB adopted revised bylaws that require 51 percent of Board members to be present to reach a quorum, institutes term limits, and requires that the executive committee meet for emergency purposes only. The State WDB also adopted a revised credential, eligible training provider, and Pell prioritization policy at the June 2021 meeting. The revised eligible training provider guidance requires One-Stop centers to utilize the Dashboard for Alabamians to Visualize Income Determinations (DAVID) self-sufficiency cliff and benefits cliff mitigation tool when taking a client through the WIOA intake process.

The State Workforce Development Board meets during four quarterly combined workforce days in Alabama that also include meetings of the GOEWT and the Alabama Workforce Council. The meetings are held consecutively at the same physical location. The workforce days are thematic and serve to drive the full workforce ecosystem forward during each quarter. For 2022, the themes are (1) the Future of Work Post-COVID-19; (2) credential transparency and competency-based learning/hiring; (3) work-based learning and employer-driven, skills-based training; and (4) using the Alabama Terminal on Linking and Analyzing Statistics (ATLAS) on Career Pathways data to make informed public- and private-sector decisions. The AWC focuses on the business and industry considerations of each theme; the State Workforce Development Board focuses on how the public workforce system will address the theme; and the GOEWT focuses on generating support and collaboration on the theme among all state agencies. The Department of Commerce Workforce Development Division (WDD) provides support and acts as the sinews that tie the broader initiatives together through copious strategic planning.

4. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS AND ONE-STOP PROGRAM PARTNERS

A. ASSESSMENT OF CORE PROGRAMS

At a minimum, core workforce system partners program services included in the WIOA State Plan, will be assessed using the six (6) common measures as provided in WIOA Section 116(b) and outlined in Training and Employment Guidance Letter WIOA No. 10-16, Change 1. The performance will be reported on the State and Local Workforce area level. Each Core Partners' performance in each of the primary indicators of performance will be a start point for the further evaluation of quality, effectiveness, and opportunities for improvement. Each core partner program will submit their performance metrics in a statewide dashboard report on a quarterly basis. The quarterly dashboard report will be provided to the State Board's Performance Accountability Committee with accomplishments, plans, and strategies to continue successes or make improvements, as necessary, how partners address areas that are not being met and the identification of resources or supports needed to move forward.

The ATLAS (Alabama's Terminal on Linking and Analyzing Statistics) is being developed as the state's longitudinal data system and is being implemented to provide workforce and educational attainment reports. The data housed here will be used to meet business needs; improve training/education activities and programs; and ensure that the Alabama Career Centers are serving those most in need.

ATLAS will allow Alabama to use a data driven process to determine regional and state in-demand career pathways through examination and review of labor market information, wage records, and educational attainment data. "Credentials of Value" can also be identified in careers in which braided WIOA and career and technical education funding can be focused.

The State does not fully understand the requirements of conducting an assessment over and above a review of WIOA performance. Core programs individually assessed their performance using measures appropriate for their programs individually and made these reports available to the State Workforce Development Board. However, an overall assessment of the workforce system core partners has not been conducted. The State Workforce Development Board Innovation and Performance Accountability Committee will adopt policies and procedures to review performance and assessments for PY2020 and PY2021. The review process will include recommendations to improve or enhance performance outcomes at the regional and local levels. The State will also form a Technical Assistance Plan and seek guidance from federal agencies, workforcegps.org, and other resources. An assessment for PY 2019 will be performed after the end of the program year on June 30, 2020.

Core program partners will provide performance reports prior to the beginning of the next full program year and will be asked to address any corrective actions as needed to the full Board.

B. ASSESSMENT OF ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS

To position the workforce system in Alabama for relevance and growth, there must be clarity about what AlabamaWorks! is at both the state and local levels, what it offers currently, and how existing partnerships between all WIOA stakeholders necessitates a shared responsibility to create value for additional partners in the future. Alabama's assessment of One-Stop Partner Programs will ensure these goals are accomplished and promote efforts to continuously improve WIOA service and performance within Alabama's workforce system across the State.

During February and March 2022, the Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Transformation hosted meetings in each of the state's seven WIOA Local Workforce Development Areas to share updates on the WIOA 2022 Combined Plan Modification and other workforce initiatives across the state. The meetings included an opportunity for discussion and sharing feedback via large group discussion and questionnaires. The feedback focused on strengthening collaboration and coordination among WIOA partners to increase the effectiveness of WIOA services and Alabama's overall workforce development system. Across local areas/regions, stakeholders articulated a vision for collaboration and coordination that includes six key components: Frequent, open, and clear communication among all partners; effective collaboration and sharing of ideas and resources among all partners; achieving outcomes for individuals and employers; understanding of roles and responsibilities among all partners; focus on job seekers and client service; and streamlined and seamless processes for individuals and employers. With this vision in mind, stakeholders collectively agreed collaboration and coordination among WIOA partners today is very effective, with an average score of 7.6 out of 10.

Stakeholders identified five key areas for improvement to close the gap between stakeholders' vision for successful collaboration and where they agreed things stand today:

- Accessibility of services: Continue to work toward wrap-around and co-located services, and create a seamless and accessible system for individuals
- Navigation services and support: Help individuals navigate the workforce system; acknowledge the difficulty of understanding the system and programs; and provide strong intake, coaching, and navigation services

- Partner coordination: Strengthen interagency and partner communication and collaboration, and continue to build partnerships, share information, cross-train, and support understanding of everyone's roles and responsibilities
- Remove barriers: Share and improve services available to reduce barriers, and continue to focus on availability of transportation, childcare, mental health services, and broadband
- Engage employers: Effectively engage employers in workforce development efforts, and educate employers about the benefits and programs available to them through the workforce system

In addition to suggesting strategies for improvement, stakeholders also expressed interest in continuing to learn about and be engaged in efforts to implement WIOA policy more effectively across the state. This level of interest and engagement is a key asset in working toward Alabama's workforce development goals.

Alabama is currently developing an annual assessment of all One-Stop Partner Programs that will include this essential stakeholder feedback and ensure consistency, ongoing system improvement, and federal, state and local compliance. The State Workforce Development Board, and the Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Transformation (GOEWT) are working with former Deputy U.S. Secretary of Labor, John Pallasch, to integrate Alabama's workforce and human services systems into a "no-wrong-door" system that allows people to access human resources, such as SNAP and TANF, and workforce services in one location. Though an overall assessment of Alabama's workforce system One-Stop partner programs has not been conducted to date, the GOWET is currently working with the State Workforce Development Board and the Department of Commerce to develop an annual statewide comprehensive assessment. System wide, the One-Stop delivery system assessment will be utilized to assess the delivery system of partner program services, including but not limited to partner programs outlined in this Combined State Plan. Assessment results will be reviewed and managed to better assess and improve outcomes, taking into account both local and regional planning strategies and goals. Once the statewide One-Stop delivery system assessment is complete, a copy of the assessment will be forwarded to the appropriate Region 3 USDOL staff.

Alabama also applied in August 2021 for the U.S. Department of Labor's Evaluation Peer Learning Cohort (EvalPLC). Alabama was accepted into the cohort in October 2021. In addition to Alabama, the cohort included Arkansas, California, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Delaware, and Nevada. The EvalPLC is focused on determining the states' current capacity for evaluation, expanding knowledge for evaluation frameworks, and developing capstone projects to support learning and implementation. Dr. Randall "Randy" Wilson was Alabama's EvalPLC coach. Over a timespan of six months, the EvalPLC used virtual 90-minute work sessions to build knowledge, facilitate peer learning, and develop specific action steps as part of a plan to conduct WIOA core program evaluations. State teams that represent core Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) core programs collaborated and developed capstone projects to support their development and implementation of state and local research and evaluations. In the cohort, Alabama: (1) learned from experienced evaluators, state and national subject matter experts (SMEs), and other states during the development of the capstone project; (2) used the Evaluation Toolkit: Key elements for State Workforce Agencies, the Evaluation Readiness Assessment, and the Evaluation Design Assessment; and (3) exchanged ideas to support the creation of other evaluation tools and resources to enhance evaluation capacity for workforce systems. The EvalPLC concluded in April 2022.

C. PREVIOUS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The State did not fully understand the requirement to conduct One-Stop Partner Program assessments during the previous two program years. The core WIOA Partner programs

individually used current performance measures to evaluate their program's effectiveness. Other One-Stop partner programs also assessed their performance using measures appropriate for their programs. However, an overall assessment of the workforce system was not conducted.

The 's Innovation and Performance Accountability Committee was poised to make policy and procedure recommendations to the State Workforce Development Board that would result in performance standards being set for the One-Stop Centers at the regional and local levels and be the foundation for a statewide One-Stop delivery system assessment for PY2020 and PY2021. Ongoing complications and interruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic prevented the necessary meeting from taking place; therefore, these policy and procedure recommendations were never framed, developed, and presented to the State Workforce Development Board.

Alabama is currently developing an annual assessment of all One-Stop Partner Programs that will ensure consistency, ongoing system improvement, and federal, state and local compliance. Though an overall assessment of Alabama's workforce system One-Stop partner programs has not been conducted to date, the GOWET is currently working with the State Workforce Development Board and the Alabama Department of Commerce to develop an annual statewide comprehensive One-Stop delivery system assessment. The One-Stop delivery system assessment will be utilized to assess the delivery of partner program services, including but not limited to partner programs outlined in this Combined State Plan. Performance standards will be established for the One-Stop Centers at the regional and local levels. The bases of these performance standards will be the WIOA performance accountability measures as required under section 116 of WIOA as one method to assess effectiveness of core programs and other One-Stop partner programs. Assessment results will be reviewed and managed to better assess and improve outcomes, taking into account both local and regional planning strategies and goals. Once the statewide One-Stop delivery system assessment is complete, a copy of the assessment will be forwarded to the appropriate Region 3 USDOL staff. At this date, the State is not requesting any formal Technical Assistance from federal agencies.

D. EVALUATION

The State did not fully understand the difference between conducting an "assessment" and an "evaluation" during the previous two program years. The State will work with the Innovation and Performance Accountability Committee of the State Workforce Board to develop a Technical Assistance Plan and seek guidance from federal agencies, workforcegps.org, and other resources. A plan will also be developed for conducting an evaluation of the Alabama Workforce System using the information available from the new longitudinal data system, Alabama Terminal on Linking and Analyzing Statistics (ATLAS) on Career Pathways and other data available from partner agencies. Alabama is participating in the U.S. Department of Labor's EvalPLC and is using this opportunity to develop a comprehensive research and evaluation plan.

5. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

A. FOR TITLE I PROGRAMS

I. YOUTH ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 128(B)(2) OR (B)(3)

i. Youth activities in accordance with WIOA section 128(b)(2) or (b)(3),
The State of Alabama will apply the "alternate" Section 128(b)(3)(B) Youth allocation formula to sub-state allocations. The "alternate" procedures seem an effective means to ensuring the available WIOA employment and training funds are appropriately better channeled to urban areas. The "alternate" Youth formula applies seventy percent (70 percent) weights to the basic Section 128(b)(2) local area statutory formula. The remaining weights, i.e. thirty percent (30 percent) are comprised of local area "excess poverty" and "unemployment above the State average."

The excess poverty "alternate" allocation component is derived from the most recent available American Community Survey (ACS) and the most current Alabama CPS population data. The State applies "above 7.5 percent of the population" to capture the "excess poverty" for WIOA Youth "alternate" allocation formula components.

The WIOA alternate formula "Unemployment above State average" component is calculated in much the same way as the WIOA formula "excess unemployment" component. The difference is the WIOA formula defines "excess unemployment" as that above 4.5 percent of the labor force; "unemployment above the State average" is that unemployment above the Alabama average, i.e., 3.1 percent of the labor force.

The two above "alternate" 30 percent formula elements are pooled, resulting in a single Poverty/Unemployment index for each county/allocation entity. In order that a greater share of available WIOA resources might be directed toward the easing of local conditions of poverty, a 75 percent weight is assigned to the poverty factor in this pooling, and a 25 percent weight is assigned to the unemployment factor. The structure of the "alternate" formulas and its greater focus on the incidence of local area conditions of poverty should help lessen the adverse effects of any year-to-year WIOA funding changes which may occur. Youth funds distributed to the local workforce development areas are guaranteed to be no less than 90% of the average allocation percentage for each local workforce development area's prior two years.

II. ADULT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 133(B)(2) OR (B)(3)

The State of Alabama will apply the "alternate" Section 133(b)(3)(B) Adult allocation formula to sub-state allocations. The "alternate" procedures seem an effective means to ensuring the available WIOA employment and training funds are appropriately better channeled to urban areas. The "alternate" Adult formulas apply 70 percent weights to the basic Section 133(b)(2)(A) local area statutory formula. The remaining weights, i.e. 30 percent are comprised of local area "excess poverty" and "unemployment above the State average.

The excess poverty "alternate" allocation component is derived from the most recent available American Community Survey (ACS) and the most current Alabama CPS population data. The State applies "above 7.5 percent of population" to capture the "excess poverty" for WIOA Adult "alternate" allocation formula components.

The WIOA "alternate formula "Unemployment above State average" component is calculated in much the same way as the WIOA formula "excess unemployment" component. The difference is the WIOA formula defines "excess unemployment" as that above 4. 5 percent of the labor force; "unemployment above the State average is that unemployment above the Alabama average, i.e., 3.1 percent of the labor force.

The two above "alternate" 30 percent formula elements are pooled, resulting in a single Poverty/Unemployment index for each county/allocation entity. In order that a greater share of available WIOA resources might be directed toward the easing of local conditions of poverty, a seventy-five percent (75 percent) weight is assigned to the poverty factor in this pooling, and a twenty-five percent (25 percent) weight is assigned to the unemployment factor. The structure of the "alternate" formulas and its greater focus on the incidence of local area conditions of poverty should help lessen the adverse effects of any year-to-year WIOA funding changes which may occur. Adult funds distributed to the local workforce development areas are guaranteed to be no less than 90% of the average allocation percentage for each local workforce development areas prior two years.

III. DISLOCATED WORKER EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 133(B)(2) AND BASED ON DATA AND WEIGHTS ASSIGNED

Dislocated Worker funds annually allotted to the state are formula allocated among the local areas. This allocation is accomplished using the six-part formula prescribed in Section 133(b)(2)(B)(ii).

Allocation Factor	Weight Assigned in Formula	Data Source(s) and Time
Average Monthly U.I. Beneficiaries ('Insured Unemployment Data")	19%	Alabama Department of Labor/ Labor Market Information - Updated Annually
Excess Unemployment	19%	Alabama Department of Labor/ Labor Market Information - Updated Annually
Estimated Layoffs ("Plant Closing/Mass Layoff Data")	19%	Alabama Department of Labor/ Labor Market Information - Updated Annually
Jobs Lost (All Industries) ("Declining Industries")	19%	Alabama Department of Labor/ Labor Market Information - Updated Annually
Farm Operators Change ("Farmer-Rancher Economic Hardship")	5%	2017 & 2012 Census of U.S. Agriculture - Updated every five years
Unemployment Compensation Exhaustees ("Long-Term Unemployment Data")	19%	Alabama Department of Labor/ Labor Market Information - Updated Annually

Dislocated Worker funds distributed to the local workforce development areas are guaranteed to be no less than 90% of the average allocation percentage for each local workforce development area's prior two years. Draft allocation policies and methods, along with the funds allocation information, are presented to the Board for review, comment, and approval on an annual basis. The staff who perform the calculations are always available to respond to questions. Questions regarding these processes have been asked and answered at State Board meetings. Local areas are notified of the outcomes in terms of funding, as well as the procedures for the allocations. Local elected officials are provided drafts of allocation policies and are asked for their review and comment. This assures that time is allowed for comments prior to the time the directive is published as policy.

B. FOR TITLE II

I. DESCRIBE HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL AWARD MULTI-YEAR GRANTS OR CONTRACTS ON A COMPETITIVE BASIS TO ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS IN THE STATE, INCLUDING HOW ELIGIBLE AGENCIES WILL ESTABLISH THAT ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS ARE ORGANIZATIONS OF DEMONSTRATED EFFECTIVENESS

The Alabama Community College System (ACCS), Adult Education Division conducted a competitive application process for all federal AEFLA funding (231, 225, and 243) during the 2021 calendar year. The review of the applications followed all USDOE/OCTAE federal requirements and the rating response aligned to the 13 considerations in Title II of WIOA.

The following timeline for the 2021 competition was observed:

- February 12, 2021: ACCS Adult Education (ACCS/AE) Division released a three-year federal AEFLA Request for Funding Proposal (RFP) aligned with the priorities in the approved State

Combined Plan.

- February 26, 2021: ACCS/AE Division conducted a Request for Funding Proposal Bidders Conference Webinar. (recorded and on the website through April)
- February–March 2021: ACCS/AE Division selected readers/scorers candidates from representative WIOA partners to be the review committee for the AEFLA grant applications.
- April 5: Due date for AEFLA grant applications.
- April 5–May 7, 2021: Review of the RFP applications occurred through the Local Workforce Development Boards and the Review Committee.
- May 7—May 18, 2021: ACCS/AE Division and the review committees conducted the review and scoring of the applications. The final determination of approved applicants and funding awards were made.
- May 21, 2021: ACCS/AE Division notified the successful applicants. There were 24 Adult Education grant providers selected to deliver adult education services for the 3 year period.
- July 1, 2021: AEFLA grant providers began the federal Program Year 2021-2022.

The Alabama Community College System (ACCS), Adult Education Division allocated adult education funds to twenty four (24) competitively selected, eligible providers to provide adult education services throughout all 67 counties of Alabama. The funds were allocated through a county level funding formula which utilizes a needs based and performance based process. In situations where a county is served by multiple competitively selected, eligible providers, the funds are allocated based on the adjusted share of need within the provider's proposed service area. The funding formula takes into consideration the population in need for each county, based on the most recent U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey 5–year estimate. The population in need in a county is defined as 18 and older without a high school diploma or high school equivalency. The award period for the AEFLA funds will be for a three-year period. An award letter stating the funding amount based on need is sent to each eligible provider selected through the competitive bid process. Each area of the state is provided adequate coverage by ensuring direct services in each county. Providers are required to collaborate with partners from the Career Centers and other social services, education, and employment-related supports in the area.

To determine organizations of demonstrated effectiveness, prospective providers are required to provide data demonstrating their ability to improve skills of low-literate adults in the applicable academic areas related to the Request for Funding Proposal (RFP). Prior recipients will use data from the state data collection system, referred to as Alabama Adult Education System for Accountability and Performance (AAESAP), to demonstrate effectiveness in meeting state-assigned performance measures for all student levels, as well as for English language learners. New prospective providers will address within their proposal how they have been successful in providing educational and literacy services, including services to low-literacy level and English language learners. Each application will be required to demonstrate its record of improving the knowledge and skills needed to transition successfully to postsecondary education, skills training, or employment. Each application will be reviewed to determine whether it meets the standard of demonstrated effectiveness.

The proposal application collects basic information regarding the eligible provider, including, but not limited to, location, service area, demographics served, fiscal management procedures, and audit history. Additionally, each applicant will be required to submit a proposed budget, as well as programmatic information regarding statutory requirements. Questions are based on the thirteen (13) considerations for Adult Education and Family Literacy Act of section 231(e). The assessment of each grant application will involve an intense evaluation of the ability of the eligible provider to meet the literacy needs of the area and to comply with the expectations and statutes described within the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. At a minimum, the review process and scoring rubric will consider the following:

1. The ability of the eligible provider to meet the literacy needs and English language needs identified for the population in the area. Particular emphasis will be given to the provider's ability to provide targeted service to individuals with barriers to employment—including low literacy skills and an English language barrier.
2. The eligible provider's ability to provide service to individuals with a (physical or learning) disability.
3. The eligible provider's demonstrated effectiveness in providing literacy instruction, including its ability to meet State–adjusted levels of performance and improve the literacy levels of eligible individuals.
4. The eligible provider's alignment with the WIOA Local Plan.
5. The depth, intensity, and rigor of the programs and activities offered by the eligible provider. The proposed program must incorporate the basic tenets of reading instruction. Attention will be given to the extent to which the eligible provider incorporates stringent research in the grant proposal submission and the development of the literacy program itself.
6. The extent to which the eligible provider's program is based on intense research and best practices.
7. The extent to which the eligible provider demonstrates the effective use of technology for instruction, to include distance education, toward students' improved performance.
8. The eligible provider's demonstrated integration of contextualized instruction, to blend literacy skills, and preparation for transition to post-secondary education or entry into the workplace. Particular attention will be given to activities that promote and lead to economic self–sufficiency, and the ability to exercise the full rights of citizenship.
9. The qualifications and expertise of the eligible provider's instructors, counselors, and administrative staff. All instructors must hold (at minimum) a Bachelor's degree. The eligible provider must also demonstrate its ability and intent to provide high-quality professional development to instructors and staff, toward the improvement of student performance.
10. The eligible provider's collaboration with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community. Particularly, the eligible provider should have or establish significant partnerships with public schools, post-secondary institutions, industry/business partners, and workforce boards.
11. The flexibility of program scheduling offered by the eligible provider, including coordination (when available) with Federal, State, and local support services such as childcare, transportation, and mental health services.
12. The eligible provider's information management system; the expectation will be that the eligible provider will use the state-administered designated Adult Education System for Accountability and Performance for all grant-related data collection and reporting.
13. The demonstrated need within the area occupied by the eligible provider for English language acquisition programs and civics education programs.

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

The Alabama Community College System (ACCS), Adult Education Division, will hold a full and open competition consistent with the standards of CFR 200.319. All eligible agencies will be granted direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants or contracts. The following steps will be initiated to ensure direct and equitable access:

- An announcement of the availability of federal funds, under the auspices of Title II of the Workforce Innovation Act of 2014, will be posted on the ACCS website and other means of available communication such as social media.
- The same announcement, grant, and application process will be used for all eligible providers in the state in sections 221, 225, 243 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity

Act. Standard criteria for evaluation of local proposals will be used for all eligible providers. The application processes will be designed so that direct application to the State eligible agency is clearly evident, customary, and non-negotiable.

- A Request for Funding Proposal Bidder's Conference webinar is conducted to provide information to all eligible providers interested in applying. The specific date, time, and directions for accessing the webinar is part of the RFP package. The webinar will be recorded and placed on the website with the RFP guidelines, information, resources, application, and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).
- The announcement will contain information pertaining to:
- Type of grants available
- Contact person
- Timeline with grant application due date included
- Other pertinent WIOA required information

C. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

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.

The Alabama Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program is a combined agency housed within the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services. Therefore, funds for services provided to individuals who are blind are from the same federal and state funds used for all individuals served. Internally, Blind and Deaf Services is a separate division from the General VR division and, each year, the amount of money allocated to the two divisions is based on the amount of funds needed for each program.

6. PROGRAM DATA

A. DATA ALIGNMENT AND INTEGRATION

Starting in April 2020, two of the core partner agencies in Alabama, the Alabama Department of Commerce (Commerce) and Alabama Department of Labor (ADOL), started using an integrated database case management system AlabamaWorks! (AW!) to exchange data elements and provide common intake to participants for Titles I and III, Trade Act and JVSG programs. The new AW! information system is the first step in the implementation of the state's the new longitudinal database, Alabama Terminal on Linking and Analyzing Statistics (ATLAS). A module allowing tracking of Registered Apprenticeship Program employers and participants was also added in PY2020.

Implementation of the new AW! system occurred during April of PY2020. Agreements for data sharing of the common elements have been put in place with the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (Title IV) and the Alabama Department of Postsecondary Education – Adult Education (Title II) so that this information is included in the new AW! case management system. Other WIOA partner agencies will also be offered a chance to join this system within the next four years.

The Alabama Department of Commerce, Workforce Development Division and the Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR) are working together to initiate a pilot project for SNAP and TANF clients. This will include referring SNAP and TANF clients to the Alabama Career Centers, which are located throughout the state for additional services. These services will include resume preparation, job search assistance, Labor Market Information on career pathways, staff assisted individualized services, support services, and possibly WIOA funded

training services, in an effort to move these individuals from government assistance into employment and eventually, unsubsidized employment.

The first step of the process is to integrate current SNAP and TANF data into the AlabamaWorks! system, which is the job search, case management, participant tracking and reporting, and financial system for Wagner-Peyser, Trade Assistance, Veterans Job Grant, WIOA Title I, National Dislocated Worker Grants, and other discretionary grants. The two Departments, along with the Alabama Department of Labor, have entered into a three-party agreement with Geographic Solutions to purchase the SNAP and TANF data system modules and implement them in the AlabamaWorks! system. The system currently has participant information for anyone who comes into an Alabama Career Center or registers online. Some of these current participants are SNAP and TANF recipients. Once these modules are implemented and individuals are enrolled into the system, other WIOA partners will be able to access the participant's information should the person wish to enroll in other available workforce services. This will minimize the enrollment process by partner agencies and shorten the path to services needed. The Governor has deemed this as part of the "no wrong door approach" to workforce services.

The second phase of the project will be to select pilot locations from across the state and cross train staff from the Department of Human Resources on WIOA eligibility and Wagner-Peyser processes currently in place at the career centers. A SNAP/TANF client specialist will be designated at these pilot career centers. This specialist would be there to assist SNAP/TANF clients through the Career Center process and expedite the services for these customers and help resolve any eligibility issues that arise. The Department of Human Resources staff will be trained to know WIOA eligibility and the AlabamaWorks! registration process so that the clients will be in the system with all applicable documentation already uploaded. The DHR staff will also be the front-line staff to make the determination if someone is suitable for WIOA funds since WIOA is not an entitlement program. Once these pilot sites are operational, this process will then be replicated in all DHR county offices across the state. DHR staff will be provided continual training on WIOA policies and procedures, AlabamaWorks! system changes/updates, Career Center Customer Service processes, and any other required assistance.

This project is expected to take twelve (12) months for system implementation and another 24 to 36 months for location selection and staff training before full access occurs statewide.

Implementation of this shared data system will greatly enhance the State's ability to conduct research, evaluate programs, and assess the effectiveness of all workforce, core partners and non-core programs statewide.

Starting in April 2020, two of the core partner agencies in Alabama, the Alabama Department of Commerce (Commerce) and Alabama Department of Labor (ADOL), started using an integrated database case management system AlabamaWorks! (AW!) to exchange data elements and provide common intake to participants for Titles I and III, Trade Act and JVSG programs. The new AW! information system is the first step in the implementation of the state's the new longitudinal database, Alabama Terminal on Linking and Analyzing Statistics (ATLAS). A module allowing tracking of Registered Apprenticeship Program employers and participants was also added in PY2020.

Implementation of the new AW! system occurred during April of PY2020. Agreements for data sharing of the common elements have been put in place with the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (Title IV) and the Alabama Department of Postsecondary Education – Adult Education (Title II) so that this information is included in the new AW! case management system. Other WIOA partner agencies will also be offered a chance to join this system within the next four years.

The Alabama Department of Commerce, Workforce Development Division and the Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR) are working together to initiate a pilot project for SNAP and TANF clients. This will include referring SNAP and TANF clients to the Alabama Career Centers, which are located throughout the state for additional services. These services will include resume preparation, job search assistance, Labor Market Information on career pathways, staff assisted individualized services, support services, and possibly WIOA funded training services, in an effort to move these individuals from government assistance into employment and eventually, unsubsidized employment.

The first step of the process is to integrate current SNAP and TANF data into the AlabamaWorks! system, which is the job search, case management, participant tracking and reporting, and financial system for Wagner-Peyser, Trade Assistance, Veterans Job Grant, WIOA Title I, National Dislocated Worker Grants, and other discretionary grants. The two Departments, along with the Alabama Department of Labor, have entered into a three-party agreement with Geographic Solutions to purchase the SNAP and TANF data system modules and implement them in the AlabamaWorks! system. The system currently has participant information for anyone who comes into an Alabama Career Center or registers online. Some of these current participants are SNAP and TANF recipients. Once these modules are implemented and individuals are enrolled into the system, other WIOA partners will be able to access the participant's information should the person wish to enroll in other available workforce services. This will minimize the enrollment process by partner agencies and shorten the path to services needed. The Governor has deemed this as part of the "no wrong door approach" to workforce services.

The second phase of the project will be to select pilot locations from across the state and cross train staff from the Department of Human Resources on WIOA eligibility and Wagner-Peyser processes currently in place at the career centers. A SNAP/TANF client specialist will be designated at these pilot career centers. This specialist would be there to assist SNAP/TANF clients through the Career Center process and expedite the services for these customers and help resolve any eligibility issues that arise. The Department of Human Resources staff will be trained to know WIOA eligibility and the AlabamaWorks! registration process so that the clients will be in the system with all applicable documentation already uploaded. The DHR staff will also be the front-line staff to make the determination if someone is suitable for WIOA funds since WIOA is not an entitlement program. Once these pilot sites are operational, this process will then be replicated in all DHR county offices across the state. DHR staff will be provided continual training on WIOA policies and procedures, AlabamaWorks! system changes/updates, Career Center Customer Service processes, and any other required assistance.

This project is expected to take twelve (12) months for system implementation and another 24 to 36 months for location selection and staff training before full access occurs statewide.

Implementation of this shared data system will greatly enhance the State's ability to conduct research, evaluate programs, and assess the effectiveness of all workforce, core partners and non-core programs statewide.

(iii) The State WIOA Workforce Board and the Governor were very instrumental in directing the core partners toward the new AlabamaWorks! Data system. Once the Request for Proposal (RFP) was developed and issued for the new Data system and several proposals were received, Governor Ivey and her staff assisted in making the final determination of vendor and system selection. The State WIOA Workforce Board followed the implementation and progress of the new Data/Case management system closely to ensure the core partners had a stake in making it be the best possible Data system for Alabama. The new AlabamaWorks! Data/Case management system is the basis for the ATLAS Longitudinal Data System that is currently under development. The Governor and the State WIOA Workforce Board also envisioned using the new workforce Data/Case management system to launch a Career and College exploration tool for use by individuals from secondary school throughout their working career. The purpose of

the ATLAS Longitudinal Data System is to generate timely and accurate information about curriculum performance that can be used to improve the education system of the state and guide decision makers at all levels. ATLAS will facilitate the enhancement of college and career ready students by presenting the collection and analysis of performance and workforce data. The new AlabamaWorks! system, which is completely integrated with Title I and III, Trade Act, and Veterans' programs, collects and reports all performance related reporting to the United States Department of Labor (USDOL). AlabamaWorks! also has all data on common participants from partner agencies that administer Title II and Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The Core partners have interagency agreements in place to share common data elements to aid in performance reporting. These data sharing files are in the AlabamaWorks! system and are completely electronic and totally secure.

At a minimum, core workforce system partners program services included in the WIOA State Plan, will be assessed using the common measures as provided in WIOA Section 116(b). The performance will be reported on the State and Local Workforce area level. Each Core Partners' performance in each of the primary indicators of performance will be a start point for the further evaluation of quality, effectiveness, and opportunities for improvement. Each core partner program will submit their performance metrics in a statewide dashboard report on a quarterly basis. The quarterly dashboard report will be provided to the State Board's Performance Accountability Committee with accomplishments, plans, and strategies to continue successes or make improvements, as necessary, how partners address areas that are not being met and the identification of resources or supports needed to move forward.

The state and local workforce development areas providing Title I-B, Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs will be assessed based on a comparison of actual performance levels with the negotiated / adjusted levels of performance each quarter and annually. The following definitions will be utilized by the federal agencies in determining if the State met performance. Additional federal guidance is pending, which may require adjustments to performance levels later in 2016 or early 2017.

Levels of Performance:

- "Exceeds" Goals: If the actual performance in any indicator is greater than 100 percent of the negotiated level.
- "Meets" goals: If the actual performance in any indicator is 90 percent or more and up to 100 percent of the negotiated level.
- "Failed to Meet Goals": If the actual performance of any indicator is less than 50% of the negotiated level, this measure will "fail" the proposed threshold outlined in Section 677.190(d)(2) of the WIOA regulations. Sanctions based on performance failure will be applied only after all indicators have at least 2 years of complete data, not including Program Year 2016. The State intends to issue State policy regarding local area performance failure by the end of the second quarter in PY2016. Sanctions based on performance failure will be applied to local areas if two consecutive years a (after 2016), the local area fails to meet:
    - 90 percent of the overall local area program score for the same core program;
    - 90 percent of the overall local area indicator score for the same primary indicator; or
    - 50 percent of the same indicator or score for the same program.

B. ASSESSMENT OF PARTICIPANTS' POST-PROGRAM SUCCESS

Alabama utilizes UI wage rewards to track participant success for WIOA Title I and Title III programs for entered employment, employment relation and median wage measures. Agreements for Title II, (Adult Education) and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation participants tracking for these three measures will be affected in order to track measurable employment and wage activity.

For the measures relating "Credential Attainment," "Measurable Skill Gains," and "Effectiveness in Serving Employers" the core partner agencies will utilize extensive case management through the Alabama Career Center System data on these measures.

The Career Centers offer follow-up services to individuals who have completed program services. With follow-up services, the Career Center staff contacts each individual through phone calls, social media, emails, in-person, or whatever method preferred by the participant. This allows the workforce system to retrieve feedback from the customer on services provided, training programs attended, deficiencies and successes.

C. USE OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) WAGE RECORD DATA

Alabama will continue to utilize quarterly State UI records wage data as well the Staten Wage Interchange System (SWIS) which facilitates the exchange of wage data among participating States in order to measure progress and performance accountability for State and local area performance measures. This wage data also assists in evaluating and accessing workforce and local labor market information. Currently, the Alabama Workforce Development Division has a data sharing agreement with the Alabama Department of Labor (State UI records) and with SWIS. These data sharing agreements are modified as necessary to reflect changes in staff and/or federal or state law. Safeguards are in place to ensure wage data stored for reporting purposes is deleted after ETA reports have been generated.

The Alabama Department of Labor's Unemployment Compensation Division will share specific bits of data as it relates to an individual's wage history in keeping with 20 CFR part 603 and the Alabama Unemployment Compensation Law, Code of Alabama 25-4-118 (d) "The director may, at his discretion, release information regarding employment, wages, wage rates, and unemployment to institutions of higher education of this state, or a federal governmental corporation upon payment of a reasonable cost therefore, for the purpose of making economic analyses; provided, that such institution or corporation agrees that information so obtained will not be published or released by it to any person or persons in such a manner as to permit the identification of any specific individual or employing unit." The bits of information that are provided will require the Department of Education to garner a release from each student and maintain a copy of such release in their file.

D. PRIVACY SAFEGUARDS

Data collection and data analysis for decision-making and planning for Alabama's workforce development and education programs shall conform to privacy safeguards established in state and federal law. Each workforce development agency has policies and procedures for safeguarding data and participants' privacy.

The Title I administrator for Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker programs, the Alabama Department of Commerce, issued Governor's Workforce Innovation Directive No. PY2018-01 on July 20, 2018, which outlined the policy for protecting Personally Identifiable Information (PII) for state, local area, and subgrantee level WIOA programs. This policy is in line with Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 39-11. Some of the actions taken to safeguard privacy include storing data in a locked and physically safe place, managing secure data

systems, and disposing of information in a safe manner such as shredding. Data is compiled for reporting and analysis using methods that remove information that may identify the person.

Title I, Title III, Trade Act and JVSG programs also share a common case management and data information system, AlabamaWorks! (AW!), which has imbedded privacy safeguards. This includes protections built into system by the vendor, Geographic Solutions, such as encryption and providing appropriate permissions for viewing data by staff and the public.

Alabama's Community College System, as the State's Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program has its own database and student management system which is housed and operated by the Alabama Supercomputer Authority. The system has updated all major security requirements and follows all state and federal guidelines, as required by the U.S. Department of Education, for retaining all student data/records in the utmost confidential manner. Examples of safeguards and protocols include authorized user agreements and adherence to password requirements as defined in NIST Special Publication 800-63B, section 5.1.1 on memorized secrets, storage of data in a Tier 4 Data Center with 24/7/365 monitoring and limited access control, limiting system access to HTTPS encrypted traffic, and use of a role and permission based access control system that gives granular control over the users allowed to view and modify data, including limiting who can view PII.

Alabama's Department of Rehabilitation Services, as the State's Title IV program, maintains its own Case Management System housed internally on ADRS owned IT infrastructure. ADRS IT staff secure all data in compliance with ADRS policy/procedures, Alabama's Office of Information Technology policy/procedures, and federal guidelines prescribed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

In the TANF Program confidentiality of program participant information (including information entered into a computer system) is assured by both federal (45CFR 205.50) and state law (Code of Alabama Title 38, Section 38-2-6 and Title 13, Section 13A-8-103) and serves the purpose of protecting the program participant from economic and/or political exploitations. Regulations, state and federal laws do allow for the release of information to those agencies having a legitimate interest in the welfare of the program participant and the integrity of the program.

Other partner agencies have developed their own policies in line with federal laws and regulations such as section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g). Each agency follows their established policies to ensure privacy.

7. PRIORITY OF SERVICE FOR VETERANS

In affiliation with the American Job Center (AJC) network, the Alabama Veterans' Services Program within the Alabama Career Center system shall offer comprehensive employment and career placement service to nearly 25,000 veterans a year through a combination of self- service Internet-based job services and direct assistance at AJCs throughout the state.
The AlabamaWorks! (AW!) system, as a point of entry for self-service registration, provides a priority service notification to veterans and covered persons at the AW! website. Veterans and persons entitled to priority services and training complete a universal application that includes features and questions designed to assist staff members in identifying them for priority services and training at the point of entry into the workforce development system. Veterans who can use AW! competently are encouraged to self-register and make maximum use of the automated access to resources. As a core service, career center specialists review applications and resumes submitted by veterans and covered persons who register for employment using self-service, to ensure that veterans' applications clearly state job objectives and show meaningful information with regards to work history, education and training. Because veterans' resumes are listed first in the search results and are annotated with an American flag, employers can quickly locate qualified veterans for job openings. To ensure that veterans receive priority in

referral to job openings, the AW! system provides 24-hour email alerts, if requested, to veterans for any job listing that matches their resumes. The AW! Virtual Recruiter system to select qualified candidates for job openings is programmed to refer only qualified veterans in the first 48 hours of the listing, unless no qualified veterans are available. Also, newly posted positions are only able to be viewed by Veteran clients for the first 48 hours after the listing is posted. Priority service is also provided when veterans, or others eligible for priority, are identified at intake when registering for services at any AJC, or other service delivery points. Career Center specialists will ensure that each veteran completing a full application will have properly recorded their skills, education, training, job or career interests, work experience, licenses or certifications, employment availability, contact information, and other vital information. Additionally, AJCs will use signage, graphics, and displays to inform veterans and Covered Persons of priority service (as described under Title 38 U.S.C. Chapter 42 and 20 CFR Part 1010) and as applicable to all US DOL-funded employment services and training. Moreover, local career center managers will develop outreach activities to locate Covered Persons under Veterans' Priority. Managers or designated representatives will review special reports generated by AW! for the purpose of identifying veterans and Covered Persons who may be contacted and made aware of their priority in services and training. Career Center managers will develop local service strategies and training goals for veterans and Covered Persons entitled to Veterans' Priority, in consultation with their partner agencies and training providers, to encourage maximum utilization of services and training by veterans and Covered Persons. All Alabama Workforce Development regions have implemented Veterans' Priority in the State WIOA and Wagner-Peyser Plan of Service. Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) representatives and Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) shall complement Priority of Service provided by the AJC to veterans and Covered Persons, as mandated under Title 38 U.S.C., Chapter 41, and in accordance with the general and special provisions of the Jobs For Veterans State Grant (JVSG), and applicable regulations, policies, and directive guidance for JVSG from the Assistant Secretary, Veterans Employment and Training (ASVET), including Veterans Program Letters addressing DVOP-LVER Roles and Responsibilities. The Alabama strategy leverages improvements in technology to enable Career Center specialists to locate and review the resumes of veterans using on-line self-services for the purpose of offering helpful advice or suggestions on presenting their skills and abilities to prospective employers, because the AW! data system is designed to support employers searching for key words, then automatically flags the resumes of veterans and Covered Persons who are identified as qualified candidates within the parameters entered by the employer. This advantage offers veterans and Covered Person a Priority in Service and enables an employer to contact them directly, with or without a referral through a posted job order. Targeting Services to Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE): Alabama Career Centers in the statewide American Job center (AJC) network will provide comprehensive employment, training, and career placement services to nearly 25,000 veterans a year through a combination of Internet-based job services and personal assistance at Alabama Career Centers in the statewide AJC network. Alabama has more than 32,000 residents currently serving in the Armed Forces and of that nearly 13,000 in the National Guard and Reserve component. Alabama National Guard ranked fifth in numbers of troops deployed.

The Alabama Career Center System in the American Job Center network operates under the auspices of the Alabama Department of Labor, the state agency responsible for providing employment services and related services to veterans, and is authorized by the Governor to make application for funds to carry out the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) to carry out the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) program as mandated under Title 38 U.S.C. Chapter 41. AW! enables veterans to use self-services, including registration. Upon entering the Career Center, these self-service Veterans will have an initial assessment performed by Wagner- Peyser staff. Alabama DVOP specialists prioritize their efforts with veterans who are facing significant barriers to employment (SBE) in securing employment, including veterans who appear to be having difficulty in using the AW!

automated system. The assignment of DVOP specialists at specific Alabama Career Centers in the statewide American Job Center (AJC) network is based on a strategy to ensure veterans with SBEs are priority customers in the Alabama Workforce Development system. Although many veterans can and will use the internet-based self-registration and various self-service features, veterans with SBEs are provided intensive services. Veterans who enter the Alabama Workforce Development System at an AJC (Alabama Career Center), are served initially by career center specialists. For veterans who appear to have an SBE, Career Center specialists will offer additional services, to include referral to a DVOP who will provide intensive services and case management services to veterans having a Significant Barrier to Employment (SBE), as defined by Veterans Program Letter (VPL) 03-14, VPL 03-14 chg. 1&2 VPL 04-14 and any future VPLs providing guidance on SBEs:

- All veterans enrolled in the Five-track Employment Program administered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Service. As covered in a separate agreement with VR&E, a client determined to be "Job-Ready" by VR&E will be referred by a VR&E Employment Coordinator to the state's Intensive Services Coordinator (ISC), who will refer the Job Ready VR&E client to an appropriate AJC manager for case management and job placement services.
- A Special Disabled Veteran or Disabled Veteran, as those terms are defined in 38 U.S.C § 4211(1). are those who are entitled to compensation (or who but for the receipt of military retired pay would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans' Affairs; or, were discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability.
- Veterans in the categories above will be provided a comprehensive Assessment of Employability, addressing barriers to employment and a written Individual Employment Plan (IEP) outlining the individual's employability planning. Locating Priority Group Veterans: Veterans in priority groups will be located in the data system by developing special reports and search capabilities of the AW! system. Career Center/AJC staff members will perform outreach to veterans who may benefit from DVOP services. DVOPs will perform outreach to homeless shelters, community agencies that provide services to homeless veterans, and will participate in special events for disabled and homeless veterans, such as Homeless Veterans Stand Downs.

Priority of Service

1. **Priority of Service: Describe how veterans and covered persons receive priority of service in all Department of Labor funded programs in the AJC or area covered by the Managers Report. Specifically, provide the following information: How are veterans and covered persons identified at the point of entry to programs and services?**

There are Priority of Service signs posted in the front lobby publicizing priority of services to veterans for training and job service. Veterans instructed to see the receptionist for details. Once identified as a Veteran, priority of service is given and provided priority and placed ahead of all other customers and seen immediately by staff members funded through the Wagner-Peyser Act. New Job orders are place on a 48 hour hold so that a Veteran resume search can be conducted before the jobs are released to the general public.

2. **How are veterans and covered persons aware of:**

1. **Their entitlement to priority of service:**

There are Priority of Service signs posted in the front lobby publicizing priority of services to veterans for training and job service. Veterans instructed to see the receptionist for details. Once identified as a Veteran, priority of service is given and provided priority and placed ahead of all other customers and seen immediately by staff members funded through the Wagner-Peyser Act.

2. **The full array of programs and services available to them:**

During the Initial interview, the Career Center Representative (Wagner-Peyser funded) conducts an initial interview, initial assessment, completes registration and demographic information into AW!. The Career Center Representative, in conjunction with the veteran, creates, edits or downloads at least one resume into AW!. The Career Center Representative identifies barriers to employment during the initial assessment, documents them, and informs the veteran about the services available by Career Center partners, such as Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, VA Vocational Rehabilitation, Post-Secondary Education, Alabama Department of Rehabilitative Services (ADRS) ADRS. After completing the initial assessment and other core services, the Career Center Representative refers Veterans with significant barriers to employment (SBE's) to the DVOP for intensive services. The DVOP performs a comprehensive assessment confirming the significant barriers to employment previously identified and noting any additional barriers to employment. The DVOP, in conjunction with the veteran, develops an individual employment plan (IEP) to overcome the identified barriers. The DVOP refers the veteran to any services that will assist the veteran in overcoming the barriers to employment and assist Veterans in finding suitable employment and reentering the workforce.

3. **Eligibility requirements for those programs and/or services:**

During the initial interview, the Career Center Representative provides detailed information about eligibility criteria for programs and services available. All Veteran with significant barriers to employment (SBE's) and other eligible person(s) are referred to the DVOP to discuss eligibility criteria for other programs, services and referrals as needed. Veterans are provided priority of services for employment and training.

4. **How does the AJC or area covered by the report ensure that veterans and covered persons take precedence over eligible non-covered persons in obtaining services?**

1. Upon entering the Career Center, the Career Center Representatives identify veterans and other eligible persons, provided priority of services over all other customers, and places at the head of the line of all services and training available including WIOA screening and training, referral to partners and supportive services.

2. When new job orders are written, cloned or re-written, the Career Center Staff notifies the DVOP of the job opening for referrals. DVOP and Career Center Staff conduct a veteran resume search, and the job order holder documents the resume search in the "Note to Yourself" section.

3. AW! includes two features ensuring eligible veterans and covered persons receive precedence over other applicants in the system. First, when a job posts on AW!, the job opportunity is only viewable by veterans or covered persons with active job registrations for the first 48 hours. Secondly, an American Flag identifies accounts of those veterans registered in AW!, aiding employers in identifying eligible veterans.

4. Priority of Service is being monitored by the Jobs for Veterans State Grant Coordinator through quarterly manager reports submitted by Career Center Managers.

8. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

In compliance with WIOA Section 188 and 29 CFR Part 38 [Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act], it is the policy of the State of Alabama One-Stop Delivery System (Career Centers) that no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, subjected to discrimination under, or denied

employment in the administration of or in connection with any WIOA Title I-funded program or activity based on that person's race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, sex stereotyping, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and for beneficiaries, citizenship or participation in a WIOA Title I-funded program or activity.

WIOA recipients must not discriminate in deciding who will be admitted, or have access, to any WIOA Title I-financially assisted 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.

WIOA recipients shall not discharge, intimidate, retaliate against, threaten, coerce or discriminate against any person who has filed a complaint alleging a violation of WIOA Section 188 or 29 CFR Part 38; opposed a discriminatory or prohibited practice; assisted or participated in any manner in an investigation, review, hearing or any other activity related to the administration of WIOA nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions, the exercise of authority or privilege under those provisions, or otherwise exercised any rights and privileges under the provisions.

Governor Kay Ivey has designated a State-level WIOA Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer and other WIOA recipients, except small recipients and service providers, have been instructed to designate Equal Opportunity (EO) Officers, as appropriate.

Notice and Communication

Registrants, applicants, eligible applicants/registrants, participants, applicants for employment, employees, unions and other professional organizations that hold collective bargaining or professional agreements with ADOL, WIOA sub-recipients, and members of the public, including those with impaired vision or hearing and those with limited English proficiency are provided a notice of nondiscrimination. The nondiscrimination policy/notice is provided through an ***Equal Opportunity is the Law Poster***(English and Spanish versions) required to be displayed prominently in all career centers and WIOA recipients' facilities, and includes the policy, complaint filing instructions, telephone numbers for the Alabama Relay Center and TTY, as well as contact information for EO Officers. An assurance of nondiscrimination is included in local workforce development area and subrecipient contract/agreement packages. The EO notice is posted on The Alabama Department of Labor (ADOL) website and the WIOA) websites.

Publications, broadcasts, and other one-stop system communications to staff, clients, or the public at large will continue to include the required taglines "equal opportunity employer/program" and "auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities" and Alabama Relay Center and/or TDD/TTY telephone numbers.

At the time of initial registration for Wagner-Peyser services and activities, all ES applicants, WIOA applicants, eligible applicants, and participants are given the notice of nondiscrimination. For those ES registrants who move on to WIOA or other services and activities, the EO notice is provided again, usually during orientation. A copy of the notice is maintained in participants' files. Career center staff read or play a recorded version of the EO notice to those applicants, registrants and participants who are visually impaired and document the provision of the alternate format. The State is investigating and preparing to update methods of providing the EO notice in alternate formats (e.g., Braille, electronic reader, etc.).

Accessibility and Communication with Individuals with Disabilities

In 2018, Alabama Career Centers (including affiliate centers) were reviewed for physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, services, technology, and materials by a team from the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services. The review team used a survey checklist developed under WIOA Section 188. The surveys measured compliance with Americans with

Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. This survey was conducted by a team of persons with disabilities and others that includes assistive technology experts on deaf and blind needs. All of these surveys measured physical access from parking to entrances, to where services are provided, as well as accessibility of bathrooms, telephones, tables, and water fountains. Policies were evaluated to ensure that they did not exclude individuals with disabilities. Computers were assessed to ensure access for those with disabilities affecting hearing, vision, and manual dexterity.

Assistive technology training is currently being implemented in all career centers across the state, beginning in the seven (7) comprehensive centers that are equipped with Assistive technology from Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) funding. Plans for upgrading assistive technology and training in all the career centers is on-going and will be implemented as soon as possible to ensure that programs and activities are fully accessible to individuals with disabilities and that staff have the knowledge, sensitivity, and awareness to address the needs of individuals with disabilities. Career Centers are receiving training on the assistive technologies below:

- Kensington expert track ball
- Height adjustable workstation
- Windows speech recognition software
- Noise cancelling headphones (if the center has them)
- NVDA screen reader
- Windows Magnifier
- EZ Eyes Large Print Keyboard
- DaVinci HD OCR Enhanced Vision
- UBI DUO

One-Stop Certification

Alabama's One-Stop Certification Process includes a review of programmatic and physical accessibility as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and WIOA Section 188. The certification team is composed of WIOA partners, including the Rehabilitation Act Title IV Agency – the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services. In PY20, every Career Center location was required to be certified in accordance with Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) NO. 16-16 from the U.S. Department of Labor and GWID PY2015-08, Change 01. Local Workforce Development Areas used Local Workforce Board approved Certification Processes, Procedures, Forms, and Documents previously approved by the State/WDD to certify their One-Stop Career Centers and One-Stop Delivery System.

Physical and Programmatic Accessibility is a requirement noted in GWID PY2015-08 and again in GWID PY2015-08, Change 01. These requirements are also essential components of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and WIOA Section 188. All seven (7) Local Area staff, including WIOA partners, conducted onsite Certification site visits in all of the State's Career Centers in PY20. All deficiencies previously noted related to Physical and Programmatic Accessibility have been addressed since the last Career Center Certification. Physical and programmatic accessibility issues are referred to Dr. Graham Sisson at the Governor's Office on Disability (GOOD) for follow-up and resolution to ensure successful compliance.

9. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Needs of English Language Learners at Alabama's One-Stop centers are met in a variety of ways, depending on the individual client's needs. One-Stop centers are equipped with computers and software that translates documents from English into a variety of languages. Staff training will include methods for obtaining translators, use of language translation software, and procedures for securing assistance from partner and outside agencies for clients who are English Language Learners (ELLs). The non-English speaking and limited-English proficient population in Alabama is growing rapidly. All public-school systems and Alabama's community colleges comply with all federal guidelines in serving ELLs and have many resources that can be accessed by the One-Stop centers and WIOA partner programs to meet the needs of ELLs who need workforce training or related services.

IV. COORDINATION WITH STATE PLAN PROGRAMS

Coordinated planning for all Alabama core and partner programs will be centered in the Alabama Department of Commerce. The WIOA staff resources have recently been placed within the Alabama Department of Commerce in a newly created Commerce Workforce Development Division (WDD). The Alabama Department of Commerce is the entity responsible for the economic development strategies for the state. By this new alignment, it is the specific job duty of the Deputy Secretary of Commerce Workforce Development Division to make sure the WIOA program is coordinated with the economic development strategies. Regional Workforce Councils of the state are also the responsibility of the Department of Commerce and will serve as the foundational information gathering entities that provide data and recommendations to the Alabama Workforce Development Board (AWDB). The AWDB's quarterly meetings and the meetings of its committees will bring forward needs, recommendations, data analysis, and initiatives to improve workforce development and to meet the needs of Alabama's current and emerging industries. The Partners Team is defined as the Alabama Team that attended the "National Convening" in Washington. This team developed the original Alabama Combined Plan and continues to work as a team to edit and expand the Combined Plan to resolve the identified conditions received from USDOL. This team represents the working group of several Cabinet level Secretaries, Commissioners and Directors that have directed the team to align, leverage, coordinate and lead the Combined Plan. The Governor, through these Cabinet members, has directed the agency coordination. The Partners Team will formally plan and set up coordination strategies that will be disseminated to all the Career Centers and Career Center staff to ensure all plans and actions that guarantee citizen success is placed into action.

State Workforce Development Board Policies for Enhanced WIOA Services

- The core and partner agency staff will be cross-trained on all publicly funded workforce development programs to create an individualized education plan and employment training plan (IEP) for all students as a no wrong door entry.

- Each person entering into the workforce system should be given a comprehensive needs assessment and an individualized education and employment plan (IEP).

- The State Workforce Development Board will allow the Alabama Department of Human Resources staff and the Alabama Community College staff to pre-certify individuals as WIOA eligible. The Local Area staff and Career Center staff would then verify eligibility. (This will speed up the process at the Local Career Center.)

- All set-aside funds reserved for marketing from WIOA Title I and Title III and other state agencies will be used to market the AlabamaWorks! Brand to expand the scale, scope, and reach of our unified marketing campaign.

- To establish a human capital development fund with state reimbursements from the SNAP 50-50 program to support funding for childcare, transportation, and housing for career pathway participants.

- The WIOA credential policy reflects the Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways (ACCCP) process of vetting non-degree credentials of value. Once the ACCCP has developed the customized credential for each of the 16 career clusters to replace the Ready-to-Work Alabama Certified Worker Credential, recommend inclusion in the countable credentials for WIOA.

- A. The statewide policy governing local area non-performance reflects the following timeframe and sanctions that maybe imposed. Each level of failure to perform by a local area results in an elevated level of sanction. As follows:
4 quarters (1 full Program Year) of failing any 1 performance metric = mandatory technical assistance by the State
6 quarters of continued failure = Mandatory Administrative and Program Oversight by the State
8 quarters of continued failure = Funding sanctions and Reconstitute the Local Area Board
B. A continuous improvement of at least 10 percent each year in the minimum number of participants served in the low income and target populations is required for each local area and workforce investment board.

- In addition to the two WIOA Effectiveness in Serving Employers performance measures already approved by the State Board, Alabama has adopted a state-specific approach. This approach will capture a percentage of each population of individuals with barriers to employment being served in each of the seven workforce regions.

Number of each special population served & employed
Number of eligible Alabamians belonging to each population of individuals with barriers to employment

This measure was designed to enhance employer access to skilled employees by reducing the number of individuals on the sidelines who are not currently participating in the labor force.

- The Alabama Workforce Development Board bas adopted the populations of individuals with barriers to employment targeted in the Success Plus goal.

Adults with Aging Dependents
Caregiver
Displaced Homemaker
English Language Learners
Ex-offenders
Homeless individuals
Indians, Alaskan natives, Native Hawaiians
Individuals nearing TANF exhaustion
Individuals preparing for Non-traditional fields
Individuals with low levels of literacy
Individuals with substantial cultural barriers
Long-term unemployed
Low Income
Migrant & Seasonal Farmworkers
Older individuals
People with disabilities
Single parents
Unemployed or Underemployed
Youth aged out of foster care
Youth with parents on Active Duty Military

- In an effort to increase performance in Alabama's seven workforce regions, Governor Ivey will refocus federal workforce funds over the next four years to more directly benefit those region's citizens who are in need of job training. Governor Ivey will ask each workforce region

in the state to incrementally increase the percentage of WIOA funds used directly on job training over a four-year period, beginning with at least 45 percent in year one, 50 percent in year two, 55 percent in year three, and 60 percent in year four. This shift to place additional federal resources directly into job training opportunities for Alabamians will help increase performance for workforce regions and decrease the state's growing workforce shortage.

- A LWDB, with agreement of the chief local elected official (CLEO), must designate or certify career center operators to run the local comprehensive career center. Such an entity must be designated or certified as a career center operator through a competitive process, unless the sole source process is followed, as mentioned below. Eligible entities can include a LWDB, with the approval of the CLEO and the governor. While LWDBs can be the career center operator, they must still be selected through a competitive process and 20 CFR § 678.615(b) requires the LWDB to have appropriate firewalls and conflict of interest policies and procedures in place which must conform to applicable federal rules. One way to avoid a conflict of interest is to establish effective conflict of interest policies and maintain appropriate firewalls that apply when the LWDB competes to be the career center operator. This may include, for example, a requirement for an outside entity to conduct the competition. For example, the LWDB could contract with a separate and independent outside entity to conduct the competition. Outsourcing the entire process (including development of requirements, drafting the request for proposal or invitation for bid, evaluation of proposals/bids, and identification of best entity an alternate entity would be the best practice in this circumstance to avoid a conflict of interest. These costs and activities would be allowable under WIOA. Alternatively, the State Workforce Development Board or State agency could conduct the competition where a LWDB is competing to be the career center operator. If the LWDB chooses to have an outside entity conduct part of, or the entire career center operator competition, the outside entity must meet certain requirements. The outside entity must be an independent organization that is capable of exercising professional and ethical judgment. The outside entity must also be required to submit a conflict of interest statement. Payment for running the competition would be an allowable cost under WIOA. The LWDB must also publicly disclose any conflicts of interest, real or apparent, and any recusal by individuals or organizations with real or apparent conflicts of interest. The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) believes it is a best practice, consistent with the public disclosure requirements of WIOA § 107(e) and 20 CFR § 679.390, to publicly disclose any conflicts of interest and recusals on the LWDB's website, or, if the LWDB lacks a website, the State WDB's website. Additional methods, such as publication in newspapers, may also be used to ensure full and regular public disclosure. A LWDB may be selected as a career center operator through sole source procurement only with agreement of the CLEO and the Governor. The LWDB must establish sufficient conflict of interest policies and procedures and these policies and procedures must be approved by the Governor. WIOA requires the LWDB to conduct monitoring of its career center operator. When the LWDB is the career center operator, there is an inherent conflict of interest in that the LWDB cannot effectively monitor itself. In such circumstances, DOL requires an outside entity or a State agency, such as a State auditor or inspector general, to conduct the monitoring and report the monitoring results to the CLEO. LWDB members may not:
- Vote on a matter under consideration by the LWDB:
- Regarding the provision of services by such member (or by an entity that such member represents); or
- That would provide direct financial benefit to such member or the immediate family of such member; or
- Engage in any other activity determined by the Governor to constitute a conflict of interest.

V. COMMON ASSURANCES (FOR ALL CORE PROGRAMS)

The State Plan must include	Include

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts;	Yes
2. The State has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of State Boards and local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes;	Yes
3. The lead State agencies with optimal policy-making authority and responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified or Combined State Plan, and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served by such programs;	Yes
4. (a) The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administrating the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public; (b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board;	Yes
5. The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities;	Yes
6. The State has taken appropriate action to secure	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
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);	
7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable;	Yes
8. The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program;	Yes
9. The State will pay an appropriate share (as defined by the State board) of the costs of carrying out section 116, from funds made available through each of the core programs;	Yes
10. The State has a one-stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all one-stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA);	Yes
11. Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate; and	Yes
12. Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor.	Yes

VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE I-B

A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. REGIONS AND LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Alabama for a number of years was divided into three local Workforce Investment Boards. The local WIBS included Mobile county, Jefferson county and the balance of 65 counties. While this may have made sense at the time these decisions were made, we have now designated seven (7) new or reconfigured Local Areas. These seven (7) Local Areas have been formed with consideration of the changing dynamic and continued growth among the business sectors within the state, to improve services to rural Alabama, and to ensure that all citizens are served effectively and appropriately with local input. The seven local areas are:

Region 1, North AlabamaWorks! (Lauderdale, Limestone, Madison, Jackson, Colbert, Lawrence, Morgan, Marshall, DeKalb, Franklin, Marion, Winston, and Cullman Counties)

Region 2, East AlabamaWorks! (Cherokee, Etowah, Calhoun, Cleburne, Talladega, Clay, and Randolph Counties)

Region 3, West AlabamaWorks! (Lamar, Fayette, Pickens, Tuscaloosa, Bibb, Sumter, Greene, Hale, and Marengo Counties)

Region 4, Central Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment (Walker, Blount, Jefferson, St. Clair, Shelby, and Chilton Counties)

Region 5, Central AlabamaWorks! (Perry, Coosa, Tallapoosa, Chambers, Dallas, Autauga, Elmore, Macon, Lee, Lowndes, Montgomery, Bullock, and Russell Counties)

Region 6, Southeast AlabamaWorks! (Butler, Crenshaw, Pike, Barbour, Covington, Coffee, Dale, Henry, Geneva, Houston Counties)

Region 7, Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment (Choctaw, Clarke, Wilcox, Washington, Monroe, Conecuh, Mobile, Baldwin, and Escambia Counties)

The Department of Commerce has for many years worked directly with practically every business and all the business sectors within the state. Commerce is involved with small business development, export/trade, film/entertainment, industry recruitment and workforce training in all 67 counties. Commerce is involved with large municipalities and very rural communities statewide to include county commissions, city councils and mayors. Whether it is business leaders or community leaders and they are sending a very clear message, the current three local area designations are not working and citizens are not being served adequately.

The Governor appointed the business led, CEO level Alabama Workforce Council (AWC) in 2015 that made many recommendations. This group of business professionals represent all areas of the state and are a cross section of healthcare, manufacturing, banking, construction and government leaders. In their first set of recommendations, in January of 2015, they advised to review and change the current WIOA (WIA at that time) Workforce Boards to better and more effectively serve the citizens of Alabama. They recommended the Governor hire an outside independent third-party vendor to survey statewide business leaders, employed workers, college students, unemployed workers and all potential stake holders related to the Alabama workforce and workforce programs. In 2015 companies from Orlando, Florida, The Ideas Group and an Alabama Company, Direct Communications was hired to perform this task over a several month period. As predicted, the recommendation was made by these companies in their report to the Governor to implement “a strong network of effective empowered regional workforce regions who should own the central role in bridging business needs with a talent supply chain.” In addition, the vendors recommended the Workforce System be driven by business and industry demand and criteria. In other words, the decisions for workforce initiatives should be made locally and a 65-county local area of a 67-county state does not allow appropriate local representation or decision-making.

Governor’s Workforce Innovation Directive PY2014-05 and PY2014-05, Change 1 (See other appendices) provided local areas the process for submitting local area designation requests. The policy was posted on the Alabama WIOA agency's website for public comment. Change 1 to GWID PY2014-05 defined “performed successfully” as the local area met or exceeded the levels of performance the Governor negotiated with local Board and Chief Elected official, and the local area has not failed any individual measure for the last two (2) consecutive program years before the enactment of WIOA. Sustained fiscal integrity means the secretary nor the Governor has not made a formal determination during either the last two (2) consecutive years preceding the determination regarding such integrity, that neither the grant recipient nor the administrative

entity of the local area misspent funds under the Workforce Investment Act, Title 1 due to willful disregard of the requirements of the provision involved, gross negligence, or failure to comply with accepted standards of administration. State WIA Reporting and Fiscal staff verified performance measures and fiscal integrity for each local area that submitted a request for initial designation.

A local area that applies for local area designation under WIOA Section 106(b)(2) (initial designation) or Section 106(b)(3) (subsequent designation) and is not granted designation may submit an appeal to the State Workforce Development Board. The local area must file notice of intent to appeal and within ten (10) working days must submit their rebuttal package stating the grounds for the appeal and the reasons why the appellant should be initially designated. The rebuttal must be sent via certified mail to the Alabama Department of Commerce c/o State Workforce Development Board, Post Office Box 304103, Montgomery, Alabama 36130. The appellant may be asked to provide additional information and documentation. State WIOA staff will work in conjunction with the State Board to expedite the appeal and schedule a formal hearing before the Board. The goal for any appeal is to be resolved within 30 days of the filing of the appeal. If the appeal to the State Board does not result in designation, the appellant may request a review by the Secretary of Labor. (See other appendices GWID, PY2014-05, Change 01.)

State WIOA core partner agencies responsible for the administration of Title I-B: employment and training services for Adult • Dislocated Workers • Youth, Title II: Adult Education and Literacy programs, Title III: Wagner-Peyser employment services, and Title IV: Vocational Rehabilitative Services agree to physically co-locate in all comprehensive one-stop career centers in each local area throughout the State. In each of these Local Areas, the local board, chief elected officials, and one-stop partners are charged with coming to an agreement regarding the methodology for determining the infrastructure cost contributions per WIOA Section 121(h)(1)(A)(i)(I). The State's process for WIOA Partners to appeal the determination of these cost funding is contained in the Governor's Workforce Innovation Directive (GWID) PY2015-10 below.

Alabama Workforce Investment System

Alabama Department of Commerce

Workforce Development Division

401 Adams Avenue

Post Office 304106

Montgomery, Alabama 36130-4106

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE INNOVATION DIRECTIVE NO. PY2015-10

SUBJECT: One-Stop Career Center System Infrastructure Costs and Appeals Process Relating to Determinations for Infrastructure

1. Purpose. This Directive provides an overview of One-Stop Career Center System infrastructure costs as well as the appeals process referred to in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Section 121(h)(2)(E) relating to determinations of infrastructure funding.

2. <u>Discussion.</u> WIOA Section 121 outlines the requirements for the establishment of One-Stop Delivery Systems. In this section it states that infrastructure costs must be shared by all of the required partners in the system. Infrastructure costs are defined as:

- Non-personnel costs that are necessary for the general operation of the one-stop center, including:
    - Rental costs of facilities
    - Costs of utilities and maintenance
    - Equipment
        - Assessment related products
        - Assistive technology for individuals with disabilities
    - Technology to facilitate access to the one-stop center
        - Center's planning activities
        - Center's outreach activities

In each Local Area, the local board, chief elected officials, and one-stop partners are charged with coming to an agreement regarding the methodology for determining the infrastructure cost contributions per WIOA Section 121(h)(1)(A)(i)(I). These agreements will be captured in MOUs between the local board and the one-stop partners (WIOA Section 121(h)(1)(A)(i)(I)).

To be eligible for infrastructure funds, one-stop centers must be certified by local boards as meeting certain criteria regarding the effectiveness, the physical and programmatic accessibility of the center in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and continuous improvement of one-stop centers and the one-stop delivery system. This certification will occur every three (3) years (WIOA Section 121(g)).

If local officials are unable to reach consensus (beginning on July 1, 2016 per WIOA Section 121(h)(1)(A)(ii)), they will be required to use the infrastructure funding methodology determined by the Governor (WIOA Section 121(h)(1)(A)(i)(II)). This methodology must abide by the percentage limitations described below.

Funds for infrastructure costs must come only from the administrative funds (when no consensus has been reached) of each respective program (per WIOA Section 121(h)(2)(D)(i)(I)) and shall be subject to the program's limitations with respect to the portion of funds under such program that may be used for administration. Limitations are also placed on how much each partner can contribute to infrastructure costs. These limitations are as follows, by program:

- **Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth:** Shall not exceed 3 percent of the federal funds provided to the State for a full program year.
- **Wagner-Peyser Act:** Shall not exceed 3 percent of the federal funds provided to the State for a full program year.
- **Vocational Rehabilitation:** Shall not exceed .75 percent of the federal funds provided to the State in the second full program year; 1 percent of the federal funds provided to the State in the third full program year; 1.25 percent of the federal funds provided to the State in the fourth full program year; 1.5 percent of the federal funds provided to the State in the fifth full program year and in each succeeding year.
- **Other Partners:** Shall not exceed 1.5 percent of the federal funds provided to the State.

Subject to the above limitations, those local areas in which the local board, chief elected officials, and One-Stop partners fail to reach a consensus agreement on methods to fund the infrastructure of the One-Stop Career Centers in the local areas beginning on July 1, 2016 and thereafter, the Governor, after consultation with chief elected officials, local boards, and the State Board, shall determine the portion of funds to be provided by each One-Stop Career Center partner. In making such determinations (for the purpose of determining funding contributions), the Governor shall calculate amounts for the proportionate use of the One-Stop Career Centers in the State consistent with Chapter II of Title 2, Code of Federal Regulations (or any corresponding similar regulation or ruling) taking into account the costs of administration of the One-Stop delivery system for purposes not related to One-Stop Career Centers for each partner.

The Governor shall exclude from such determination of funds the amounts for proportionate use of one-stop centers attributable to the programs of one-stop partners for those local areas of the State where the costs of infrastructure of one-stop centers are funded under the option described in WIOA Section 121(h)(1)(A)(i)(I), e.g. funding methods agreed on by the local board, chief elected officials, and One-Stop Career Center partners (and described in the memorandum of understanding described in WIOA Section 121(c). The Governor shall also take into account the statutory requirements for each partner program and the partner program's ability to fulfill such requirements. Per WIOA Section 121(h)(2)(C) in a State in which the State constitution or a State statute places policymaking authority that is independent of the authority of the Governor in an entity or official with respect to the funds provided for adult education and literacy activities authorized under Title II, postsecondary career and technical education activities authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.), or vocational rehabilitation services offered under a provision covered by Section 3(13)(D), the determination with respect to the programs authorized under that title, Act, or provision shall be made by the chief officer of the entity, or the official, with such authority in consultation with the Governor.

Pursuant to WIOA Section 121(h)(2)(E), the Governor shall establish a process, described under WIOA Section 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(IV), for a One-Stop partner administering a program described in WIOA Section 121(b)(1) to appeal a determination regarding the portion of funds to be provided by the One-Stop partner. Such a determination may be appealed under the process on the basis that such determination is inconsistent with the WIOA requirements for One-Stop partners' contributions for One-Stop Career Center infrastructure costs. Such process shall ensure prompt resolution of the appeal in order to ensure the funds are distributed in a timely manner, consistent with the requirements of WIOA Section 182(e).

In order to comply with the requirements for an efficient and judicious appeals process pursuant to WIOA Section 121(h)(2)(E), the following appeals process should be utilized by One-Stop partners who do not agree with the Governor's determination of its share of One-Stop Career Center infrastructure costs.

In accordance with WIOA as stated above, One-Stop partners may appeal the Governor's determination on the portion of funds to be provided for One-Stop infrastructure cost and request a hearing. A written appeal and request for a hearing must be mailed to the State Board (Alabama Department of Commerce / Workforce Development Division / State Workforce Development Board / Post Office Box 304106 / Montgomery, Alabama 36130-4106) within twenty-one (21) calendar days from the Governor's infrastructure cost determination.

The appeal must be in writing and state the grounds for the appeal. The appellant must describe how the Governor's infrastructure cost determination is inconsistent with proportionate share requirements, cost contribution limitations, and/or the cost contribution caps, in accordance with WIOA Notice of Proposed Rulemaking Section 678.750(b).

The Workforce Development Division staff will work in conjunction with the State Board to expedite review of an infrastructure cost appeal and to schedule a formal hearing before the State Board. Efforts will be made by the Workforce Development Division staff to enable Board members to review the appeal informally, i.e., via e-mail or mail outs, or, if the situation warrants, the Board may be convened by the Governor in advance of a scheduled meeting date in order that the appeal might be heard.

The appellant will be contacted within ten (10) calendar days of the receipt of the appeal and a hearing date will be scheduled. In order to ensure a prompt resolution of the appeal and distribution of funds in a timely manner, the appellant will receive a written decision no later than fifteen (15) calendar days after the hearing.

3. Action. One-Stop Career Center partner agencies in each local area should work in conjunction with the local board and chief elected officials to reach a consensus for funding the infrastructure of the One-Stop Career Center System in accordance with this policy.

4. Contact. Questions regarding this Directive should be referred to Bill Hornsby, Supervisor, Workforce Development Division, State Programs, Planning and Divisional Budget Management Section at (334) 242-5847 or bill.hornsby@commerce.alabama.gov.

Steve Walkley 1/20/2016

Steve Walkley, Division Manager, Workforce Development Division Date

Alabama Department of Commerce

2. STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES

The State of Alabama receives general funds that are allotted to the Alabama Department of Commerce's Workforce Development Division (Title I-B Administrative Entity). These funds are governed by Alabama State Legislation and expenditures are used to enhance programs and activities, and for capital improvements and/or equipment that promotes literacy, adult education, public health and welfare, and mental health. The uses of these funds are governed under the code of Alabama 1975, Section 41-23-3.

The State of Alabama's WIOA policies are developed by the Alabama Department of Commerce's Workforce Development Division and are officially issued to the State's seven (7) Local Workforce Development Areas, including the core partners and other partner agencies, by communicating Federal Department of Labor ETA policies (TEGL's, TEN's, etc.) when applicable, via Governor's Workforce Innovation Directives (GWIDs), to provide guidance that results in effectiveness and compliance throughout the Statewide Workforce Development System. State initiated GWID's also provide guidance from the WIOA statue and the WIOA Final Rule effective as of October 18, 2016.

Policies (GWID's) are posted on the Alabama Department of Commerce's Workforce Development Division website under the "Directives" tab at: (https://wioa-alabama.org/directives/). When a directive is first issued or updated, an email is sent out to all Local Workforce Development Areas, all workforce partner agencies, as well as to other workforce system personnel and providers, notifying them that the new policy or revision has been posted on the State's website for their review. These State policies (GWID's) cover all areas of compliance, both fiscal and programmatic, to maintain compliance at the State and local level with the WIOA Act and Final Rule.

Original publications of notable State workforce policies include, but are not limited to:

- GWID PY2017-04 Alabama Career Center System Guide to Customer Services

- GWID PY2014-16 Statewide WIOA Fiscal Procedures Manual
- GWID PY2021-01 WIOA Eligible Training Providers List
- GWID PY2021-02 WIOA Credential Policy
- GWID PY2021-04 Individual Training Account Guidelines
- GWID PY2021-07 WIOA Data Validation
- GWID PY2021-08 On-The-Job Training (OJT) Guidelines
- GWID PY2020-02 WIOA Participant Documentation File Data Storage
- GWID PY2019-07 Indirect (F&A) Costs Charged to Subrecipient Grant Agreements
- GWID PY2020-04 PY2021/FY2022 WIOA Adult, Youth Dislocated Worker Allocations
- GWID PY2020-04 GWID PY2020-04 WIOA Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Requirements
- GWID PY2016-03 WIOA Financial Reporting Guidance
- GWID PY2015-09 WIOA Youth Program Requirements, Procurement and Youth Workforce Investment Activities
- GWID 2015-08 One-Stop Career Center Systems and One-Stop Delivery System Certification

In addition to issuing Statewide policies (GWID's) and guidance, the Alabama Department of Commerce's Workforce Development Division interacts with its workforce partners to assist in and improve statewide workforce investment. The State provides both programmatic and fiscal training to Local Area, One-Stop Operator, and program provider staff on a regular basis. Training is usually by state level staff, but has also been provided by professional workforce consultants such as Maher & Maher. Monthly meetings are held with our One-Stop Operator's team of Area Managers that represent every Local Area in the State, as well as departmental Directors and management staff from the Alabama Department of Labor. Regular meetings are also held with all Local Workforce Area directors and their staff to discuss resolutions to current issues, best practices, and the best use of State funds for workforce investment activities in each of the State's seven (7) LWDA based on their current needs and levels of funding.

The State has an established and approved budget for the use of WIOA Governor's Set Aside funds. The required state level activities for oversight and monitoring, grant administration, reporting to the USDOL, incentive awards to local workforce development areas, pre-apprenticeship project, etc. are included in the approved budget. Also, allowable activities such as incumbent worker training projects funded with Governor's Set Aside funds are included in the approved budget. The Title I-B administrative entity also provides funds for operational costs to include the costs for the driver/operator for the State's Mobile Career Center Vehicle (MCCV) with Governor's allocated funds as well as Rapid Response funds when the vehicle is being used for a Rapid Response related layoff event the State has administered a successful incumbent worker training program since 2001, which was funded with Workforce Investment Act, Governor's Set Aside funds. If necessary, the budget may be submitted to the State Workforce Development Board for approval of an amendment should other allowable statewide activities be considered for funding with WIOA Governor's Set Aside funds.

Rapid Response activities in Alabama are the responsibility of the Workforce Development Division of the Alabama Department of Commerce. Rapid Response staff responds to WARN and non-WARN events immediately upon notification of pending layoffs or business closures. Rapid Response staff will contact the designated contact person for the company or business to

provide an overview of services and materials available to the affected employees. If the affected employees are part of a union, a representative of the AFL/CIO Labor Institute for Training (LIFT) is also included in the meetings. Once Group Employee Meetings (GEM) dates are established, the Rapid Response Unit immediately notifies the local Career Center, UI, Community Based assistance agencies and others that can provide support and information to the affected workers.

The State has a newly established "layoff aversion team," whose purpose is to provide assistance to "at-risk" companies should those companies contact the team prior to it being too late to avoid layoffs. The purpose of this team, which is composed of staff from several workforce partner agencies, is "lay-off aversion." Each agency funds its own staff members for this team, so there's no additional cost to the WIOA Title I-B administrative entity. One example of assistance might be incumbent worker training, if that is determined (by the team and the employer being assisted) to be the best route to avoid layoffs.

The Alabama Dislocated Worker Unit, Rapid Response section is part of a State Level team that initially will meet to discuss assistance to any area of the state designated as a national disaster area. The Department of Commerce's Workforce Development Division provides the Governor's Office with information regarding available Rapid Response resources. State partnerships then included the Alabama Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) to provide the initial links for communication to FEMA as well as county level emergency management personnel. Rapid Response staff members also coordinate with the Alabama Department of Labor's Career Centers to ensure State and local partnerships coordinate services to employers and workers affected by natural disasters.

The Rapid Response activities and coordination of services to be provided are the Governor's initial part of Emergency Response Task Force to ensure information can and will be provided with agencies and contacts that will assist in meeting the needs of impacted individuals through the various agencies.

Early intervention for possible TAA-eligible workers is provided by the State Rapid Response Unit assisted by local Career Center staff that, together, comprise the Rapid Response team. Customers attending Rapid Response General Employee Meetings are provided a general outline of available TAA services and instructed to report to their local Career Center upon receipt of their TAA eligibility notice. Available to assist in early intervention efforts is the Mobile Career Center Vehicle (MCCV) providing remote access to areas removed from Career Center availability, offering ten (10) PCs with internet access.

B. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKERS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. WORK-BASED TRAINING MODELS

Governor's set aside funds are utilized to assist in funding a position in the State AFL/CIO office to assist in facilitating a registered apprenticeship program being added to the State's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The State Workforce Development Board will also strongly encourage local workforce development areas to set aside a dedicated sum of local Title I-B funds for Registered Apprenticeship training slots. (see III.a.2.H) Alabama utilizes the Incumbent Worker Training Program (IWTP) with WIOA state set aside funds as authorized in section 134(a)(A)(i). The IWTP is designed to provide skills training upgrade to full time, permanent workers. The training must be a business necessity that will enhance companies' ability to compete in global economies, expand present markets and help ensure the permanency of businesses in the state. For the workers, the training will upgrade present work skills, heighten job security and increase the possibilities of higher wages and promotional

opportunities. Local Workforce Development Areas/Boards are also highly encouraged to utilize a portion of their funds for work-based training models through on-the-job training, transitional jobs, work experience and customized training.

2. REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

The touchstone of Governor Ivey's workforce development strategic plan is the Success Plus postsecondary education attainment goal of adding 500,000 credentialed Alabamians to the labor force by 2025 through a strategy that seeks to mitigate barriers to entering education, training, or the workforce.

Based on recommendations from the Success Plus plan, Governor Ivey has set five absolute priorities for reaching the post-secondary educational attainment goal:

- Awareness—all Alabama residents will understand the importance of earning certificates, credentials, and degrees and will know how to find information and resources to start or continue their education and training.
- Access and Success—all Alabama residents will have access to education and will receive the continuous support they need to complete certificates, credentials, and degrees.
- Pathways—career pathways from education and training to high-demand jobs will be defined.
- Leadership and Collaboration—partners at the state, regional, and local levels will work together to increase post-secondary educational attainment in Alabama.
- Assessment and Continuous Improvement—progress toward Alabama's goal for post-secondary educational attainment will be tracked and shared regularly using data and evidence-based practices.

To measure progress against each of the Success Plus absolute priorities, five key metrics have been identified, which will be tracked and shared regularly: (1) post-secondary educational attainment rate; (2) college and career readiness; (3) participation in work-based learning; (4) enrollment and completions for all levels of education and training by population, race/ethnicity, gender, and workforce region; and (5) the employment and workforce participation rate. All five Success Plus absolute priorities and key metrics are aligned to our work here today.

Since taking office, Governor Ivey has collaborated with the legislature to expand access to quality work-based learning programs for all Alabamians, which is helping us to reach our Success Plus absolute priorities. Act 2019-506 established the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship as Alabama's State Apprenticeship Agency. In March 2020, the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship was approved by the U.S. Department of Labor as the first new State Apprenticeship Agency in over 20 years.

For more than 80 years, apprenticeship programs have been an efficient pathway to the workforce, and it's a pathway that continues to pay off for Alabama's workers. Those who complete an apprenticeship program earn more than the median wage. Over the past year, the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship has developed innovative models of apprenticeship in early childhood education and made history by establishing the nation's first master's level registered apprenticeship at a HBCU in partnership with Alabama A&M University.

As of December 2021, there are 418 registered apprenticeship employer sponsors who are employing 3,033 active registered apprentices in Alabama. Alabama also participated in the NGA Policy Academy on Work-Based Learning for two years and made substantial progress

before being selected to serve as a mentor state for NGA's Policy Academy on Scaling Work-Based Learning for the last two years.

Alabama's employers are joining forces with education providers in an unprecedented effort to expand on-the-job training models. Apprenticeships offer an excellent opportunity for our citizens to maintain gainful employment while receiving the technical skills and work-based learning experiences needed to enter an in-demand occupation. Alabama is taking the lead in workforce development efforts. Our efforts are catching the attention of companies from around the globe and are providing more opportunities for Alabamians. By growing apprenticeship opportunities across industry sectors, the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship will help Alabama continue to lead the way in workforce development.

3. TRAINING PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURE

The Alabama Department of Commerce's Workforce Development Division issued Governor's Workforce Innovation Directive Number PY2021-0, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Eligible Training Provider Policy on June 8, 2021. This policy described the process and procedures required by Local Workforce Development Areas and interested training providers to apply for and maintain eligibility on Alabama's WIOA Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

Registered Apprenticeship programs need only submit a letter requesting to be included on the ETPL with information about occupations included, name and address of program sponsor, location of related instruction and method and length of instruction. Apprenticeship sponsors will not be required to meet the State's minimum performance goals and will be granted automatic approval to the list.

The updated Eligible Training Providers policy includes the following changes:

- The application period for inclusion on the Training Providers List has been reduced to four (4) months, July 1 through October 31 of each program year. Any new programs, new training providers and any changes to current programs must be submitted within the application period in order to be considered for approval. Any information submitted on or after November 1 will be rejected.

- The remainder of the program year, November 1 through June 30, will be for reviewing programs for compliance, issues, problems, cost, effectiveness and other administrative items. Training Provider evaluation reports from the AlabamaWorks Case Management system will be used for review as well as feedback from the Career Center staff.

- All training providers must register in the AlabamaWorks case management system, www.AlabamaWorks.Alabama.gov. Training Providers and public inquiries may also find information at www.AlabamaWorks.com.

- Training Providers must have been in business at least eighteen (18) months prior to application and have successfully served participants in the training program for a minimum of twelve (12) months.

- Training programs must result in family sustaining wages, which is defined as entry level wages that are at least 200% of the HHS Poverty level for 1 person. HHS Poverty level chart is included in the attachments.

- Training programs must result in certificates, credentials, diplomas, or degrees that meet the WIOA Credential policy. Credential policy is included in the attachments. Credentials must be awarded after successful completion of the occupational skills training. National exams are separate credentials and are in addition to successful training completion credentials.

- Training Providers are required to provide information on non-WIOA funded students that have entered the training programs on the ETPL. Sample spreadsheet is in the

attachments. This must be provided at initial eligibility but not for recertification due to Alabama requesting and receiving a waiver to collect the performance data on all Non-WIOA students. After ETPL approval, then only WIOA participant data is required for performance for recertification purposes.

- Training program costs, tuition, fees, books and supplies, are required to be recorded separately in www.AlabamaWorks.Alabama.gov. A lump sum of these costs is no longer acceptable.

- Out of state training providers must register at www.AlabamaWorks.alabama.gov and Alabama WIOA will not pay out-of-state tuition rates and fees.

- Training programs and/or providers may be removed from the ETPL for just cause. If a program is determined to be funded solely by WIOA ITA funds, then it may be removed from the ETPL. If a program/provider is removed, they will not be eligible to reapply for a minimum of two (2) years.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Alabama's Eligible Training Provider List

Policy

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) 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. Under WIOA, participants in need of training services may access career training through a list of approved training providers and training programs. The eligible training provider list is compiled to provide participants a full array of training programs designed to meet their needs for job readiness or a career pathway. WIOA requires states to establish procedures to determine eligibility for training providers and training programs. Only those eligible training providers and their eligible programs will be included on Alabama's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Only those training providers and programs listed on the ETPL will be utilized by the Career Centers for Individual Training Accounts. The ETPL can be viewed at www.AlabamaWorks.Alabama.gov, Provider/Education Services, ETPL approved programs or at www.AlabamaWorks.com, under Resources.

Current providers of training services must seek continued eligibility by following the application instructions included. New providers of training services must follow the application instructions indicated in this policy to be considered for approval for the ETPL.

Alabama's ETPL will be open for application for the period of July 1 through October 31 of each program year, for a total of four (4) months. This application period will be for the submission of new programs and any changes to currently approved programs. The remainder of the program year will be utilized to review programs currently on the ETPL for compliance, alignment with industry sectors, labor market information, and performance. Applications are completed on-line only through the AlabamaWorks system at www.AlabamaWorks.Alabama.gov. The open application period does not apply to the Registered Apprenticeship programs who choose to opt in the ETPL. Registered Apprenticeship programs may submit their information at any time during the program year.

For Alabama, to be an eligible training provider under WIOA, requirements include the following:

1. The training provider must be one of these:
    a. Post-secondary education institution;

b. Registered Apprenticeship program approved by, and listed on the website of, the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship at www.alapprentice.org;

c. Other public or private provider of training, which may include joint labor-management organizations and eligible provider of adult education and literacy activities **and** such activities are provided in combination with occupational skills training;

d. Local Board, if the Governor of the State grants a written waiver to the Local Board citing an insufficient number of eligible providers to meet the local demand for training programs **and** that the local board meets the other training provider criteria, i.e. performance, **and** that the training programs are preparing participants for in-demand industry sector or occupations in their local area; WIOA sec. 107(g)(1); or

e. Community Based Organization (CBOs) or private organization of demonstrated effectiveness that provides training under contract with the Local Board.

2. Training provider must have a private school license or an appropriate exemption issued by the Alabama Community College system (ACCS). Private school licensure is to be submitted with the application and status will be verified accordingly.

3. Training provider must have at least eighteen (18) months of business operation experience and have successfully served participants for a minimum of twelve (12) months.

4. Training provider must have a training program or programs that:

   a. Result in a recognized post-secondary credential and employment;

   b. Are delivered in person, on-line, or in a blended approach with an actual physical location, i.e., a campus, classroom, facility, in the state of Alabama;

   c. Are short term, 52 weeks (twelve (12) months) or less for a training program is preferred and strongly encouraged. For extenuating circumstances, 104 weeks (two (2) years) or less of training is acceptable;

   d. Are reasonable in cost in comparison with other training programs offered by other providers in a region, a local area, or throughout the state as determined by the State Workforce Development Board;

   e. Must be aligned with a regional or statewide in-demand occupation or dynamic career pathway approved by the Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways (ACCCP);

   f. Must not exceed the maximum cost of $20,000; and

   g. Have measurable performance for all students as required by the State Workforce Development Board.

Training programs that do not provide family sustaining wages even though considered in high demand will not be added to the ETPL. Family sustaining wages are defined as entry level wages and should be at least 200% of the HHS Poverty level for a one (1) person family (see Attachment A). Programs may be removed for lack of performance in obtaining employment, failing to award certificates or credentials to participants or other factors as deemed necessary. Staff will use the Training Evaluation Reports from the AlabamaWorks! system for performance review. Training programs must provide a certificate, credential, diploma, or degree that meets the WIOA Credential Policy and those certificates, credentials, diplomas, or degrees must be awarded to the students during or at the end of program participation (Attachment B).

Certificates and/or credentials may not be held until a National Certification is awarded by a separate entity.

Training programs that are six (6) semesters or two (2) years in length will be approved if only industry specific and have successfully proven performance of participants entering employment. Training providers are strongly encouraged to ensure programs are industry specific and short-term occupational training, 52 weeks (twelve (12) months) or less is preferred and highly recommended. Costs included on the AlabamaWorks system should show all tuition, fees, books, and supplies. These cost items are to be broken down on each program.

Training programs that are not appropriate for the ETPL and will not be included are On-the-job training, customized training, incumbent worker training, transitional employment, or other training services described in WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(G)(ii).

Initial Eligibility for New Providers

New providers must provide the following to the Workforce Development Division to be considered for initial eligibility:

1. A completed Alabama training provider online application indicating that they meet the criteria listed above;
2. A description of each training program to be offered;
3. Program cost information, including tuition and fees, books and supplies must be broken out. Costs must be the same for ALL students. Costs per program must not exceed the maximum of $20,000.
4. Information addressing performance, (1) percentage of program participants that have obtained employment after completing the program, (2) the median earnings of program participants in employment, and (3) percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized post-secondary credential during participation in or after completing the program. The excel spreadsheet (Attachment C) should be uploaded in the documents tab under the Provider profile in the AlabamaWorks system.
5. Information supporting a minimum 40% student completion rate and a minimum 40% student employment rate for each training program submitted for ETPL approval. This will be based on the excel spreadsheet that will be uploaded into the AlabamaWorks system.
6. Information regarding partnership with businesses. This may include information about the quality and quantity of employer partnerships, contribution of business input into training program or curriculum, or availability of businesses to mentor students.
7. Programs must be aligned with regional or statewide in-demand occupation or dynamic career pathway approved by the Alabama Committee on Credentials and Career Pathways (ACCCP).
8. Private, for-profit training providers should upload copies of their current state and local business licenses and registration with the Alabama Secretary of State to conduct business in Alabama in the AlabamaWorks! system.

All training programs offered must be physically and programmatically accessible for individuals who are employed and individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities. Training programs should be designed to meet the needs of employers and provide the participants with the necessary skills to obtain employment. Training providers are encouraged to include employability skills in their programs.

Initial Eligibility for new providers will be granted for only one year for a program. Before the one year initial eligibility expires, providers will be expected to submit the criteria for continued eligibility. If initial eligibility expires and the updated information is not provided, the new provider and its programs will be removed from the approved list. Continued eligibility will be reviewed at least every two years to determine suitability and appropriateness for the ETPL.

Continued Eligibility for Current Providers

Current providers must provide the following information to the Department of Commerce, Workforce Development Division for continued eligibility on the ETPL:

1. Performance of each program addressing, (1) percentage of program participants in unsubsidized employment after completing the program, (2) the median earnings of program participants in unsubsidized employment after completing the program, and (3) percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized post-secondary credential during participation or after completing the program should be included on the spreadsheet (Attachment C) and uploaded into the documents tab of the AlabamaWorks! System.

2. Information supporting minimum performance standards of (1) minimum 40% completion rate for ALL Students within the program, (2) minimum 40% employment rate for ALL students within the program, (3) minimum 50% completion rate for WIOA participants, (4) minimum 50% employment rate for WIOA participants, and (5) average wage for WIOA participants after program completion.

3. Program cost information, including tuition and fees, books and supplies must be broken out. Costs must be the same for ALL students. Costs per program must not exceed the maximum of $20,000.

4. Information identifying all of the recognized post-secondary credentials or industry recognized certificates and/or credentials, specifically those received by WIOA participants. Links to the credentials on the Alabama Credential Registry will be accepted. *Training providers are encouraged to award the students who have attained credentials or certifications during participation in the program but are required to award the credentials earned at the end of the program.*

5. Information supporting continued private school licensure or exemption as provided by the Alabama Community College System.

6. Information regarding access to training program throughout the State including rural areas and through the use of technology.

7. Information as to the degree the training program relates to in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

8. Private-for-profit training providers should provide copies of their current state and local business licenses and registration with the Alabama Secretary of State to conduct business in Alabama.

All training programs offered must be physically and programmatically accessible for individuals who are employed and individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities. Training programs should be designed to meet the needs of employers and provide the participants with the necessary skills to obtain employment upon completion of the program.

The training providers are required to submit necessary information on all students being served in the approved programs so that the State can submit program information to the U.S.

Department of Labor in the ETA-9171 report. The following is a list of required data for all students that must be submitted to the State:

- The number of students served;
- The number of students who completed, withdrew or transferred out of the program;
- The number who completed the program;
- The number of those who ended the program and were employed within 6 months after ending;
- The number of those who ended the program and were employed within 1 year after ending;
- The number of those who attained a credential during participation or after completion of the program.

The timeframe for each of these number counts will be given to the training provider so that the reports are timely and accurate. Should a current provider be unable to obtain performance as described above, the State may assist in providing employment and wage data matches on behalf of the providers for WIOA and non-WIOA students. For all non-WIOA students, the training provider will need to provide pertinent information to obtain employment and wage data through the downloaded data sheets provided by the AlabamaWorks! system. If unable to provide performance information or unwilling to provide necessary information for the State to obtain the required performance information at renewal, then the program will be removed from the ETPL until the information is submitted to the State. WIOA requires that the above information be reported for all approved programs on the ETPL, and therefore, this information must be reported for the programs even if WIOA participants were not served during the reporting period.

Program costs, including tuition, fees, etc., should be itemized and updated during the open application timeframe as necessary to remain current on the ETPL website. The local workforce development areas will only cover the cost that is listed on the ETPL website or up to the maximum allowed by the local workforce development board/area. It is very important that the training provider maintain accurate cost information on the ETPL website. Only the providers that are determined eligible and remain so with approved programs may receive training funds under WIOA for participants' training services.

Continued eligibility will be reviewed every two years to determine renewal, suitability, and appropriateness for the ETPL. The above information will be requested at that time and if not provided, the training program and/or provider will be removed until information is submitted. An Eligible Training Provider will have 90 days after removal to provide the required information. Subsequently, a new application is required for the training provider.

Registered Apprenticeship programs

All Registered Apprenticeship (RA) programs registered with the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship are **automatically** eligible to be included as an eligible training provider and can apply to be on the ETPL at any time during the program year. The open application period does not apply to Registered Apprenticeship program who opt in the ETPL. Registered Apprenticeship programs are not subject to the same requirements as other providers since they go through a detailed application and vetting procedure to become a Registered Apprenticeship program sponsor approved by the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship. **Note:** Pre-apprenticeship programs do not have the automatic eligible training provider status under WIOA.

To be included on the ETPL, all Registered Apprenticeship programs must submit a letter requesting to be included on the ETPL and the letter should include (1) the occupations included within the program, (2) name and address of the program sponsor, (3) name and address of the Related Technical Instruction provider, and the location of instruction, if different from the program sponsor's address, (4) method and length of instruction, and (5) the number of active apprentices.

Along with the letter including all of the information listed above, either the Sponsor, Training Provider or the Employer with the Registered Apprenticeship program must register in the AlabamaWorks! system to be listed on the ETPL. Typically, an Eligible Training Provider will complete the registration in the AlabamaWorks! system and include the sponsor of the program, if different. Registration in the AlabamaWorks! is required to initiate payments for the Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). Should the Sponsor of the RA program receive the payment for the training, then the Sponsor should register the program in www.AlabamaWorks.Alabama.gov.

Registered Apprenticeship programs will remain as long as the program is registered or until the program sponsor/training provider notifies the State that it no longer wants to be included on the ETPL. Performance is not required. Registered Apprenticeship programs are not subject to the initial or continued eligibility periods.

Role of State and Each Local Workforce Development Board

Role of the State: The Governor, through the Alabama State Workforce Development Board, has the responsibility for establishing the eligibility criteria and procedures for initial determination and renewals of eligibility for training providers and training programs to receive funds under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The Alabama Department of Commerce, Workforce Development Division has the responsibility for managing and disseminating the approved list of Eligible Training Providers to include receiving current and potential training providers' information for renewal or approval; adding, reviewing and renewing Registered Apprenticeship programs for the ETPL; enforcing the ETPL policies, procedures, and regulations; determining if state-established minimums have been met; monitoring providers to ensure compliance; addressing complaints and/or issues concerning participants; removing training programs and/or training providers as necessary; and managing the appeals process for providers to appeal a denial of eligibility. Training providers and programs will be reviewed within two years from the date of approval and addition to the ETPL.

Role of Local Workforce Development Boards: The Local Workforce Development Boards have statutorily required responsibilities related to eligible training providers. Local Boards must work with the State to ensure that there are sufficient numbers and types of training providers serving the local area and ensuring the state's eligible training provider list is disseminated publicly through the local one-stop system and its partner programs.

The Local Workforce Development Board may set additional eligibility criteria, information requirements, and minimum performance levels for local providers beyond what is required by the State's procedure. Any additional requirements (established by the Local Board) will only affect a program's eligibility and performance level eligibility requirements within the local area. Local Boards may elect to give priority to local training providers with established performance and relationships within the local area while ensuring customers' choice of any approved training provider on the State's ETPL is given appropriate consideration.

The Local Workforce Development Board may receive complaints from participants, Career Center staff, or others concerning training providers. The Local Board staff and/or Career Center staff should work with the training provider to determine a reasonable solution to any complaints. The Local Workforce Development Boards have the discretion and latitude to

suspend new ITA enrollments with any training provider after complaints have been received until a solution can be determined. If a reasonable solution is unattainable, then the complaint may be escalated to the State level.

Eligible training providers outside the Local Area or State

Under WIOA, each state is responsible for compiling and disseminating an Eligible Training Provider List of training programs. A WIOA participant in Alabama may choose a training provider located outside the local workforce development area, and/or, in some instances, outside the state. The Eligible Training Provider selected by the WIOA participant must be in an adjoining state, i.e. Mississippi, Florida, Georgia, or Tennessee, and must be included on the respective State's ETPL approved list. Out of State training providers must register in the AlabamaWorks! System during the open application timeframe and must keep the information current and accurate. Alabama will not pay out of state tuition rates and fees. Alabama Department of Commerce will enter into an agreement with each out-of-state training provider for payment purposes.

Appeals Process for Training Providers

Training providers must deliver results and provide accurate information in order to retain its status as an eligible training provider under the WIOA. The State may revoke a training provider's eligibility and remove the provider from the list of approved providers for false reporting, substantially violating a provision of Title I of WIOA or its implementing regulations, failure to meet required performance outcomes, provide required/requested information, or unresolvable participant issues. All training providers are subject to the equal opportunity and nondiscrimination requirements under WIOA, Section 188.

The Department of Commerce, Workforce Development Division will be responsible for the removal of training providers and/or programs from the approved ETPL. Should a training provider be removed from the approved list, the removal period will be for a minimum of two years and the provider may be subject to repayment of any WIOA funds received during the period of noncompliance. Training providers that have been removed from the ETPL will be afforded an appeal to the Acting Deputy Secretary of Workforce Development within the Alabama Department of Commerce.

Training providers requesting an appeal of removal from the ETPL should provide a letter from their signatory authority, a completed appeal form and detailed justification for retaining approval including any supporting facts. The appeals package should be no more than five (5) pages and should be sent to the Workforce Development Division, Attention ETPL Appeals.

A training provider may be placed in probationary status or removed from the ETPL for certain reasons. Those reasons include but are not limited to falling below the minimum required completion rate and employment rate, situations where the customers/participants are failing to receive adequate training, or as monitoring deems it appropriate. These may not be the only reasons for a provider to be placed on probation or removed. This policy provides enough latitude for staff to make the determination on a case-by-case basis as deemed appropriate by the Department of Commerce. If on probation, the provider will be required to submit periodic updates indicating improvements and/or corrections. Continued failure to correct the problem, meet or exceed the minimum standards set by this policy will result in removal from the ETPL. Probationary status may not exceed one year. Should a training provider be removed from the list, the provider will not be eligible to reapply for at least two years.

Potential training providers requesting an appeal of initial eligibility denial from the state's ETPL should provide a letter from their signatory authority, a completed appeal form and detailed justification for approval including any supporting facts. The appeals package should be no more than five (5) pages and should be sent to the Workforce Development Division, Attention ETPL Appeals.

For specific information regarding local area appeals, contact the appropriate local workforce Development area.

NOTE: No Training Provider should establish a training program solely dependent upon providing training funded with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds. Training programs should serve the general public and have enough capacity to also provide services to WIOA-funded participants. If it is determined that a program is solely dependent upon WIOA funds, then it may be removed from the ETPL.

4. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR THE PRIORITY FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS, OTHER LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS, AND INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF WIOA SEC. 134(C)(3)(E), WHICH APPLIES TO INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES AND TRAINING SERVICES FUNDED BY THE ADULT FORMULA PROGRAM

As mentioned in other sections, Alabama's approach to economic and workforce development begins with a base principle to ensure that all populations, especially the basic skill deficient, economically disadvantaged, physically, mentally, and verbally challenged participants are provided the services to assist in attaining gainful employment. The Career Centers partners and the regional workforce development boards must put together local plans based on the requirements outlined in WIOA for each core partner and allowable additional partners. WIOA specifies that services for adults will be provided through One-Stop Career Centers. Services such as career guidance and workforce information may also be provided virtually. WIOA authorizes two types of service that are potentially available to job seekers:

1. Career Services - includes outreach, job search and placement assistance, provision of labor market information, comprehensive assessments, development of individual employment plans, counseling and career planning, and other services specified in Section 134(c)(2)(A).

2. Training Services - includes Occupational Skills Training, One-the-Job Training activities, Customized, Training, Individual Training Accounts, and other training services specified in Section 134(c)(3)(D).

Priority for both career and training services must be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient in accordance with federal requirements.

The Alabama Workforce Development System will provide priority of services to veterans and eligible spouses, as specified in the Jobs for Veterans Act and its implementing regulations at 20CFR Part 101. When Veterans Priority is applied in conjunction with Priority of Services for WIOA Adult Program Participants, veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient will receive first priority. The second priority would be recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient who are not veterans or eligible spouses. Local Workforce Development Boards are required to develop and include in their local plan, policies that implement Priority of Services for WIOA Adult Program Participants for the One-Stop Center and service delivery plan for the local training providers. The State Program Integrity Section is tasked with monitoring the LWDAs to ensure that Priority of Services policies are established and approved by local boards, as well as sample testing participant files for adherence to stated policies. The State Program Integrity Section will monitor each local area on an annual basis and conduct extensive reviews of local area policies and conduct sample testing of participant files to ensure LWDAs adhere to their respective policies, as well as operate within compliance of WIOA regulations for Priority of Service and regulations for Jobs for Veterans. A description of how the State will implement and monitor the priority for public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient is provided in the Governor's Workforce Innovation Directive (GWID) PY

2016-01, located on the Department's website at Department of Commerce Made In Alabama website. (http://www.madeinalabama.com/divisions/workforce-development/governors-workforce-innovation-directive/).

5. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S CRITERIA REGARDING LOCAL AREA TRANSFER OF FUNDS BETWEEN THE ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAMS

Local Workforce Development Areas must submit a plan modification request to transfer funds between adult and dislocated worker programs. Once funds are transferred from one funding stream to another, the program eligibility and activity requirements transfer to the new program. However, the funding allocation must be tracked separately in the financial system and reported as if it retained its original identity.

Up to 100 percent of the funds allocated to the local area for Adult and Dislocated Workers may be transferred between adult employment and training activities and dislocated worker employment and training activities per WIOA Section 133(b)(4) and the WIOA's Implementing Regulations at 20 CFR 683.130. Transfer requests must be accompanied by appropriate justification, clearly indicating why the request is being made and how granting the request will benefit local area delivery of workforce development services. At a minimum, the rationale for the transfer should address: 1) the situation necessitating the transfer, including local conditions (labor market, economic, etc.) contributing to the need for the transfer request; 2) how the funds transfer will impact the participant levels in both programs; 3) the transfer's effect on current providers of training and other services; and 4) a description of the expected impact on WIOA performance outcomes for both funding streams.

The fund transfer may be approved by the Governor, provided that: 1) the transfer will not adversely impact an area's capacity to adequately provide appropriate services to individuals in need of such services provided by the program subject to reduced funding; 2) the transfer should also not adversely impact the area's ability to achieve program performance measures established for the current or subsequent years; 3) the local area will expend, at a minimum, 80 percent of all funds budgeted to the receiving funding stream by the end of the program year.

C. WITH RESPECT TO YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES AUTHORIZED IN SECTION 129 OF WIOA—

1. IDENTIFY THE STATE-DEVELOPED CRITERIA TO BE USED BY LOCAL BOARDS IN AWARDING GRANTS OR CONTRACTS FOR YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES AND DESCRIBE HOW THE LOCAL BOARDS WILL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE ABILITY OF THE PROVIDERS TO MEET PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES BASED ON PRIMARY INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE FOR THE YOUTH PROGRAM AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 116(B)(2)(A)(II) OF WIOA IN AWARDING SUCH GRANTS OR CONTRACTS.[11]

(1) Alabama's WIOA youth program activities are administered by the seven (7) local workforce development areas / boards. Policy guidance (Governor's Workforce Innovation Directive PY2015-09) was issued on January 21, 2016 to the local workforce areas that delineated State-developed criteria to be used by local boards in awarding grants (contracts) for WIOA youth workforce programs and activities. Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) will follow the procurement procedures established within their area to ensure proper competition and transparency as required by WIOA Section 123(a).

The local areas / boards, per the policy Directive, are required to consider funding youth providers based on program cost data provided by potential providers and based on criteria that may include those youth providers and activities that:

- Develop relationships between youth and caring adults
- Involve family members

- Develop youth citizenship and leadership skills
- Provide appropriate services based on age and needs of each youth
- Demonstrate involvement of the business/employer community
- Demonstrate prior successes in providing employment and training services to youth, both basic skills and occupational skills
- Demonstrate the connection between work and learning

In addition, each Local Area/LWDB must use the following criteria in awarding contracts for youth services:

- Ability to measure and attain youth-related core performance levels; participant and employer (customer) satisfaction levels (Note: the State calculates and tracks official standards and performance.)
- Coordination with local secondary and post-secondary institutions;
- Prior experience working with disadvantaged, special populations, and in operating education, training, and employment programs;
- Leveraging funds with other funding sources;
- Fiscal accountability; and
- Program design that includes the following components: a. An objective assessment for each participant; b. Individual Service Strategies (ISS); and c. Services that prepare youth for post-secondary education opportunities, link academic and occupational learning, prepare youth for employment, and provide connections to intermediary organizations linked to the job market and employers.

WIOA has established core performance indicators to ensure that Federal investments in employment and training programs are accountable to job seekers, employers, customers, and taxpayers. This is a renewed system, which will ensure access for all individuals, of every skill level, the opportunity to pursue the skills, training, and education they need to obtain employment that will lead to financial stability and economic security for themselves and their families. Employers will also have the assurance that trained and qualified workers will be available to fill their current and future openings. Specifically related to this Youth Policy are the Youth Measures and Descriptions.

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.

(2) The WIOA requirement that increases the minimum out-of-school youth (OSY) expenditure rate to 75 % signifies a much greater focus on both funds and resources on the OSY population. Early in Alabama's WIOA implementation process representatives from state level core and optional one-stop partner focused on reviewing requirements for aligning program services and activities.

The State Workforce Development Board supports cost-efficient, collaborative efforts that result in comprehensive and innovative services that lead youth to academic improvement, high school graduation or High School Equivalency attainment, employment, military services, advanced or apprenticeship training, paid and unpaid internships, and/or post-secondary education. Local programs must link academic and occupational learning and develop measures of successful outcomes. Effective programs require the involvement of local groups providing input on the proposed program design and coordinating the delivery of the youth services with local employers, One-Stop Career Centers and other youth services already available in the community.

Local programs have the discretion to determine which specific program services will be provided to a youth participant, based on each participant's objective assessment and individual

service strategy. Critical to the success is integrating a youth development strategy that focuses on a young person's assets, provides a variety of interventions and supports enabling the youth to grow, learn and mature—successfully transitioning to careers and productive adulthood. Youth development activities include leadership development opportunities that encourage responsibility, employability, and other positive social behaviors. It is expected that each youth will participate in more than one of the fourteen program elements required as part of any local youth program. The overall goal of the youth program is to help youth complete a high school diploma or equivalent and to prepare for a career pathway that will transition into skilled employment and/or postsecondary education.

In Alabama, the workforce system will expand education, training, and employment services to youth and adults with disabilities by using a career pathway framework to increase opportunities. Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) and the ACCS Adult Education program partners on serving individuals with disabilities that lack the basic academic skills and soft "essential" skills to be successful in postsecondary education and employment. The services include eligible services outlined under section 202 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title II Adult Education and the support services that are offered by ADRS under section 414 (Vocational Rehabilitation Services) of WIOA.

Alabama will use multiple strategies to achieve improved outcomes for out of school youth as described in 129(2)(1)(B). These strategies will include all of the combined partners, especially Title II and Title IV being inclusive in their delivery models. The integrated Education and Training opportunities that will be offered through the Alabama Community College System adult education and technical education programs will emphasize braided funding and support services for continued success. All Out of School Youth will follow the eligibility and performance requirements as outlined in WIOA.

In April 2020, the State implemented a WIOA Common Intake and Reporting System (AlabamaWorks!) that captures participants' demographic information for the four core programs and additional partners as requested. The system aligns accountability measures and generates automatic referrals among the programs.

Currently, some partners have their own accountability and performance systems for tracking client information and generating reports and referrals. Memorandums of Understanding are in place to allow for data matching of participants to collect the required common measure and partner specific information for accountability.

Using a no-wrong-door policy, all participants will develop an individualized plan which will entail an optimum blend of services and funding to achieve their objectives. The plan will guide a participant to a pathway built to meet his/her needs and integrate multiple programs and services in a seamless and effective manner. This model is an integrated compilation of programs and services intended to develop basic academic, technical and employability skills; provide continuous education, training, and work supports that lead to high-demand jobs in targeted sector areas in the local region.

3. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THAT ALL 14 PROGRAM ELEMENTS DESCRIBED IN WIOA SECTION 129(C)(2) ARE MADE AVAILABLE AND EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENTED, INCLUDING QUALITY PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS UNDER THE WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM ELEMENT. [12]

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides innovative programs to assist in-school and out-of-school Youth, as well as Youth with disabilities and other significant barriers to employment. These programs serve Youth between the ages of 14 and 24 by providing a broad array of activities designed for educational and occupational skills training in seven Local Workforce Development Areas throughout the State of Alabama. Current Youth

programs in Alabama focus on educational attainment, work-based learning opportunities, and training linked to careers aligned with the skills needs for in-demand industries throughout the state. The goal of these programs is to help Youth attain the education and job skills that are necessary for employment and advancement in their chosen career pathway.

The Governor's Workforce Innovation Directive (GWID) below, GWID PY2015-09, demonstrates the State's policy that all Local Workforce Development Areas are required to make each of the program elements required in 20 CFR § 681.460 available to Youth participants. Local Youth program providers have the discretion to determine what specific program services a youth participant receives, based on each participant's objective assessment and individual service strategy. Local Youth programs are not required to provide every program service to each participant. Youth enrollment occurs only after the youth receives one of these fourteen (14) elements for the first time.

Alabama Workforce Investment System

Alabama Department of Commerce

Workforce Development Division

401 Adams Avenue

Post Office 304106

Montgomery, Alabama 36130-4106

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE INNOVATION DIRECTIVE NO. PY2015-09

SUBJECT: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Program Requirements and Procurement of Youth Workforce Investment Activities

1. Purpose. This Directive identifies the State-developed criteria to be used by local boards in awarding grants (contracts) for youth workforce investment activities.

2. Discussion. The State Workforce Development Board supports cost-efficient, collaborative efforts that result in comprehensive and innovative services that lead youth to academic improvement, high school graduation or High School Equivalency attainment, employment, military services, advanced or apprenticeship training, paid and unpaid internships, and/or post-secondary education. Local programs must link academic and occupational learning and develop measures of successful outcomes. Effective programs require the involvement of local groups providing input on the proposed program design and coordinating the delivery of the youth services with local employers, One-Stop Career Centers and other youth services already available in the community.

Local programs have the discretion to determine what specific program services will be provided to a youth participant, based on each participant's objective assessment and individual service strategy. Critical to the success is integrating a youth development strategy that focuses on a young person's assets, provides a variety of interventions and supports allowing the youth to grow, learn and mature—successfully transitioning to careers and productive adulthood. Youth development activities include leadership development opportunities that encourage responsibility, employability, and other positive social behaviors. It is expected that each youth will participate in more than one of the fourteen program elements required as part of any local youth program. The overall goal of the youth program is to help youth complete a high school diploma or equivalent and to prepare for a career pathway that will transition into skilled employment and/or postsecondary education.

Youth program outcomes should prepare youth for post-secondary educational opportunities, provide better linkages between academic and occupational learning, prepare youth for employment; and offer effective connections to intermediary organizations that provide strong links to the job market and employers. All youth must receive some form of follow-up services for a minimum period of 12 months, following the completion of participation in the program.

Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) will follow the procurement procedures established by each local area to ensure proper competition and transparency. Procurement of WIOA funded Youth Services requires the selection of youth providers through a competitive selection process (Section 123(a)). Each LWDA, is afforded the opportunity to identify providers of youth services that effectively address the needs of local youth.

Per WIOA Section 123(b), a local board may award grants or contracts on a sole-source basis if such board determines there is an insufficient number of eligible providers of youth workforce investment activities in the local area involved (such as a rural area) for grants and contracts to be awarded on a competitive basis under Section 123(a). Failed competitive competition would be necessary to make such determination for sole-source procurement.

The local boards will fund youth providers based on performance and program cost data provided by potential providers and based on criteria that may include those youth activities and providers that:

- Develop relationships between youth and caring adults
- Involve family members
- Build youth responsibility
- Develop youth citizenship and leadership skills
- Place high expectations on youth and staff
- Provide appropriate services based on age and needs of each youth
- Demonstrate involvement of the business/employer community
- Provide accessible facilities and provide accommodations for special needs populations, including individuals with disabilities
- Demonstrate prior successes in providing employment and training services to youth
- Prepare youth for success in employment
- Advocate for the youth perspective
- Demonstrate the connection between work and learning
- Provide comprehensive guidance and counseling

The criteria to solicit competitive proposals (per WIOA Section 123(a)) for the operation of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I, Public Law 113-128 youth purposes and activities, will ensure that Youth Programs are competitively procured and solicited for comprehensive year-round Youth Programs for out-of-school youth between the ages 16-24, and in-school youth between the ages of 14 and 21. Local Areas' youth program design must offer a unique opportunity to provide a creative and innovative mix of services designed to address the academic, vocational, and employment needs of at-risk youth. WIOA Title I Youth Programs are required to provide access to the following 14 program service elements:

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized postsecondary credential.

2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate,

3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have as a component, academic and occupational education, which may include:

a. summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year,

b. pre-apprenticeship programs,

c. internships and job shadowing, and,

d. on-the-job training opportunities,

4. Occupational skill training, which shall include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that are aligned with in demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area involved, if the local board determines that the programs meet the quality criteria described in WIOA Section 123.

5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

6. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors, as appropriate.

7. Supportive services.

8. Adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months.

9. Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate.

10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate;

11. Financial literacy education.

12. Entrepreneurial skills training.

13. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services, and

14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.

State policy for “requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment” is a low-income individual who has at least one of the following criteria:

- Indian, Alaska Native, or Hawaiian Native.
- Individuals who are English language learners.
- Individuals with low levels of literacy.

- Individuals facing substantial cultural barriers.
- Eligible migrant and seasonal farm workers.
- Low academic performance (a grade point C or below or basic academic skills in the bottom quartile of the class).
- A past record of excessive absences as verified by school officials.
- Has been suspended, expelled, or put on probation during high school.
- Has dropped out of school previously.
- Limited English proficiency.
- Family environment is not conducive to education or career goals.
- Has documented alcohol and/or substance abuse.
- Has a record of violent behavior.
- Lacks motivation or maturity to pursue education or career goals.
- Emotional disorder which impairs education or career goals.
- Health problems which impair education or career goals.
- Eligible for free lunch under the National School Lunch Programs.
- Has inadequate or no work experience.
- Lacks marketable, occupational skills that are in demand in the local labor market.

The State understands and provides guidance that in each local area, not more than five percent (5%) of the in-school youth assisted may be made eligible using WIOA Section 129(a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII) as follows: (VII) An individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.

The five percent (5%) "Limitation" is calculated based on all in-school youth served in the WIOA local youth program in a given program year. For example, if you serve a total of 40 in-school youth, only 2 may be eligible using clause (VII) "requires additional assistance" (40 x .05 = 2).

Local Areas / Local Boards must follow a procurement process that ensures compliance with the prescribed rules and regulations. At a minimum, the procurement process must ensure:

1. Solicitation methods that promote fair and open competition;

2. A written code of conduct that includes specific conflict of interest provisions to ensure that those who develop or issue a proposal are separate and distinct from those who are involved in the selection process;

3. A clear and accurate description of the services being procured; and

4. A specific contract time frame with the option to extend the contract for a specified period based on a provider's compliance with the terms of the contract. (Note: This option (to be valid) must be included in the Request for Proposals (RFPs) as well as in the subsequent contracts resulting from the RFPs).

In addition, each Local Area/LWDB must use the following criteria in awarding contracts for youth services:

1. Ability to measure and attain youth-related core performance levels; participant and employer (customer) satisfaction levels (Note: The State calculates and tracks official standards and performance.)

2. Coordination with local secondary and post-secondary institutions;

3. Prior experience working with disadvantaged, special populations, and in operating education, training, and employment programs;

4. Leveraging funds with other funding sources;

5. Fiscal accountability; and

6. Program design that includes the following components:

a. An objective assessment for each participant;

b. Individual Service Strategies (ISS); and

c. Services that prepare youth for post-secondary education opportunities, link academic and occupational learning, prepare youth for employment, and provide connections to intermediary organizations linked to the job market and employers.

WIOA has established core performance indicators (See Table 1 on Next Page) to ensure that Federal investments in employment and training programs are accountable to job seekers, employers, customers, and taxpayers. This is a renewed system, which will ensure access for all individuals, of every skill level, the opportunity to pursue the skills, training, and education they need to obtain employment that will lead to financial stability and economic security for themselves and their families. Employers will also have the assurance that trained and qualified workers will be available to fill their current and future openings. Specifically related to this Youth Policy are the Youth Measures and Descriptions.

State WIOA Performance Indicators	
Adults / Dislocated Workers	
Measure	**Description**
Entered Employment Rate	The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the 2nd quarter after exit.
Employment Retention Rate	The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the 4th quarter after exit.
Median Earnings	The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the 2nd quarter after exit.
Credential Rate	The percentage of participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, during participation or within 1 year after exit.
Measurable Skills Gain	The percentage of 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 measureable skill gains toward such a credential or employment.
Youth	
Placement in Employment / Education / Training	The percentage of participants who are in education or training services, or in unsubsidized employment during the 2nd quarter after exit.
Retention in Employment / Education / Training	The percentage of participants who are in education or training services, or in subsidized employment during the 4th quarter after exit.
Earnings	The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the 2nd quarter after exit.
Credential Rate	The percentage of participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, during participation or within 1 year after exit.
In-Program Skills Gain	The percentage of 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 measureable skill gains toward such a credential or employment.
Employers	
Indicators of Effectiveness	To Be Determined

3. <u>Action.</u> Local Workforce Development Areas / Local Workforce Development Boards will follow this policy in regard to the selection of Youth Program Service Providers beginning with the procurement of Youth Services and Activities for WIOA programs beginning on or after April 1, 2016.

4. <u>Contact.</u> Questions regarding this Directive should be referred to Bill Hornsby, Supervisor, Workforce Development Division, State Programs, Planning and Divisional Budget Management Section at (334) 242-5847 or bill.hornsby@commerce.alabama.gov.

To comply with the State's policy that all 14 program elements described in WIOA section 129(c)(2) be made available to Youth participants, Local Workforce Development Areas have addressed this requirement through the Request for Proposal (RFP) process. All seven (7) Local Workforce Development Areas within the State competitively procure Youth provider services via All Youth provider responses submitted to these RFPs are graded and scored by Local Workforce Development Area staff using a grading instrument. These RFP grading instruments lists, among other criteria, the requirement to discuss which of the fourteen (14) required Youth elements providers will offer to participants. Alabama currently does not have any active Pre-Apprenticeship programs in the state. The Alabama Office of Apprenticeship (AOA) is currently considering developing a Pre-Apprenticeship program to go along with their Registered Apprenticeship programs throughout the State.

To ensure that all 14 program elements described in WIOA section 129(c)(2) are effectively implemented through the State, Local Workforce Development Area monitors visit Youth programs on a regular basis throughout the program year. Local Area monitors examine all aspects of the Local Area's Youth programs, including programmatic performance, adherence to contractual agreements, and the availability of the 14 program elements required by Governor's Workforce Innovation Directive (GWID) PY2015-09. The State's Program Integrity Section monitors will also provide technical assistance, monitoring, and oversight of Local Area Youth programs to ensure that local area policies, procedures, and programmatic activity meet the requirement delineated in WIOA Section 129(c)(2).

Once a youth program has been selected and a subrecipient agreement implemented, the youth program participants are registered in AlabamaWorks! (AW!), our statewide case management, participant tracking, and reporting system. WIOA staff enters into this system all of the services that have been provided to the youth participants, the case notes, outcomes, and follow up services. Each of these services is reported in the PIRL and tied to a reporting data element, i.e., Youth Summer Employment (AW! service code 400) is reported in the PIRL as Data element 1405. Each of the 14 Youth program elements is listed in the AW! System and is made available to each youth participant from either the Career Center, partner services, or a youth program provider.

4. PROVIDE THE LANGUAGE CONTAINED IN THE STATE POLICY FOR "REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO ENTER OR COMPLETE AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT" CRITERION FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(B)(III)(VIII) AND FOR "REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO COMPLETE AN EDUCATION PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT" CRITERION FOR IN-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(C)(IV)(VII). IF THE STATE DOES NOT HAVE A POLICY, DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THAT LOCAL AREAS WILL HAVE A POLICY FOR THESE CRITERIA.

Alabama's state policy definition for someone who "requires additional assistance to complete and educational program or to secure and hold employment" is a low-income individual who is: (1) Indian, Alaska Native, or Hawaiian Native; (2) individuals who are English language learners, individuals with low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; (3) eligible migrant and seasonal farm workers; (4) low academic performance (a grade point of "C" or below or basic academic skills in the bottom quartile of class); (5) a past record of excessive absences or has been suspended, expelled, or put on probation during high school; (6) has dropped out of school previously; (7) limited English proficiency; (8) Family environment is not conducive to education or career goals; (9) has documented alcohol and/or substance abuse; (10) has a record of violent behavior; (11) lacks motivation or maturity to pursue education or career goals; (12) emotional disorder or health problems which impair education or career goals; (13) eligible for free lunch under the National School Lunch Programs; (14) has inadequate or no work experience; (15) lacks marketable occupation skills that are in demand in the local labor market.

5. INCLUDE THE STATE DEFINITION, AS DEFINED IN LAW, FOR NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL AND ATTENDING SCHOOL AS SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(B)(I) AND SECTION 129(A)(1)(C)(I). IF STATE LAW DOES NOT DEFINE "NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL" OR "ATTENDING SCHOOL," INDICATE THAT IS THE CASE AND PROVIDE THE STATE POLICY FOR DETERMINING WHETHER A YOUTH IS ATTENDING OR NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL.

Every child between the ages of 6 and 17 years is required to attend a public school, private school, church school, or be instructed by a competent private tutor for the entire length of the school term in every scholastic year except that, prior to attaining his or her 16th birthday every child attending a church school as defined in Section 16-28-1 is exempt from the requirements of this section, provided such child complies with enrollment and reporting procedure specified in Section 16-28-7. Admission to public school shall be on an individual basis on the application of the parents, legal custodian, or guardian of the child to the local board of education at the beginning of each school year, under such rules and regulations as the board may prescribe. The parent, legal custodian, or guardian of a child who is 6 years of age, may opt out of enrolling their child in school at the age of 6 years by notifying the local school board of education, in writing that the child will not be enrolled in school until he or she is 7 years of age.

6. IF USING THE BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT DEFINITION CONTAINED IN WIOA SECTION 3(5)(B), INCLUDE THE STATE DEFINITION WHICH MUST FURTHER DEFINE HOW TO DETERMINE IF AN INDIVIDUAL IS UNABLE TO COMPUTE OR SOLVE PROBLEMS, OR READ, WRITE, OR SPEAK ENGLISH, AT A LEVEL NECESSARY TO FUNCTION ON THE JOB, IN THE INDIVIDUAL'S FAMILY, OR IN SOCIETY. IF NOT USING THE PORTION OF THE DEFINITION CONTAINED IN WIOA SECTION 3(5)(B), INDICATE THAT IS THE CASE.

We use the WIOA definitions for basic skills deficient.

D. SINGLE-AREA STATE REQUIREMENTS

1. ANY COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD THAT REPRESENT DISAGREEMENT WITH THE PLAN. (WIOA SECTION 108(D)(3).)

2. THE ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISBURSAL OF GRANT FUNDS, AS DETERMINED BY THE GOVERNOR, IF DIFFERENT FROM THAT FOR THE STATE. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(15).)

3. A DESCRIPTION OF THE TYPE AND AVAILABILITY OF WIOA TITLE I YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND SUCCESSFUL MODELS, INCLUDING FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(9).)

Single-area State Requirements- Does not apply

4. A DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLES AND RESOURCE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ONE-STOP PARTNERS.

Single-area State Requirements- Does not apply

5. THE COMPETITIVE PROCESS USED TO AWARD THE SUBGRANTS AND CONTRACTS FOR TITLE I ACTIVITIES.

Single-area State Requirements- Does not apply

6. HOW TRAINING SERVICES OUTLINED IN SECTION 134 WILL BE PROVIDED THROUGH INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS AND/OR THROUGH CONTRACTS, AND HOW SUCH TRAINING APPROACHES WILL BE COORDINATED. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL MEET INFORMED CUSTOMER CHOICE REQUIREMENTS REGARDLESS OF TRAINING APPROACH.

Single-area State Requirements- Does not apply

7. HOW THE STATE BOARD, IN FULFILLING LOCAL BOARD FUNCTIONS, WILL COORDINATE TITLE I ACTIVITIES WITH THOSE ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE II. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE BOARD WILL CARRY OUT THE REVIEW OF LOCAL APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED UNDER TITLE II CONSISTENT WITH WIOA SECS. 107(D)(11)(A) AND (B)(I) AND WIOA SEC. 232.

Single-area State Requirements- Does not apply

8. COPIES OF EXECUTED COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WHICH DEFINE HOW ALL LOCAL SERVICE PROVIDERS WILL CARRY OUT THE REQUIREMENTS FOR INTEGRATION OF AND ACCESS TO THE ENTIRE SET OF SERVICES AVAILABLE IN THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM, INCLUDING COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH ENTITIES ADMINISTERING REHABILITATION ACT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

Single-area State Requirements- Does not apply

E. WAIVER REQUESTS (OPTIONAL)

Requested Waiver: Allow the use of individual training accounts (ITAs) for in-school youth, ages 14-21 years.

Statutory and/or regulatory requirements to be waived

20 CFR 681.550 allows ITAs funded by WIOA youth funds to be used by out-of-school youth. The final rule did not expand the use to ITAs to in-school youth. Instead, in-school youth wishing to access ITAs may only do so through the WIOA adult program. Alabama would like to waive the requirement to only allow ITAs for out-of-school youth and expand this flexibility to in-school youth, ages 16-21 years.

The intent of using ITAs in the WIOA out-of-school youth program is to expand training options, increase program flexibility, and enhance customer choice. If the State of Alabama is going to offer an adequate supply of workers to in-demand industry and occupations, it cannot include only those who are determined to be out-of-school as part of that supply. Alabama needs a waiver to support those with post-secondary educational goals past high school. In-school youth deserve the same opportunities for support as those being served as out-of-school youth, and it would be a disservice to those in-school customers to not support them past their high school diploma or its equivalent. Although it has been recommended to close the enrollment of those in-school youth who graduate and then re-enroll them as an out-of-school youth for the purpose of assisting them with an ITA after age 18, this poses a risk that the customer may no longer be eligible under the barrier requirements.

Providing occupational training to in-school youth via an ITA will maximize the service delivery capacity of the State of Alabama's WIOA Youth Program by allowing those youth that are focused on employment to have the same access as adults, dislocated workers, and out-of-school youth to the advantages of ITAs. ITAs for in-school youth will support several strategic goals in Alabama's State Plan:

1. Provision of occupational skills training activities to youth;

2. Participation of youth in apprenticeship programs through the use of ITAs for the classroom learning component of apprenticeship; and

3. Contributing to the achievement of Alabama's postsecondary attainment goal of adding 500,000 credential holders to the workforce and raising Alabama's labor force to the national average by 2025, especially creating career pathways for in-school youth.

The State of Alabama is requesting a **renewal** of this waiver, which was approved and included in the Program Year (PY) 2020-2023 State Plan. Since the waiver was approved, approximately

14 in-school youth have been served who would not have been eligible for an ITA without the waiver. Most of these youth graduated high school at the age of 17 and would not have been eligible to receive services or an ITA as an adult or out-of-school youth. Six have successfully completed their ITA. Three participants did not complete their ITA and five are still attending classes. Alabama plans to provide technical assistance to Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) during the upcoming year to expand the use of this waiver.

State or Local Statutory Barriers

There are no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the proposed waiver.

Strategic Goals of the Waiver and Expected Programmatic Outcomes

This waiver if granted would have a significant impact on all of the youth performance measures as well as increase the number of youth served in Alabama. We anticipate approximately 20 in-school youth will be served per year who would not be eligible for an ITA otherwise if this waiver is approved. The State overall and the majority of LWDAs have had difficulty meeting the Credential Attainment within a Year After Exit measure for youth. This waiver would assist the State and LWDAs in meeting this measure since in-school youth would be encouraged and provided the necessary tools through the program to complete their education and training, which would not only lead to valuable credentials for the youth but also increase the youth credential rate for the state. We anticipate that 50% of in-school youth enrolled in ITAs will earn a credential. Additionally, the State and LWDAs would have increases in the number of Measurable Skills Gains (MSGs) since the in-youth would be involved in occupational, pre-apprenticeship, or apprenticeship training. We anticipate 50% of in-school youth enrolled in ITAs will obtain a MSG. In turn, Placed in Employment/Education Second Quarter, Placed in Employment/Education Fourth Quarter, and Median Earnings Second Quarter to be impacted positively.

In addition to these programmatic outcomes, Alabama expects to achieve the following goals:

- Improve the ability of local workforce development boards, youth program providers, and workforce and education lead agencies to respond quickly to the needs of in-school youth, ages 16-21 years;
- Increase the quality of learning opportunities;
- Increase employment and training opportunities;
- Improve coordination by reducing fragmentation of service delivery;
- Increase the opportunities for work-based learning;
- Improve customer choice and increase empowerment for youth, making them capable and responsible for making thoughtful choices about their career;
- Reduce unnecessary paperwork;
- Develop an emerging workforce with prepared candidates ready for work; and
- Increase accountability.

Alignment with USDOL/ETA Policy Priorities

In the WIOA Final Rule, the intent of using ITAs in the WIOA out-of-school youth program is to expand training options, increase program flexibility, enhance customer choice, and reduce paperwork. Alabama would like in-school youth, ages 16-21, to also have this option. This waiver encourages this youth population to seriously look at career pathways in the in-

demand occupations and empowers them to make their own decisions, thereby taking responsibility for their actions. The waiver also assists in the preparation of an emerging workforce with candidates who are ready for work.

Description of Individuals, Groups, or Populations Impacted by the Waiver

WIOA in-school youth participants, ages 16-21 years, will benefit from this waiver. By virtue of the WIOA program's eligibility requirements, Alabama is directly addressing service delivery for disadvantaged populations and individuals with multiple barriers to employment.
This waiver will enable the youth population ages 16-21 years to seriously look at career pathways and in-demand occupations, increase training and employment opportunities for this population of youth, and empower youth to make their own decisions.

Description of the Process to Monitor the Waiver Program and Collect Waiver Outcome Information

Upon USDOL's approval of the Four-Year Combined State Plan Modification including this waiver request, the Alabama Workforce Development Board will communicate the waiver allowance to all its members and statewide partners.

The Workforce Development Division (WDD) of the Alabama Department of Commerce will revise applicable state level policy and ensure applicable operational guidance reflects the waiver allowance parameters. WDD will widely communicate these changes by posting revised policy on its public website. Additionally, WDD will communicate directly with all key stakeholders including the Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) by way of email to announce the revised policy and other information important to convey regarding the waiver allowance. WDD will track and report youth participant activities through the AlabamaWorks! Participant case management/financial tracking system.

Also, case managers in the one-stop career centers will collaborate with subrecipient youth services providers as well as pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship program sponsors. Case managers will maintain copies of necessary forms in youth participant case files. Case managers and/or WDD staff may request additional information from program sponsors or employers as necessary.

Youth In-School ITAs will be delivered to youth primarily at the local level. If a local board decides to offer ITAs for eligible in-school youth, ages 16-21 at time of program enrollment, the board will amend their local ITA policy accordingly and may amend any other local policies impacted by this waiver as need be. As is the case with WIOA funded activities, the local board is responsible for oversight and monitoring. The local board will ensure local area policies pertaining to this waiver allowance and ITAs will be adhered to by all parties concerned. The local board is responsible to communicate relevant information to local stakeholders, Alabama Career Center System staff and partners, lead agencies and youth program providers. Local case workers will be directed to document the use of an ITA in each eligible youth's individual service strategy, which contains the goals and objectives for the youth's participation in WIOA programs and activities as well as the participant service plan. Per existing policy and operational procedures, youth participant services must be recorded in the AlabamaWorks! case management system including ITA-related training, supportive services, follow-up and outcomes.

The WDD State Reporting Section will coordinate with appropriate data and case management staff to ensure in-school data is accurately captured and reported in Youth WIOA performance measures.

At the end of each program year after the waiver allowance is implemented, the WDD State Reporting Section will evaluate impacts, if any, the availability of in-school youth ITAs have had

on the state's workforce development system and report this data to the Alabama Workforce Development Board.

Opportunity for Local Board and Public Comment on the Waiver Request

Workforce development stakeholders, including local boards, businesses, and organized labor organizations, will be notified of the State of Alabama's Four-Year Combined State Plan Modification including this waiver request through an e-mail alert. The e-mail alert will contain instructions on how to submit comments. In addition, both the general public and stakeholders will have access to the waiver request on the Alabama WIOA website: https://wioa-alabama.org. The public comment period will be open for fourteen (14) days.

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients and basic skills deficient;	Yes
2. The State has implemented a policy to ensure local areas have a process in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist;	Yes
3. The State established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members;	Yes
4. The State established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2);	Yes
5. Where an alternative entity takes the place of a State Board, the State has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under WIOA section 101(e) and the legal requirements for membership;	Yes
6. The State established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the State Workforce Development Board help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the State consults with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the State in determining the distributions;	Yes
7. The State will not use funds received under	Yes

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

ADULT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	77.0%	77.0%	78.0%	78.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	74.0%	74.0%	74.8%	74.8%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$5,900.00	6,364.00	$5,950.00	6,364.00
Credential Attainment Rate	65.0%	70.0%	65.5%	72.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	60.0%	62.5%	60.5%	65.5%
Effectiveness in	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Serving Employers				

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

DISLOCATED PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	75.0%	76.8%	75.3%	76.8%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	77.0%	79.9%	78.0%	79.9%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$7,500.00	8,174.00	$7,550.00	8,174.00
Credential Attainment Rate	75.0%	77.0%	75.3%	78.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	60.0%	60.0%	60.5%	60.5%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

YOUTH PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	67.0%	67.0%	67.3%	67.3%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	67.0%	67.0%	67.8%	67.8%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$2,850.00	2,987.00	$2,900.00	2,987.00
Credential	49.0%	50.0%	49.3%	50.0%

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Attainment Rate				
Measurable Skill Gains	49.0%	50.0	49.5%	50.0
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR WAGNER-PEYSER PROGRAM (EMPLOYMENT SERVICES)

A. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL STAFF THE PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES UNDER THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT, SUCH AS THROUGH STATE EMPLOYEES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO STATE MERIT STAFF EMPLOYEES, STAFF OF A SUBRECIPIENT, OR SOME COMBINATION THEREOF.

The state will staff the provision of labor exchange services under the Wagner-Peyser Act through state merit staff employees. Generally, Wagner-Peyser staff are the first staff customers see when coming into a career center. Wagner-Peyser staff complete an initial assessment through a seated one-on-one interview. Wagner-Peyser staff are trained to recognize clients, including UI claimants, needing credentials, education and training services and/or resources in order to acquire skills leading to high demand, high wage career paths. They are also trained to provide referral and application assistance to customers as they navigate through the system to reach their reemployment goal.

2. 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

Alabama's Wagner-Peyser Employment Service (ES) program utilizes a variety of resources for it's professional development activities. Bedrock of this professional development is the Alabama State Personnel Department which offers a variety of courses such as: interview and selection; performance appraisal; presentation skills; and dynamics of supervision to ensure the selection of quality staff, properly motivated to perform with a high level of interpersonal skills seeking continuous improvement in their role as workforce professionals in the ever-evolving workforce arena. In this era of record low unemployment and record high employment ES professionals must intensify outreach/recruitment to those not in the labor force, lacking skills and possibly facing barriers to employment in order to sustain an adequate viable labor pool for employers. Many of these recruited will require intensive services in order to identify and prepare a career pathway. Each staff member has this training plan in their individual file which is reviewed periodically for a "refresher".

Recent implementation of an Employee Educational/Orientation Training program featuring videos focuses on basic training for new employees and a resource for seasoned staff is expected to improve staff understanding and investment in their role while lowering staff attrition and promoting professionalism.

Staff members are afforded the opportunity to attend Southeastern Employment and Training Association (SETA) conferences twice a year to learn the latest in workforce development programs, best practices and skills training. The State also offers an annual Workforce Development Conference offering plenary sessions and workshops featuring National, State and local workforce leaders with expertise and best practices to share with Career Center staff.

Veteran's Employment and Training is provided continuously by the National Veterans Training Institute (NVTI) in Dallas, Texas for VETS LVER and DVOP staff. ES is partnering with VETS to leverage and utilize excess training slots for Wagner-Peyser staff. Additionally, ADOL-ETA and Workforce GPS training webinar offerings are made available to One-Stop staff for live participation or viewing of recorded programs later.

Professional development programs are being evaluated to provide Career Center staff professional training and certification in the field of workforce development. This will include skills in career resources, career exploration, career planning, career development, interviewing, resumes, assessment, case management, job search, job development, job placement and employer outreach services.

Finally, in-house training developed and presented by seasoned professional leaders is increasing. Partners are sharing in the cost of this training as staff become more cross trained and diversified across programs.

Career Center Customer Satisfaction Surveys for Employers and Jobseekers are readily available and in plain sight in Career Centers and available on-line

1. Completed surveys and associated comments are first directed to the local Career Center management for resolution
2. ES Area Supervisors and the ES Administrator become involved when necessary

Veteran priority of service is not just a rule of law for the Alabama Career System

1. It is common knowledge and practice not only among DVOP and LVER staff, but throughout every rank of Career Center staffing
2. Official training sessions, both virtual and in person, are documented by both State JVSG management and by Career Center management

State JVSG management has the responsibility to carry out official training sessions regarding priority of service

Alabama Department of Labor HR Division keeps meticulous record of attendance and subject matter

Local Career Center management are instructed to carry out informal training sessions/staff meetings as the need arises or if directed to do so by State JVSG or ES Administration

3. 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

One-Stop Career Center staff meetings of all partners are periodically conducted to share information and cross-train staff. Wagner-Peyser ES staff members are cross-trained on UI eligibility issues and are responsible for conducting the UI work test and, more recently, have been designated as responsible for the UI eligibility assessment portion of the Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program. Other core programs, including WIOA Title I staff, are aware of UI eligibility issues through One-Stop staff meetings. UI has developed a desk-aid for One-Stop staff use in identifying potential eligibility issues. Additionally, UI has

developed a power point presentation for Center staff that is available on their desk-top. Wagner- Peyser ES management works closely with Unemployment Insurance management to provide continuous training to One-Stop staff on UI program changes that may affect eligibility.

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

Information, both written and verbal, on filing a claim for unemployment compensation is available in the reception area/front desk in all one-stop centers where client service needs are assessed and identified. Telephone and internet computer access for filing claims are provided in One-Stop Center resource rooms. Individuals needing assistance in filing claims are provided staff-assistance by Wagner-Peyser resource room attendants.

Career Center staff cross-trained to assist in taking UI claims during COVID crises:

- At the peak of Covid related UI Claims, approximately 65% of the Career Center Staff were assisting with the UI claims taking process
- Career Center Staff served as front line for UI Claims process, since Alabama UI claims are handled remotely by telephone and internet
- Career Center Staff further trained by Alabama UI authorities to obtain and forward documents associated with Covid related unemployment

C. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING REEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE TO UI CLAIMANTS AND OTHER UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS

As part of the "work-test" to ensure UI claimants required to conduct a work search are available and seeking employment, Wagner-Peyser staff reach out to UI claimants early and often in their claim, either electronically, by phone, and/or by mail to apprise of one-stop career center services and encourage visiting their nearest center for reemployment assistance. UI claimants profiled and selected for the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program targeting those most likely to exhaust benefits are required to come to a center for mandatory reemployment services to include: (1) orientation to all services, including self-service; (2) provision of labor market and career information; (3) development of an Individual Reemployment Plan (IRP) that includes work search activities such as assessments, counseling, training, resume preparation, and job search; and (4) eligibility assessment to ensure claimants are complying with mandated work search requirements.

My Reemployment Plan, a tool endorsed by the US Department of Labor is the cornerstone to engaging and preparing claimants for their next job. A My Reemployment Plan workbook is provided to each participant at the initial group orientation to career center services. The workbook and a video series are also available on desktops of resource room computers and staff computers in the career center for ease of access. Headphones are available for individuals wishing to work through the video series in the resource area. Group orientations begin with the video Introduction to My Reemployment Plan to provide an overview of the program and establish the linkage between the workbook and the videos. This gives claimants a sense of ownership and an active role in their Reemployment Plan.

Wagner-Peyser (W-P) staff are familiar with the workbook and videos and in the one-on-one interviews with claimants to develop an individualized reemployment plan can identify areas of these resources that can be utilized to overcome identified needs and barriers and strengthen job readiness. Claimants are encouraged to take part in Microsoft training available through

NorthStar credentialing series and be evaluated for the National Career Ready Certificate as they seek to return to stable employment.

UI claimants not selected for RESEA may receive many of the same reemployment services through the Wagner-Peyser grant and the state funded Claimant Assistance Program. Other unemployed individuals have available many of these same reemployment services as determined appropriate with their needs determination by interview and assessment with Wagner-Peyser staff. Where possible, these individuals are encouraged to participate in the RESEA group orientation and are provided a workbook.

Career Center staff worked closely with agency IS and IT staffs to implement and improve virtual technology for WP and WIOA case management, as well as JVSG and RESEA functions

1. For the first time, Alabama offered RESEA orientation virtually (P. 160 of plan)
2. Alabama is considering a two RESEA program

- The first tier involves basic RESEA orientation and associated job shops, services, and case management
- A second tier would involve those first RESEA participants still receiving UI after a certain number of weeks

Alabama Career centers were closed to walk-in public only four weeks. However, virtual completion of all possible services is still offered and available

Alabama Department of Labor successfully completed a Foreign Labor Certification audit in 2021

1. Occurred at height of Covid exposure and infection rates
2. Subsequent plan developed from that audit is attached
3. Alabama is designated “non-significant” by Foreign Labor Certification standards, but our Foreign Labor Certification staff has grown from one member to three in the past three years.

Ready to Work

1. Alabama’s Ready to Work program, operated by the Alabama Community College System in cooperation with AIDT (Alabama Industrial Training and Development), provides a career pathway for individuals with limited education and employment experience.
2. The workplace environment provides trainees with entry-level skills required for employment with most businesses and industries in Alabama.
3. Training is provided at no cost to participants. Work sites are selected on a priority basis according to economic need and the college’s demonstrated ability to ensure effective program operations and services.
4. The Ready to Work curriculum is set to standards cited by business and industry employers throughout the state, and the skills cited in the U. S. Department of Labor’s Secretary’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) Reports. The curriculum is delivered through both online and classroom instruction.
5. Upon successful completion of the program and earning 70 percent or higher on comprehensive assessments, graduates will receive the Alabama Certified Worker (ACW) Certificate, issued by AIDT, and the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), issued by ACT.

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:

Alabama State Employment Services (ASES) has an integrated workforce registration system that captures and shares common information from both UI and Wagner-Peyser in establishing a labor exchange registration for all UI claimants in the state's data system.

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UI claimants profiled and selected for the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program targeting those most likely to exhaust benefits are mandated to come to a center for mandatory reemployment services to include: (1) orientation to all services, including self-service; (2) provision of labor market and career information; (3) development of an Individual Reemployment Plan (IRP) that includes work search activities such as assessments, counseling, training, resume preparation, and job search; and (4) eligibility assessment to ensure claimants are complying with mandated work search requirements.

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Wagner-Peyser staff members are trained in administration of the work test for UI claimants, including making eligibility assessments. As possible availability issues are detected during interviews with UI claimants, they are reported to UI staff for adjudication. Wagner-Peyser staff members also provide staff-assisted reemployment services to include job search and placement services.

UI claimants must register in the state's automated labor exchange and log-in to the website weekly to search for a job or visit a one-stop center for staff-assisted services as part of their job search requirement for receipt of benefits. Failure to comply with job search requirements may jeopardize benefits.

One-Stop Career Center staff meetings of all partners are periodically conducted to share information and cross-train staff. Wagner-Peyser ES staff members are cross-trained on UI eligibility issues and are responsible for conducting the UI work test and, more recently, have been designated as responsible for the UI eligibility assessment portion of the Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program. Other core programs, including WIOA Title I staff, are aware of UI eligibility issues through One-Stop staff meetings. UI has developed a desk-aid for One-Stop staff use in identifying potential eligibility issues. Additionally, UI has developed a power point presentation for Center staff that is available on their desk-top. Wagner- Peyser ES management works closely with Unemployment Insurance management to provide continuous training to One-Stop staff on UI program changes that may affect eligibility.

Generally, Wagner-Peyser are the first staff customers see when coming into a career center. Wagner-Peyser staff complete an initial assessment through a seated one-on-one interview. Wagner-Peyser staff are trained to recognize clients, including UI claimants, needing credentials, education and training services and/or resources in order to acquire skills leading to high demand, high wage career paths. They are also trained to provide referral and application assistance to customers as they navigate through the system to reach their reemployment goal.

Changing AJL to AlabamaWorks!

1. AlabamaWorks! replaced Alabama JobLink since the Alabama Combined WIOA Plan was officially submitted
2. Both the Alabama Department of Labor Employment Service and the Alabama Department of Commerce Workforce Development Division use this internet-based labor exchange tool to satisfy case management and federal reporting requirements.

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 AN ASSESSMENT OF NEED. AN ASSESSMENT NEED DESCRIBES 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.

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.

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.

Alabama is not identified by the U.S. Department of Labor as a significant Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker (MSFW) state, or among states with the highest estimated MSFW activity, relative to the MSFW program.

A review of the latest available statistics from the United States Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) 2012 Census of Agriculture revealed the number of farms in Alabama decreased significantly (-8.9%) since 2012 to number 39,700 in 2018. While all size categories registered losses, the steepest declines were found among smaller farms (less than 180 acres) which shrank 3%. Farms with 180 acres or more declined 0.5% during this period. Farm acreage also decreased (-1%) during this period. Agricultural employers number an estimated 2,200 in the state. During PY 2018, an estimated 225 agricultural job orders for almost 1,800 agricultural job openings were placed in Alabama JobLink, the state's automated labor exchange system. It is projected that PY 2019, job orders and job openings will remain unchanged or increase slightly from the preceding year. The slight increase in agricultural job orders seem to be from a shortage of US workers available for farm work, most noticeably over the past two seasons.

An attempt to review and analyze agricultural hired farm labor, to include the number of MSFW employed and possible labor shortages in these labor-intensive crops, found only summary total agricultural labor numbers available in the United States Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) 2012 Census of Agriculture. Detailed information was not found available by crop for labor. Lacking data on hired farm labor, estimates available through the Labor Exchange Agricultural Reporting System (LEARS) as determined in collaboration with WIA/MSFW grantee (Telamon Corp.), Alabama Livestock and Crop Reporting Service, Extension Service and Alabama JobLink were used to estimate the number of MSFWs in Alabama at approximately 1,400.

The estimated number of MSFW in PY 2018 appears to be up slightly from the previous year's estimates owing to more new farms. Previously we reported that the shift to more mechanized planting and harvesting and less labor-intensive crops had declined significantly. Although not significant, there has been a noticeable increase from 2016 through 2018. No significant change in MSFW is expected in the State in PY 2019. During PY 2018, it is estimated that sixty-five (65) MSFW registered for work in Alabama JobLink (AJL).

Assessment of MSFW numbers and needs, while difficult to ascertain, have been estimated from information and input from many sources such as WIOA/MSFW 167Grantee (Telamon Corp.), Alabama Livestock and Crop Reporting Service, Extension Service and other knowledgeable sources.

2. 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

The number of acres harvested for crops in Alabama, where historically MSFWs may be employed because of the crop's need for hand harvesting, hand planting or both, have also declined; however, Alabama has shown a moderate increase in agricultural job orders due to the shortage of US workers available over the past two to three seasons. These crops and acreage are: Sweet Potatoes - 2,800 tons; Potatoes -1,300 tons; Tomatoes - 1,400 tons; Sweet Corn - 2,200 tons; Vegetables - 24,000 tons; Watermelons - 3,300 tons; and Peaches - 4,000 tons. Overall, total acreage for these labor-intensive vegetable crops has also decreased over the

last few years as many growers have switched to crops such as peanuts and feed corn which are highly mechanized in their production, previously necessitating the need for fewer agricultural manual workers. As stated previously, the slight increase in agricultural job orders seem to be from a shortage of US workers available for farm work, most noticeably over the past two seasons as well.

3. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS MEANS SUMMARIZING MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARM WORKER (MSFW) CHARACTERISTICS (INCLUDING IF THEY ARE PREDOMINANTLY FROM CERTAIN COUNTRIES, WHAT LANGUAGE(S) THEY SPEAK, THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF MSFWS IN THE STATE DURING PEAK SEASON AND DURING LOW SEASON, AND WHETHER THEY TEND TO BE MIGRANT, SEASONAL, OR YEAR-ROUND FARMWORKERS). THIS INFORMATION MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT DATA SUPPLIED BY WIOA SECTION 167 NATIONAL FARMWORKER JOBS PROGRAM (NFJP) GRANTEES, OTHER MSFW ORGANIZATIONS, EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS, AND STATE AND/OR FEDERAL AGENCY DATA SOURCES SUCH AS THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (DOL) EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION

U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Employment and Training Administration.

As a non-significant MSFW state, ASES cooperates and works closely with Telamon, WIOA 167 Grantee, to outreach, identify, and serve the state's MSFWs. Through this agreement with Telamon, ASES is able to achieve many of the state's outreach goals and determine needs to include employment, training and housing.

In PY 2018, Telamon (WIOA 167 grantee), renewed its partnership with One-Stop Career Centers and with co-location in four (4) centers (Montgomery, Mobile, Dothan and Huntsville), will require registration of all farm workers who enter through the WIOA, Title I, Section 167 door into Alabama Job Link, the state's labor exchange system. The possibility of additional co-locations is also being explored. This collaboration is expected to increase the number of MSFW registered in AJL in PY 2019.

Through this agreement ASES and Telamon Corporation work cooperatively to combine resources for more efficient service delivery to MSFWs. This includes the provision of employment, training and housing assistance. ASES One-Stop staff members make every effort to ensure appropriate resources are made available to MSFWs. Services may include assessment, counseling, job development, job referral, training, support services and job placement assistance.
Telamon and ASES plan to have regularly scheduled meetings with ALFA, The Alabama Coop, Alabama Department of Agriculture, and various other farm related agencies and several farmers have volunteered to participate in an effort to better reach farmworkers.

In consideration of agricultural industry and employment trends, and the small number of MSFWs in the state, the available resources for outreach would appear sufficient. It appears that MSFW's nationalities are mostly Hispanic, however, Alabama is starting to see more farm workers from a variety of other countries. Most notably South Africa, Haiti, Honduras and Romania.

4. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

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    - e4. Outreach Activities

- A. Contacting farmworkers who are not being reached by the normal intake activities conducted by the employment service offices*Federal Review*

The ADOL (Alabama Department of Labor) or ACCS (Alabama Career Center System) partners with Telamon to assist in the outreach of the transient population from the MSFW program. Telamon is a good source to provide workers to the local Career Center for needed services. As a partner, Telamon can provide interpreters to help create an individual plan for employment, explain services and assist with job referrals and training pathways. Previous MOU's and agreements with Telamon have demonstrated a strong partner relationship.

Additionally, Telamon has an active website marketed to partner agencies, employers, and farmworkers to provide additional outreach. The site is: Telamon | Alabama | National Farmworker Jobs Program.

Local Career Center Business Services Representatives (BSRs) are encouraged to market Career Center services to programs that may support farmworkers including local United Way/211 referral programs, DHR Jobs programs and employers who wish to learn more about the Farmworker program.

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    - B. Providing technical assistance to outreach staff. 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 and Employment-Related Law Complaint System ("Complaint System" described at 20 CFR 658 Subpart E), 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.*Federal Review*

The ADOL MSFW program works with all local Career Centers and partners to make sure services are received and entered in the State's Management Information System. Due to COVID complications and USDOL staff assigned to work at home, the ADOL MSFW staff have been limited to virtual training sessions and virtual meetings to develop ways to improve training to necessary staff.

The ADOL Action Team has implemented a training program so that frontline staff will receive training on the Career Center's responsibility to meet the Complaint System process. This training will be a part of the MSFW training to be held at each Comprehensive and Affiliate Career Centers and will include all ADOL assigned Career Center staff. Staff sign-in sheets and training surveys will be collected. The Action Team will review the surveys to determine necessary updates in training and will then move to train the remaining Career Centers throughout the state. The goal is to complete training of all Career Centers by the end of the program year. Each Quarter, an email reminder will be sent to all Career Center Management Team reminding them of the Complaint process and the deadline to submit complaints to the State Monitor Advocate.

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- 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*Federal Review*

Monthly ADOL ES ATEAM (Area Management Team) meetings are attended in ADOL Central office. Prior to these meetings a "Topics of Discussion" sheet is shared to all Team Members so that an appropriate Agenda can be developed with Career Center Core partners including UI (Unemployment Insurance), WDD (Commerce Workforce Development), TRA/TAA Unit, Rapid Response, Federal Bonding/WOTC and other needed programs. Often, The ADOL Secretary of Labor attends these meetings to share reports from the Governor's Office on issues needing to be addressed. Area Management is then required to share information from these meetings with Local Career Center management.

ADOL Career Center Area Management is responsible for making sure assigned Career Centers are actively participating in Quarterly Career Center and local workforce partner meetings. During these meetings various ideas for training, webinars and local events are shared with all partners.

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    - 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*Federal Review*

Staff from Alabama's 55 Career Centers are constantly attending training not only from the ADOL ES Division but from core partners such as the AL Dept. of Commerce WDD, AL Dept. of Adult ED, AL Postsecondary system, ADOL UI, and TRA/TAA. Training from the ADOL Employment Service-based program, AlabamaWorks! (AW!) is provided both in-person and virtually. During COVID, staff was introduced to virtual training which included training from core partners, ADOL-ES, and the AW! (AlabamaWorks!) vendor. This training assisted Career Center staff in assisting participants in registering in AW!, Job Search, Resume preparation, Virtual recruiting, applying for UI benefits, training and possible on-the-job-training programs that might be available.

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    - E. Coordinating outreach efforts with NFJP grantees as well as with public and private community service agencies and MSFW groups*Federal Review*

The ADOL MSFW staff and the Alabama Career Center System works closely with the Alabama Farmers Federation (ALFA) to market the MSFW program at Annual Conferences and local ALFA events. Many MSFW Employers are members of AFLA and have reached out to AL Employment Service Staff for assistance in job orders, referrals, the H1A/H1B Visa process, and guidance in contacting the State Monitor Advocate about MSFW issues.

Also, MSFW staff work with local Chambers of Commerce and their members to share updated information about Seasonal and Migrant Seasonal Farmworker programs, changes in laws, reviews, and related Labor Market Information.

Intensive efforts will be made to contact MSFW whose residence is in the local Career Center area served and those that migrate into the area that are not aware of the Center(s) or services available. In an effort to make sure that farmworkers are being informed of resource available to them, the state MSFW Monitor Advocate will continuously conduct outreach and reach out to

all available resources related to MSFW program. Among these resources are the state's One-Stop Career Centers. The Monitor Advocate will visit and inform Center staff of the MSFW program and their responsibilities to outreach and provide services. Pre-seasonal canvassing will be conducted by Career Center staff with leads provided from the State Monitor Advocate to determine anticipated MSFW population in local Center areas. Career Centers contact individuals and groups to identify, offer and provide services to these individuals not reached by usual Career Center intake activities.

As part of the outreach, MSFW will be informed of their rights to full Career Center services and invited to the local Center for registration, orientation, and assessment in accordance with ADOL/MSFW regulations. Services, including job referral, job development, as well as referral to other service agencies to include WIOA for possible individualized and training services, will be provided. Appropriate information will be directed to MSFW informing them of their rights, including the complaint process, under various Federal and State laws, as well as directives of service agencies in the community. Handouts will be provided to each person contacted advising them of this information.

Telamon, (WIOA 167 grantee) partnering with the Career Centers also performs outreach registering farmworkers in Alabama JobLink (AJL) who may be eligible for additional American Job Center services through the Career Center system. Telamon is currently co-located in four (4) Centers (Montgomery, Mobile, Dothan and Huntsville) with possibility of additional co-locations being explored. Through this partnership Career Centers and Telamon Corporation work cooperatively to leverage resources for more efficient service delivery to MSFWs. This includes the provision of employment, training and housing assistance. Career Center One-stop staff members make every effort to ensure appropriate resources are made available to MSFWs. Services may include assessment, counseling, job development, job referral, training, support services and job placement assistance.

The activities to promote interagency cooperation the SMA speaking at Alabama Farm Bureau meetings, regional, state, and, county. Also meeting with County Cooperatives, County and state young farmers groups, and Alabama County farmers chapter meetings. Visiting U.S. Department of Agriculture offices statewide as well as NFJP Grantee corporate office for the latest updates on MSFW activities in all areas throughout the state.

All core programs including UI will engage staff members in annual training designed to inform staff members of the needs, services, activities, and outreach efforts to assist MSFWs and other farmworkers who may need assistance. Training will be coordinated by Wagner-Peyser outreach staff and Telamon staff to ensure current information and resources are included in the staff trainings. One-Stop Career Centers maintain information, technological resources, and assistance contact information to provide technical assistance outreach workers. Designated staff members will attend state, regional and national conferences to stay abreast of current training, resources, and information needed to provide effective and efficient assistance for MSFWs and other farmworkers who may need services. Intensive efforts will be made to contact all MSFW whose usual residence is in the local Center area and those that migrate into the area that do not contact Career Centers for service. MSFW will be informed of their rights to full Career Center services and invited to the local Center for registration, orientation, and assessment in accordance with ADOL/MSFW regulations. Services, including job referral, job development, as well as referral to other service agencies to include WIOA for possible individualized and training services, will be provided. Appropriate information will be directed to MSFW informing them of their rights under various Federal and State laws, as well as directives of service agencies in the community. Handouts will be given to each person contacted advising them of this information.
Bilingual regular and outreach staff, if possible, will be assigned to offices where substantial

proportions of MSFW are primarily fluent and/or literate in Spanish, but not in English.

All core programs including UI will engage staff members in annual training designed to inform staff members of the needs, services, activities, and outreach efforts to assist MSFWs and other farmworkers who may need assistance. Training will be coordinated by Wagner-Peyser outreach staff and Telamon staff to ensure current information and resources are included in the staff trainings.

Merit staff outreach workers are provided professional development activities to ensure they are able to provide high quality services to both jobseekers and employers. Bedrock of the professional development activities are courses taught by the Alabama State Personnel Department which include presentation skills, public speaking, and interviewing and selection. Professional development programs are being evaluated to provide Career Center staff professional training and certification in the field of workforce development. This will include skills in career resources, career exploration, career planning, career development, interviewing, resumes, assessment, case management, job search, job development, job placement and employer outreach services.

Outreach staff training also leverages One-Stop partner Veterans Employment and Training Services (VETS) Program - National Veterans Training Institute (NVTI) training for LVER. This training closely tracks WIOA-BSR outreach training and is conducted periodically at in-state venues as well as National Veterans Training Institute (NVTI) in Dallas. Staff members are also afforded the opportunity to attend Southeastern Employment and Training Association (SETA) conferences twice a year to learn the latest in workforce development programs and skills training. The State also offers an annual Workforce Development Conference offering plenary sessions and workshops featuring National, State and local workforce leaders with expertise and best practices to share with Career Center staff.

Additionally, Workforce GPS training webinar offerings, to include MSFW training, are transmitted to One-Stop staff for live participation or viewing of recorded programs later. The State Monitor Advocate visits Career Centers on a regular schedule and conducts training for staff on the MSFW program.

ASES Career Center staff members have a working partnership with Telamon Corporation, the 167 Grantee. Coordination of outreach efforts is assured through regular meetings and communication and is further enhanced through the co-location of WIA 167 grantee staff in selected Career Centers. A cooperative, coordinated effort is pursued to minimize duplication of services and maximize the number of MSFWs contacted. As MSFW are contacted, their needs are assessed and, those in need of Career Center services are referred and encouraged to visit for assistance. Services may include assessment, job referral, job placement, job development, counseling, training, support services, and information on unemployment insurance. Also, ASES, Telemon, and ALFA, have agreed to have quarterly meetings to discuss ways to effect overall improvement of the MSFW programs and services.

5. SERVICES PROVIDED TO FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

(1) Pre-seasonal canvassing is conducted by local Career Center staff with leads provided from the State Monitor Advocate to determine anticipated MSFW population in local Center areas. Career Centers will conduct outreach activities to identify MSFW and services needed. Individuals and groups are contacted to offer and provide services to those not reached by usual Career Center intake activities.

(2) Telamon, partnering with the Career Centers, registers farmworkers in Alabama JobLink (AJL) who may be eligible for and in need of additional services through referral to the Career Center system. Career Centers strive to ensure that MSFWs are afforded the same basic, individualized and training services available to all clients. Agricultural employers continue to be reached by ASES as part of the Work Alabama program, focused on helping farmers find and hire temporary agricultural workers. Agricultural employers are encouraged to place job orders in Alabama Job Link. Career Center staff will assist in referring farm laborers.

Telamon, the 167 Grantee partnered with ASES, coordinates outreach efforts that will assure through regular meetings, communication with farmworkers and advocacy groups to include information on the complaint system. In addition, co-location of WIA 167 grantee staff in selected Career Centers will ensure the successful distribution of information to MSFWs visiting Centers. Telamon, the 167 Grantee, assists migrants and seasonal farm workers in the State of Alabama. Its two primary objectives are: (1) to help farm workers seek alternatives to agricultural labor; and, (2) to improve the agricultural lifestyle of those who wish to remain in agriculture.

Agency staff and Telamon workers educate farmers regarding the posting of DOL migrant and seasonal farmworker posters and literature addressing farmworker rights, to include terms and conditions of employment, in visible high traffic areas such as check-in areas and break-rooms. Staff members also notify other State agencies that may serve Migrant Seasonal farmworkers of this information as well.

The Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) is integrated into the Career Center System's operating system, Alabama JobLink (AJL). Agricultural job orders may be placed directly into the system by employers or placed into the system with assistance of Career Center staff. Brochures on "The Agricultural Recruitment System: An Agricultural Worker's Guide" and "The Employer Guide to participation in the H-2A Temporary Agricultural Program" will be available and provided to agricultural employers. Brochures highlighting all of the services available to employers through Career Centers are provided to employers as part of the Career Center System marketing program.

State attention was focused on the agricultural sector in 2010-2011 with introduction of the Governor's "Work Alabama" initiative aimed at ensuring farmers have an adequate farm labor supply. This initiative required Career Center staff to identify, outreach and contact agricultural employers in the state to identify labor shortages and market Career Center services such as AJL, ARS and recruitment, and programs such as H2-A to ensure farmers an adequate agricultural labor supply. This relationship established between Career Centers and agricultural employers continues today and remains strong.

Additionally, the State Monitor Advocate will participate in meetings with farmworker organizations, county cooperatives, extension service, and others representing farmers to inform of and market Career Center System services, including ARS, H-2A programs to farmers. Career Center staff work with partner agencies to ensure that farmworkers reached through outreach are informed and encouraged to visit their local Career Center where they can have access to the full complement of services offered by the Career Center System. Staff in each Center work cooperatively to ensure information on each agency's services is available to MSFWs upon visiting a Center.

This includes information on the complaint system. Some of the agencies partner with local community action agencies that offer assistance with paying utility bills, local food banks that supplement food needs, and health departments/agencies that may help with free or low-cost health and dental care. Pre-seasonal canvassing is conducted by local Career Center staff with leads provided from the State Monitor Advocate to determine anticipated MSFW population in

local Center areas. Career Centers will conduct outreach activities to identify MSFW and services needed. Individuals and groups are contacted to offer and provide services to those not reached by usual Career Center intake activities.

Telamon partnering with Career Centers, register farmworkers in Alabama JobLink (AJL) who may be eligible for and in need of additional services through referral to the Career Center system. Career Centers strive to ensure that MSFWs are afforded the same basic, individualized and training services available to all clients.

6. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. COLLABORATION

In a collaborative effort, ASES works with local partner agencies to ensure that farmworkers reached through outreach are informed and encouraged to visit their local Career Center where they can have access to the full complement of services offered by the Alabama Career Centers. Staff in each Center work cooperatively to ensure information on each agency's services is available to MSFWs upon visiting a Center.

This includes information on the complaint system. Some of the agencies, ASES, and Telamon partner with are local community action agencies that offer assistance with paying utility bills, local food banks that supplement food needs, and, health departments/agencies that may help with free or low-cost health and dental care.

B. REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT

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

In developing the Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP) information and suggestions were solicited through survey of the WIOA 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantee (Telamon Corporation), and other appropriate groups, agencies, organizations to include: the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, Alabama Farmers Federation (ALFA), and Alabama Department of Agriculture & Industries. The State Monitor Advocate for MSFW was also provided an opportunity to review and comment on the AOP.

The items that follow are the suggestions received from the most recent survey and the State response:
Telamon - WIOA 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantee

Comment: Telamon, partnering with the Career center system and co-located in some Job Centers, will register farmworkers in Alabama JobLink (AJL) who may be eligible for additional

American Job Center services through the Career Center system.
Response: Closer collaboration/coordination with partners serving MSFW should further outreach efforts allowing easier access to services, resulting in increased registrations, stimulation of dual enrollments with partners, and access to all services of the One Stop delivery system.

Comment: Need to be provided with referrals from One-Stop partners of individuals entering the One-Stop system who are identified as primarily dependent on farm work for their livelihood
Response: Increased awareness of One-Stop partners of specialized services, including educational and job training programs for individuals with agricultural farm work experience, should increase referrals resulting in better service to farmworkers.

Alabama Farmers Federation (ALFA)

Comment: Communication/Information on services available through Career Centers doesn't always reach farmers and farmworkers.
Response: Outreach and networking through agricultural groups, agencies, organizations and in particular the WIOA 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantee should help ensure farmers and farm workers are aware of the services available to them through the Career Center system.

Comment: Farmers don't always use the Career Center services available to them,
Response: Outreach and networking through agricultural groups, agencies and organizations to promote awareness of services available and staff assistance if needed should encourage farmers to use these services.

Alabama Cooperative Extension System

Comment: The extensive network of job centers located throughout the state, the itinerant point centers located in key locations and the outreach activities planned provide appropriate levels of support for employment and training services to MSFWs and agricultural employers.
Response: None

State Monitor Advocate
Comment: Better data on the number of farm workers in the state is needed.
Response: Meetings with partners and organizations and agencies with agricultural interests will be pursued to explore means to improve estimates of farm workers in the state.

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.

Planned progress in agricultural outreach in PY 2018, did not achieve all of the progress sought. Agricultural job orders received and Agricultural job openings received remained largely unchanged from the previous two years at 240 job orders and 2,000 openings. Based upon historical trends, ASES does not expect these trends in the agricultural sector or the numbers of MSFW to change significantly in PY 2019. This reflects minimal change in the number of farms and acres harvested in the state. The conversion to crops that are highly mechanized in their production also curbs the necessity for agricultural manual workers.

This trend is also reflected in the number of MSFW registering and seeking services through the Career center system. Those registered during the previous program year by quarter were: June

2017 - 98; December 2017 - 18; March 2018 - 35; June 2018 - 63; and September - 33. Of those served, indicators of compliance were met in referrals to employment, receipt of staff-assisted services, and Career Guidance while compliance was not met in referral to support service, job development contacts, and job placement.

D. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Achievement of the state's goals was initially hampered by transition of the Monitor Advocate position following retirement of the incumbent and hiring of a new Monitor Advocate. This disruption in continuity of service delayed many of the plans for outreach. The new Monitor Advocate and Telemon (167 Grantee), along with Alabama Career Center management and staff, have continued to pursue and increase the outreach efforts that are expected to net positive results. While too soon to tell if the increased efforts have made a significant improvement, with continued outreach and effort based on the current information, Alabama should see no less than an upward trend in outreach.

E. STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE

The State Monitor Advocate is a merit employee of the Alabama Department of Labor and was afforded the opportunity to review, comment, and approve the AOP.

WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time (sec 121(e)(3));	Yes
2. If the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers, the State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111, State Workforce Agency staffing requirements;	Yes
3. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser Act services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and	Yes
4. SWA officials: 1) Initiate the discontinuation of services; 2) Make the determination that services need to be discontinued; 3) Make the determination to reinstate services after the services have been discontinued; 4) Approve corrective action plans; 5) Approve the removal of an employer's clearance orders from interstate or intrastate	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
clearance if the employer was granted conditional access to ARS and did not come into compliance within 5 calendar days; 6) Enter into agreements with State and Federal enforcement agencies for enforcement-agency staff to conduct field checks on the SWAs' behalf (if the SWA so chooses); and 7) Decide whether to consent to the withdrawal of complaints if a party who requested a hearing wishes to withdraw its request for hearing in writing before the hearing.	

WAGNER PEYSER PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	65.9%	68.7%	65.9%	68.7%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	64.5%	64.5%	64.5%	64.5%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$4771.10	$4771.10	$4771.10	$4771.10
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAMS

A. ALIGNING OF CONTENT STANDARDS

The Alabama Community College System (ACCS), Adult Education Division aligned to the College and Career Readiness (CCR) standards designed for WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy and that were disseminated through the U.S. Department of Education Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) August 2016. The CCR standards reflect the necessary skills and abilities required for the rigor of postsecondary education, training, and employment. The CCR standards provide benchmarks to strengthen adult education instruction. The adoption and alignment of the College and Career Readiness standards in August of 2016 allow adult educators to target the specific skills that will ensure students are prepared to

attain a high school equivalency, postsecondary education, skills training, and/or employment. Collaboration with K–12 and college partners confirm consistent expectations for preparing students for entering postsecondary education without the need for developmental education. Adult Education Title II contracted providers or any future selected providers are required to teach these standards to maximize the effectiveness of curricula and instruction, and to prepare students with the skills and abilities for postsecondary education, training, and the demands of the workforce. To facilitate the understanding and knowledge of CCR standards in the adult education classroom, professional development training targets the use and implementation of the standards. Instructor effectiveness training is the hallmark of ACCS professional development. Instructors are taught strategies for delivering instructional courses with the intensity and duration for successful understanding and skills mastery.

State efforts support an instructional effectiveness approach to adult education, in which standards–based education is defined as the process for planning, delivering, monitoring and improving academic programs in which clearly defined academic content standards provide the basis for content in instruction and assessment. A standards-based approach assists students in learning what is important, rather than allowing textbooks to dictate classroom practice. This approach aims for a deep level of student understanding that goes beyond traditional textbook–based or lesson–based instruction. Although standards define individual skills, standards–based education does not promote a skill–by–skill methodology. Multiple standards and expectations are integrated in instructional activities to promote College and Career Readiness for preparing a skilled workforce. The use of technology and the integration of Open Educational Resources (OER) in the interactive classroom environment of today is paramount.

Adults that have not completed the requirements of a high school diploma will be able to prepare for a high school equivalency in an academic contextualized instructional pathway. The instructional pathway increases the skills necessary to attain employment or participate in postsecondary education or training. Adult education students will also be provided the opportunity to participate in pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship pathways in the demand fields in each of the 7 workforce regions of our state. When possible and as applicable, adult education students will be placed in a pre-apprenticeship program while obtaining the requirements for a high school equivalency diploma. This pre-apprenticeship will provide the adult education student with work-based learning experiences reflective of a specific career while enabling the student to gain the preparatory skills demonstrating readiness to work upon program completion.

B. LOCAL ACTIVITIES

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES (SECTION 203 OF WIOA)

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 (IET) that—
- Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
- Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

The ACCS Adult Education Office is Alabama's eligible agency for adult education and is responsible for the administrative and programmatic oversight of the Title II AEFLA funds

distributed to eligible, competitively selected providers. Under WIOA, ACCS Adult Education eligible providers' services may include all of the following:

- adult education and literacy;
- workplace adult education and literacy;
- family literacy;
- English language acquisition;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- workforce preparation;
- integrated education and training (IET).

ACCS Adult Education will focus on expanding low-skilled individuals' access to career pathways in high-demand occupations. With this focus, the integrated education and training (IET) activities and the contextualized curriculum and materials used for IET will be aligned to Alabama's College and Career Readiness standards for ELA/Literacy, science, and math. In addition, workforce preparation activities will align to OCTAE's Employability Skills Framework, and any occupational training components provided will be based on business and industry standards, credential obtainment, work-based learning efforts, and employability. Program alignment will also exist as non-credit pathways are articulated into credit bearing coursework at each individual college making success for completion and stackable credentialing easier for students. Attached to these programs are apprenticeships or pre-apprenticeships so that employer/employee relationships can occur earlier and be maintained throughout the entire student education to workforce experience.

ACCS Adult Education will solicit requests for funding proposals from eligible providers as defined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) law to serve the eligible adult education population who:

- have attained 16 years of age; AND
- are not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law; and meet one of the following
- are basic skills deficient; OR
- do not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and have not achieved an equivalent level of education; or,
- are English Language Acquisition learners. The eligible entities selected will provide academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that increase an individual's ability to:
- read, write and speak the English language and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
- transition to postsecondary education and training; and,
- obtain sustainable employment.

Eligible entities may include the following organizations, provided they have demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy services:

1) Local education agencies
2) Community–based or Faith–based organizations
3) Volunteer literacy organizations
4) Institution of Higher Education/Learning
5) Public or private nonprofit agencies
6) Libraries
7) Public housing authorities
8) Nonprofit institutions that are not described in (1) through (7) and have the ability to provide literacy services to adults
9) Consortiums of the agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described in 1 through 8.

In accordance with federal law, supplanting federal dollars for state and local dollars is prohibited.

ACCS Adult Education Division will distribute funds in accordance to the following process:

1) Not less than 82.5 % of the grant funds to award grants and contracts under section 231 and to carryout section 225, Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized individuals, of which not more than 20 % of such amount shall be available to carryout section 225;
2) Shall not use more than 12.5 % of the grant funds to carryout state leadership activities under section 223; and
3) Shall not use more than 5 % of the grant funds for administrative expenses of the eligible agency.

Funding will be allocated and distributed according to the process described in the Title II distribution of funds Common Elements section. Funding will be awarded and distributed to eligible local entities for the provision of adult education services through a competitive Request for Funding Proposal (RFP) process. The criteria will include meeting the eligibility requirements, a proven record of demonstrated effectiveness, and a plan that will align with all of the requirements under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), as well as purposeful placement on a career pathway toward success as deemed high-wage, high-skill, high-demand by the state of Alabama. Grants will be awarded on a multi–year (three year) basis contingent upon annual performance and demonstrated effectiveness.

The ACCS, Adult Education Division will ensure that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants. The information will also be posted on the ACCS website and other means of electronic communication such as social media and Alabama's College and Career Exploration Tool (ACCET) which will be a one-stop hub for students and industries searching education, employment, and attainment goals.

Federal Definitions

In Alabama, adult education means academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that increase an individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent; transition to postsecondary education and training; and obtain employment.

In Alabama, eligible individual means an individual who has attained 16 years of age; who is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law; and who– is basic skills deficient; does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and has not achieved an equivalent level of education; or is an English language learner.

In Alabama, literacy means an individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English, compute, and solve problems, at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society.

In Alabama, workplace adult education and literacy activities means adult education and literacy activities offered by an eligible provider in collaboration with an employer or employee organization at a workplace or an off–site location that is designed to improve the productivity of the workforce. Workplace adult education and literacy activities will also be intermingled with pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship work-based learning opportunities.

In Alabama, family literacy activities are those activities that are of sufficient intensity and quality, to make sustainable improvements in the economic prospects for a family and that better enable parents or family members to support their children's learning needs, and that integrate all of the following activities:

(A) Parent or family adult education and literacy activities that lead to readiness for postsecondary education or training, career advancement, and economic self–sufficiency.

(B) Interactive literacy activities between parents or family members and their children.

(C) Training for parents or family members regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children.

(D) An age–appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences. See Special Rule for Family Literacy.

Special Rule: The Alabama Community College System, Adult Education Division will not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that the 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, Adult Education will 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.

In Alabama, Integrated Education and Training (IET) is a service approach that provides adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement. Integrated Education and Training (IET) will be based on local market data demands reflecting those programs that align with WIOA regulations and are contained on the Eligible Training Provider List for credential obtainment and employability standards.

In Alabama, Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education is an educational service provided to English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enables such adults 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. Such services shall include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation and may include workforce training.

In Alabama, Workforce Preparation Activities are those activities, programs, or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self–management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, or employment. Workforce preparation activities are based on information held in Alabama's Terminal on Linking and Analyzing Statistics (ATLAS) system, a state database maintained by Alabama Department of Labor that statistically reports all local labor market data, industry occupation demands, valued credential obtainment, and prospective leads toward economic advance.

In Alabama, Integrated Education and Training (IET) is a primary service of adult education programs. IET classes create contextualized opportunities for adults to gain academic and technical skills for employment. Adult Education programs integrate basic academic instruction to support the achievement of a high school equivalency and the skills needed to be successful in postsecondary education & training. This approach accelerates the understanding and applicability of knowledge. The integration of skills will ensure that our adult learners will be able to apply and use their knowledge to be successful in training and/or employment.

Request for Funding Proposal (RFP):

The Alabama Community College System (ACCS) Adult Education Division allocates adult education funds through a performance-based funding formula by county. The formula takes into consideration the population in need in each county based on the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey 5-year estimate plus program performance based on enrollment, measurable skills gains, high school equivalency attainment, and the number of industry recognized credentials of value attained by students. The allocation of funds considers the levels of annual performance in the local programs compared to established goals as a basis for an increase or decrease in funds.

Each area of the state will be provided adequate coverage by ensuring each provider selected through the RFP process has demonstrated effectiveness in providing direct services to adults in each county of the awarded grant service area. Providers will be required to collaborate with partners from the Career Centers and other social services, education, and employment–related supports in the area.

The proposal application will collect basic information regarding the eligible provider including, but not limited to, demonstrated effectiveness in serving adults, location and service area, scope of work for the program, demographics served, fiscal management procedures, and audit history. Additionally, each applicant will be required to submit a proposed budget, as well as programmatic information regarding statutory requirements. Questions are based on the thirteen (13) considerations for WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act of section 231(e).

Assessing the RFP:

The assessment of each grant application will involve an intense evaluation of the ability of the eligible provider to meet the literacy needs of the area, and to comply with the expectations and statutes described within the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. At a minimum, the review process and scoring rubric will consider the following 13 considerations of section 231(e):

• The ability of the eligible provider to meet the literacy needs and English language needs identified for the population in the area. Emphasis will be given to the provider's ability to provide targeted service to individuals with barriers to employment—including low literacy skills and an English language barrier;
• The eligible provider's ability to provide service to individuals with a (physical or learning) disability;
• The eligible provider's demonstrated effectiveness in providing literacy instruction, including its ability to meet State–adjusted levels of performance and improve the literacy levels of eligible individuals;
• The eligible provider's alignment with the WIOA Local Plan;
• The depth, intensity, and rigor of the programs and activities offered by the eligible provider. The proposed program must incorporate the basic tenets of reading instruction. Attention will be given to the extent to which the eligible provider incorporates stringent research in the grant proposal submission and the development of the literacy program itself;
• The extent to which the eligible provider's program is based on intense research and best practices;
• The extent to which the eligible provider demonstrates the effective use of technology for instruction, to include distance education, toward students' improved performance;
• The eligible provider's demonstrated integration of contextualized instruction, to blend literacy skills, and preparation for transition to post–secondary education or entry into the workplace. Particular attention will be given to activities that promote and lead to economic self–sufficiency, and the ability to exercise the full rights of citizenship;
• The qualifications and expertise of the eligible provider's instructors, counselors, and administrative staff. All instructors must hold (at minimum) a bachelor's degree. The eligible provider must also demonstrate its ability and intent to provide high quality professional

development to instructors and staff, toward the improvement of student performance;
• The eligible provider's collaboration with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community. Particularly, the eligible provider should have or establish significant partnerships with public schools, post–secondary institutions, industry/business partners, and workforce boards;
• The flexibility of program scheduling offered by the eligible provider, including coordination (when available) with Federal, State, and local support services such as childcare, transportation, and mental health services;
• The eligible provider's information management system; the expectation will be that the eligible provider will use the state–administered designated Adult Education System for Accountability and Performance for all grant related data collection and reporting.
• The demonstrated need within the area occupied by the eligible provider for English language acquisition programs and civics education programs.

Selected providers will deliver adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both workforce preparation activities and workforce training, for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, for the purpose of educational and career advancement. Emphasis will be given to those programs vetted by the Alabama Department of Labor and indicate O*NET occupation coded jobs that are considered high-demand, high-skill, and high-wage in each local region and lead to a credential considered valuable to the state ranking process.
All Integrated Education and Training (IET), workforce preparation, adult education and literacy, and English Language Acquisition (ELA) activities must align contextualized curriculum and materials to Alabama's College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS). In addition, IET and workforce preparation activities must also align to OCTAE's Employability Skills Framework, and the occupational training component must be based on industry standards.

Special Rule

Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

C. CORRECTIONS EDUCATION AND OTHER EDUCATION OF INSTITUTIONALIZED INDIVIDUALS

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

The Alabama Community College System (ACCS), Adult Education Division will provide corrections education services and services for other institutionalized population as described under section 225. AE will not use more than 20% of the overall 82.5% or greater that is described in section 231 to carry out the activities as described in section 225 for corrections education and other institutionalized populations. Funding will be allocated, competed, and distributed according to the process described in the Title II distribution of funds Common Elements section of this plan and will comply with subpart C in Title II of WIOA.

A correctional institution includes any prison; jail; reformatory; work farm; detention center; or halfway house, community–based rehabilitation center, or any other similar institution designed for the confinement or rehabilitation of criminal offenders. A criminal offender is any individual who is charged with or convicted of any criminal offense.

The funds shall be used for the cost of educational programs for criminal offenders in correctional institutions and for other institutionalized individuals, including academic programs for—adult education and literacy activities; special education, as determined by the eligible agency; secondary school credit; integrated education and training (IET); 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 provider receiving funds under section 225 to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution shall give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five (5) years of participation in the program.

The correctional and institutionalized population will be afforded opportunities to develop their skills and abilities for successful re–entry into society after release. An emphasis on skills contextualization for pathway programs will ensure that inmates are prepared for employment opportunities. There are several innovative initiatives currently occurring in corrections education in Alabama. One initiative incorporates the use of tablet devices with pre–loaded educational resources that are used back in the inmate's dormitory. This allows for additional time on task that will lead to better knowledge and understanding of the material and the use of mobile devices. Other programs that adult education plays an integral part are the Correctional Life–Tech program and the Day Treatment Centers through Department of Pardons and Parole. These partnerships are designed to reduce prison overcrowding and recidivism by preparing deserving parolees for job success and life success. Life skills, adult education and technical skills are integrated into a structured program to assist parolees in the transition from prison to society. Opportunities for work based learning through apprenticeships that exist as programs for inmates will enable incarcerated adults to prepare for life outside prison in a successful manner by partnering with companies who willingly hire formerly convicted individuals, hold occupation needs for jobs that supply a livable wage, and will work alongside education institutions on remediation and training needs for these occupations.

D. INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM

1. Describe how the State will establish and operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs under Section 243 of WIOA, for English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries.

Alabama Community College System Adult Education Division will establish and operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs by offering a competitive, multi–year (three year) Request for Funding Proposal (RFP) process specifically for Integrated Literacy and Civics Education funds. Funding will be allocated, competed, and distributed according to the process described in the Title II distribution of funds Common Elements section of this plan and will comply with the requirements of subtitle C of WIOA. The purpose of the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program is to assist immigrants and other individuals who are English Language Learners (ELL) in acquiring an understanding of the American system of government, individual freedom, and the responsibilities of citizenship. English language learners who hold degrees and credentials in their native countries are eligible to access all services provided by section 243(a) of WIOA. These services shall include instruction in literacy and English acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation. Integration of workforce culture and skills training will enable learners to begin or continue careers in their chosen fields, including preparation for post–secondary education. A focused effort will be placed on providing 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 high demand sectors 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 co–enrolled in other workforce development system programs and 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 243(a) of WIOA.

An evidenced–based pathway approach will be the framework for Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education. Team planning and teaching will be critical in ensuring the contextualization of the skills to master the English language and become a productive citizen with sustainable employment. The in–demand occupations will be targeted in each regional and local area. Specifically, the provider will deliver contextualized English language acquisition instruction that includes general employability, workplace, and financial vocabulary as well as instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation. The curriculum will include an overview of important dates/events in U.S. history and their significance to current events, as well as an overview of the U.S. government at the federal, state, and local levels.

2. Describe how the State will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II, subtitle C, Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education services and how the funds will be used for those services.

Alabama Community College System Adult Education Division will establish and operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs by offering a competitive, multi–year (three year) Request for Funding Proposal (RFP) process specifically for Integrated Literacy and Civics Education funds. Funding will be allocated, competed, and distributed according to the process described in the Title II distribution of funds Common Elements section of this plan and will comply with the requirements of section 243(a) of WIOA.

Each program that receives funding under this section shall 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.

Alabama Adult Education Division will consider the ELL population in each service area. The eligible provider must demonstrate the need and services to be provided which aligns with the mission of the combined state plan and the requirements under WIOA. The funds will target those areas that have a large population of English language learners and provide the skills to improve one's abilities to read, write, speak the English language, and become a productive citizen with sustainable employment.

3. Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

Integrated English literacy and civics education is defined as educational services provided to English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enables such adults 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 types of services shall include instruction in

literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation and include workforce training.

An evidence–based approach using the framework of Integrated Career Pathways will be used for the non–skilled or skill deficient adults in our state who are non–native English language learners. Instructors from the ELL program and the technical education programs will be identified to provide an integrated instructional model to effectively and efficiently train the adult participants. The program will be a bridge that seamlessly prepares our ELL adults for employment opportunities like any other career pathway program in our state.

Eligible providers must demonstrate in their request the manner in which the program will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training (IET) for career pathway activities. These activities will be provided through collaboration with WIOA and other community partners and can exist in a variety of ways. If a skills gap closure is necessary, an eligible provider can on-board student interest by offering an opportunity for work-based learning as a pre-apprentice until the gap is closed and a student is able to meet the qualifications of credited courses. In the event a student can meet the obligations of postsecondary credit, eligible providers can demonstrate effective work-based learning through apprenticeship. In any event, eligible providers must utilize all aspects of the state plan including eligibility for services, provisions of education, relativity of work, and credential obtainment directed by competency models created and enforced by Technical Advisory Committees representing each workforce region and governed by the Governor's Office of Education to Workforce Transformation (GOEWT).

4. Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

Eligible providers will design programs that deliver the activities under WIOA including the integration of literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training, including promoting linkages with employers. Providers must prepare English Language Learners for unsubsidized employment in demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self–sufficiency. The activities of the program must reflect the needs of the local, regional workforce area. Civics education is an integral part of the English language acquisition services for the ELL population. An emphasis is placed on contextualized instruction in the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, naturalization procedures, civic participation, and U.S. history and government to help students acquire the skills and knowledge they will need to become active and informed parents, workers, and community members. English literacy and civics education classes introduce students to civics–related content and provide them with opportunities to apply that knowledge in their daily lives while building their English language and literacy skills. The skills learned in these classes strengthen the ELL adult's ability to be an active participant and contributor to our communities and economies.

An increased emphasis on college and career readiness will be extended to the ELL and EL Civics programs. Integrated Education and Training (IET) pathway activities will include preparation of ESL/EL Civics for employment opportunities in the demand industries and with full coordination with the local workforce system. Providing targeted IET professional development to the ELL/EL Civics instructors will be crucial in preparing the English language acquisition population to be an active participant in the college and career readiness initiatives of the state. Program design will be based on an assessment provided by the Alabama Department of Labor that concludes those job opportunities in each local regional area that are deemed high-demand, high-wage, or high skill and/or included on a career pathway leading to a job of the same requirement. Occupations are vetted through a star rating system in which jobs must maintain demand for a minimum of ten years, must include a wage that is 70% of the median average for the region in which it exists, and must require more than a high school diploma. Program alignment for adult education students may also include occupation training

via apprenticeship in a program that does not match these qualifications but is considered a stepping-stone toward inclusion in a particular career cluster. Occupations must lead to a credential of value as determined by the Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Transformation (GOEWT) under the authority of each career cluster's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

E. STATE LEADERSHIP

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT THE REQUIRED STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA

The Alabama Adult Education Division reserves the right to use funds made available under section 222(a)(2) for the required State leadership activities outlined in section 223 (such as the support of State or regional networks of literacy resource centers; the development and implementation of technology applications; the development and dissemination of curricula, including curricula incorporating the essential components of reading instruction, developing content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways). Not more than 12.5% of the grant funds made available will be used to carry out these adult education and literacy activities to develop or enhance the adult education system of the State. The following activities will be supported through State Leadership funds:

1) Support in alignment of adult education and literacy services with one–stop partners and the core programs. Local programs will align with local one stop partners to ensure that contextualized basic academic support is embedded in training designed to prepare the job seeker/student with the employability skills needed to be successful in achieving or sustaining gainful employment. There will be a seamless support of services between the partners. These funds will be used to cover the instructional costs for supporting these efforts. In an effort to braid funds to quickly satisfy educational obtainment for students and support career pathways, the Alabama Community College System will pre-qualify the eligibility requirements of adult education students for Title I individual training funds. This will be done through the completion of an application developed by the Workforce Development Boards with final confirmation of eligibility determined by the Career Centers.

2) Establishment and continued operation of high quality professional development programs to improve the instruction provided pursuant to the local activities required under Section 231 (b) including instruction incorporating the essential components of reading instruction, instruction related to the specific needs of adult learners, and dissemination of information about best practices and research– based models for improving teacher effectiveness and quality of instruction.

a. Professional development targeted to models of integrated education and training (IET), career pathways, and bridge programs that can prepare students for success in postsecondary education, training activities, and sustainable employment.

b. Professional development on how to design instructional activities that incorporate support services that will increase student persistence.

c. Professional development for implementing team teaching and planning methods which includes exit points with industry recognized certificates and credentials along the way.

3) Technical assistance to the local programs for compliance under the WIOA Title II requirements and the other parts of the law that describe the common performance measures and roles of the partners as related to state and local areas.

a. Assistance in the use of technology in both administrative and instructional formats to increase effectiveness and efficiencies.

b. Leadership training for program directors will be used to enhance their abilities as administrative and instructional leaders.

c. Assistance in using data to inform programmatic, instructional decision making. Leadership funds will allow for any upgrades that will be needed for reporting common measures and assessing the performance of the program. Training on the Alabama Adult Education System of Accountability and Performance (AAESAP) will be provided on an annual basis at the summer conference and as needed periodically throughout the year on rollouts.

4) The state will provide grantee oversight to include data monitoring, site visits, and a program improvement process for low performing grantees.

Alabama Community College System: Adult Education will ensure that the requirements of section 223 are followed. Alabama Community College instructional staff and Adult Education are working together with the fiscal agent providers of adult education and career centers to expand Integrated Education & Training Career Pathway models. State level and local level staff have reviewed other states' models regarding the development of Integrated Education and Training (IET) and career pathways at all educational levels. Currently there are several adult education career pathway models underway in the state with close partnership with the community college and the local workforce investment board. In addition, multiple college providers are working internally with college faculty and adult education staff to create and establish pathway programs which provide multiple program options. Research, best practices, and strategies for creating and sustaining career pathway models are being disseminated through various professional development methods. Several Community College Presidents, in conjunction with local college and workforce investment board leadership, have been developing and refining their processes for implementation. The regional workforce councils are also very supportive of the career pathway programs, essential skills training, apprenticeships, and the contextualized academic instruction. Creatively incorporating Integrated Education and Training in a career pathway will be central to successful transition to sustainable employment. Adult Education, as part of the Alabama Community College System, creates those linkages to sustainable employment by integrating the basic academic and technical skills instruction to assist participants in the successful completion of training, attainment of a high school equivalency (if without) and the attainment of livable wage occupation upon program completion.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT PERMISSIBLE STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA, IF APPLICABLE

The Alabama Adult Education Division reserves the right to use funds made available under section 222(a)(2) for any of the following permissible State leadership activities outlined in section 223 (such as the support of State or regional networks of literacy resource centers; the development and implementation of technology applications; the development and dissemination of curricula, including curricula incorporating the essential components of reading instruction, developing content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways). Not more than 12.5% of the grant funds made available will be used to carry out these adult education and literacy activities to develop or enhance the adult education system of the State.

F. ASSESSING QUALITY

WIOA common measures along with other measures established by U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education will be used to assess the quality and performance of the providers. In addition to these measures, the programs will also be evaluated on state established goals for enrollment, overall academic level completions, attainment of high school equivalencies and/or the attainment of a credential deemed valuable

by industries in local regional areas and throughout the state of Alabama. Local eligible programs are responsible to meet all programmatic goals and outcomes that are set by the state. Performance outcomes for each provider will meet or exceed the levels of performance for the common measures set forth under WIOA and the measures established by the National Reporting System performance indicators for Title II Adult Education. The effectiveness of grantees in achieving continuous improvement toward meeting the measures will be continuously evaluated. The performance outcome measures shall consist of the following core indicators:

(1) The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;

(2) The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;

(3) The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;

(4) 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

(5) The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers.

Performance Accountability: In addition to the above outcome measures, the ACCS Adult Education Division has established goals for enrollment, academic performance, high school equivalency, and for the number of stackable, industry-recognized certificates and credentials earned by students. Each provider receives their portion of the state goal based on the most recent U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) five-year estimate of the population 18 and over without a high school diploma and other specialized populations as suggested by the Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Transformation (GOEWT). All aspects of performance goals and expectations for adult education can be visualized and analyzed through the detailed data dashboards and reports in the Alabama Adult Education System for Accountability & Performance (AAESAP) which is Alabama's version of the federal Management Information System. Continuous improvement in the implementation of research-based, evidence-based best practices in the field of adult education is an enduring process within the state.

The monitoring and program evaluation process is defined as follows:

Monitoring is the annual, systematic tracking of adult education program implementation. It consists of examining the progress made in the program against the agreed upon goals set forth in the application for funds. Monitoring also provides the opportunity to make constructive suggestions or recommendations. It employs systematic collection of data and on–site observations by providing stakeholders the extent of progress and achievement of objectives, proper and lawful use of funds, and compliance with federal and state level policies and guidelines. The ACCS, Adult Education Division, is responsible for the development and updating of the monitoring instruments. A copy of the instruments is provided to local programs annually, and prior to a monitoring visit, so programs can complete self-evaluations. Effective monitoring strategies will involve an observation of program scheduling and creation as it relates to the ever-changing needs of an adult education population group as well as the wrap around services anticipated to help adult learners make workforce-ready progress through these programs.

Risk Assessment: Review the AAESAP MIS Dashboard provides a real time picture of each grantee in all performance measures. All grantees are reviewed, at a minimum, annually, either by desktop/virtual or on-site monitoring. Each local program will receive an on-site monitoring

review at least once within the grant period. The order of the monitoring is based on a program performance ranking. The ranking identifies programs at greatest risk of not meeting program goals, which establishes the monitoring order.

The various methods of evaluation and monitoring can be performance independently and/or a combination thereof, to include:

Desk–top/Virtual Monitoring: Through continuous, routine data collection, review of the MIS performance dashboard, and reports from providers, desk-top monitoring informs state staff how a grantee is performing against expected results. Structured desk-top reviews are conducted with each local program. The review is followed by the local program developing a plan for continuous improvement, as a result of observations made during the review. A follow-up to the improvement plan is made via conference call. Once the improvement plan has been implemented, the state gauges progression of the plan with a follow-up desk-top/virtual monitoring.

On-Site Monitoring: Program Management; Recruitment, Orientation and Intake; Retention, Assessment, Curriculum and Instruction; Transition and Support Services; Professional Development; and Program Performance shall be assessed using an ACCS-approved monitoring instrument.

The scope and depth of the evaluation and monitoring visit will be decided and be implemented in a way that allows ACCS/AE to determine the provider's ability and willingness to meet the intents and purposes of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the requirements of the National Reporting System for Adult Education (NRS), and this plan. On-site program monitoring will be conducted by ACCS state staff who may be accompanied by a local provider.

The program's performance in each area or module of the monitoring tool (which can be found on the "Help/Resources" page of AAESAP) will be rated using the following scale:

5 Exemplary: Consistently present and could be shared as a model.
4 Accomplished: Present the majority of the time and of generally high quality.
3 Needs Improvement: Present to some degree but lacks quality and consistency.
2 Not Evident: Unable to identify evidence of compliance.
1 Not Applicable: The question does not apply.

The ACCS shall provide a copy of the documented monitoring report within fourteen (14) business days following the conclusion of the visit. The local provider shall respond within fourteen (14) business days of receiving ACCS's written report. The written evaluation and monitoring report will address specific findings and observations.

- Findings: Discoveries that are deviations from, or non-accomplishment of, those details or stipulations that impair the accomplishment of the intent and purposes of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, this plan, or initiatives directed by the Chancellor. Findings require a response and a remedy.

- Observations: Discoveries that may help improve those details or stipulations that may help achieve the intent and purposes of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act and this plan, thus enhancing continual program improvement.

In some cases, agencies/organizations/institutions may be required to submit a program improvement plan or require additional monitoring such as:

- Targeted Monitoring: Targeted monitoring is performed to follow-up and verifies the satisfactory completion of findings identified during the performance of on-site monitoring. ACCS officials shall conduct a targeted monitoring visit after receipt of the provider's response addressing findings. The targeted visit shall be at a time when the provider has had time to implement and evaluate the remedy. Described measures, such as indicators of program

quality, ensure that program services and activities consider the findings of program reviews and evaluations.

Technical Assistance: A relationship between the ACCS/AE, contracted expert, or a local adult education director/teacher that possesses specific technical/content knowledge and who provides information to address an identified need of a local adult education provider.

- Technical Assistance goals are designed to utilize recognized 'best practices" by adult education programs or individuals seeking answers to specific questions or problems identified during monitoring or evaluation visits.
- Technical Assistance relationships are program-focused, and may use an interactive, on-site/hands-on approach as well as telephone or email assistance.
- Technical Assistance delivery is generally short in duration and usually takes place as result of findings during monitoring or evaluation, or a request from a local provider, or because of policy changes.

The Alabama Community College System, Adult Education Division, creates an annual professional development plan uses the following information as a baseline guide:

* Assimilate relevant college and career readiness and career pathway curriculum

* Create a compendium of best instructional practices to increase student learning and retention

*Create an online learning program that can be utilized throughout the State

*Train local programs in relevant curriculum, best instructional practices and online learning programs

* Create an in-house tracking program for local professional development activities

* Create a state-wide tracking program for State led professional development activities

* Continue to assist with the annual State led conference

* Provide an online resource to LINCS and other relevant Adult Education instructional offerings

Alabama Adult Education will use five critical levels of assessment to evaluate professional development at the local and State level: Participant reaction, Participant engagement, Organization Support and Change, Participants use of new knowledge and skills, and Student learning outcomes.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM CERTIFICATIONS

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;	Yes
2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;	Yes
3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;	Yes
4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;	Yes
5. A State officer, specified by title in the	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan;	
6. The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;	Yes
7. The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and	Yes
8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program;	Yes

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include	Include
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 the supplement-not-supplant requirement);	Yes
2. The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA;	Yes
3. The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not “eligible individuals” within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA;	Yes
4. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.	Yes
5. The eligible agency agrees that in expending funds made available under Title II of WIOA, the eligible agency will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303).	Yes

AUTHORIZING OR CERTIFYING REPRESENTATIVE

APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION	Enter information in this column
Applicant's Organization	Alabama Community College System
PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	**Enter information in this column**
First Name	David
Last Name	Walters
Title	Executive State Director of Adult Education
Email	david.walters@accs.edu

SECTION 427 OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA)

OMB Control Number 1205-0522 27

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)

Instructions: In the text box below, describe the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs provide the information to meet the requirements of Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), consistent with the following instructions.

Alabama Adult Education, administered through the Alabama Community College System, serves an educationally, culturally, and socio economically diverse population of adults. The Adult Education Division is strongly committed to equal access and treatment for all adults served through their programs or employed by the system. It is the official policy of the Alabama Community College System that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, gender, religion, creed, national origin, age, or disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program, activity, or employment. The Alabama Community College System's Adult Education Division follows this policy and section 427 of GEPA when expending federal Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act funds including State Leadership funds designated for professional development. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. These factors are considered when conducting professional development or any other training or service delivery when using both federal and state funds. Below is an example of the policy from the Alabama Community College System that guides decision making within each division of the system and each community college in the state.

The Alabama Community College System 800 Policy Series on Non-Discrimination states: "no student shall be discriminated against on the basis of any impermissible criterion or characteristic including, but not limited to, race, color, national origin, religion, marital status, disability, gender, age, or any other protected class as defined by federal and state law". An example of how this provision is enacted— the Human Resource Department for the Alabama Community College System places the following statement at the end of every position announcement:

THE ALABAMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER. *The Alabama Community College System is an equal opportunity employer. It is the policy of the Alabama Community College System, including all postsecondary community and technical colleges under the control of the Alabama Community College System Board of Trustees, that no*

employee or applicant for employment or promotion, on the basis of any impermissible criterion or characteristic including, without limitation, race, color, national origin, religion, marital status, disability, sex, age, or any other protected class as defined by federal and state law, shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program, activity, or employment.

Another example specific to the Alabama Community College System, Adult Education Division, is related to marketing materials that have been created for Integrated Education and Training programs for English Language Learners in their own language. Local programs have created marketing materials in various languages to ensure that all students are aware of the skill training opportunities.

As a reminder, Alabama requires all adult education eligible applicants that apply for Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funding under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to address GEPA section 427 during the competitive Request for Funding Proposal (RFP) application process. The entire GEPA document is embedded in the Request For Funding Proposal (RFP) application to be completed by each applicant.

OMB Control No. 1894-0005 (Exp. 04/30/2020)

NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS

The purpose of this enclosure is to inform you about the following provision in the Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) that applies to applicants for new grant awards under Department programs. This provision is Section 427 of GEPA, enacted as part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law (P.L.) 103-382).

To Whom Does This Provision Apply?

Section 427 of GEPA affects applicants for new grant awards under this program. **ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW AWARDS MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS NEW PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.**

(If this program is a State-formula grant program, a State needs to provide this description only for projects or activities that it carries out with funds reserved for State-level uses. In addition, local school districts or other eligible applicants that apply to the State for funding need to provide this description in their applications to the State for funding. The State would be responsible for ensuring that the school district or other local entity has submitted a sufficient section 427 statement as described below.)

What Does This Provision Require?

Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable

access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, you should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, etc. from such access or participation in, the Federally funded project or activity. The description in your application of steps to be taken to overcome these barriers need not be lengthy; you may provide a clear and succinct description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for Federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve to high standards. Consistent with program requirements and its approved application, an applicant may use the Federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

What are Examples of How an Applicant Might Satisfy the Requirement of This Provision?

The following examples may help illustrate how an applicant may comply with Section 427.

(1) An applicant that proposes to carry out an adult literacy project serving, among others, adults with limited English proficiency, might describe in its application how it intends to distribute a brochure about the proposed project to such potential participants in their native language.

(2) An applicant that proposes to develop instructional materials for classroom use might describe how it will make the materials available on audio tape or in braille for students who are blind.

(3) An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course, might indicate how it intends to conduct "outreach" efforts to girls, to encourage their enrollment.

(4) An applicant that proposes a project to increase school safety might describe the special efforts it will take to address concern of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students, and efforts to reach out to and involve the families of LGBT students

We recognize that many applicants may already be implementing effective steps to ensure equity of access and participation in their grant programs, and we appreciate your cooperation in responding to the requirements of this provision.

Estimated Burden Statement for GEPA Requirements

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.5

hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (Public Law 103-382. 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 Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20210-4537 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1894-0005.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	41.0%	41.0%	42.0%	42.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	42.0%	42.0%	43.0%	43.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$3,845.00	3,845.00	$3,850.00	3,850.00
Credential Attainment Rate	32.0%	33.0%	33.0%	34.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	36.0%	37.0%	37.0%	38.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL)

A. INPUT OF STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

1. INPUT PROVIDED BY THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, INCLUDING INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL'S REPORT, THE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION, AND OTHER COUNCIL REPORTS THAT MAY HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED AS PART OF THE COUNCIL'S FUNCTIONS;

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services continues to have a State Rehabilitation Council which meets on a quarterly basis. Council membership is representative of most areas of the state and includes a cross section of disabilities and minorities. Local vocational rehabilitation advisory councils, created by the SRC to obtain direct consumer input at the local

level and to provide easier access, continue to meet across the state, and SRC members continue to report on information or advice from these councils at each quarterly SRC meeting. The councils also continue to serve as recruitment grounds for future SRC members due to member training provided during meetings.

The SRC continues to advise the Designated State Unit or DSU on a variety of issues. Specific activities and advice of the SRC during FY 2021 include the following:

Review and comment on the State Plan. As in prior years, the SRC reviewed the goals and priorities within the VR portion of the Combined State, and the DSU asked for comments. In FY 2021 the SRC agreed with the goals and priorities in the State Plan.

Recommendation: The Agency should adopt the following goals and priorities for the 2022 State Plan update:

1. Assure that Alabamians with disabilities negatively affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic are of special interest and concern within planning and operational efforts aimed at recovery.

2. Advance efforts that improve the department's working alliance and integration with the Alabama Workforce Development System.

3. Improve outreach and service delivery to unserved and underserved Alabamians with disabilities.

4. Develop and improve training and other resources for community rehabilitation programs.

5. Advance collaboration between administrative and field staff to improve operational efficiencies, develop needed training, and update antiquated or unclear policies and procedures.

6. Continue to optimize departmental resources, ensure operational efficiency, and avoid limitations that would be imposed by an Order of Selection.

Agency response: The Agency accepts this recommendation and will implement it as soon as possible.

Review and comment on the Agency's CSPD. The SRC received information on the CSPD and recommended no significant changes to the recruitment or retention plan. The SRC also reviewed information on current training programs for VRS staff and consumers and recommended no significant changes.

Review and comment on the VR Employer services. The SRC continued to work with the Agency on issues affecting employer services and made the following recommendations:

Recommendation: VR should raise wages in its WBL program to align VR program services with career center services.

Agency Response: The Agency accepts this recommendation and will implement it as soon as possible.

Review and comment on Impartial Hearing Officer List: The SRC continued to monitor the list for vacancies and to recommend replacements where appropriate. No revisions to the list were recommended for FY 2021.

Review and comment on VRS Consumer Satisfaction Survey and Related Issues: The SRC reviewed the Agency's consumer satisfaction survey and had no recommendations.

SRC Training. Council members received training and/or informational materials on the following areas (For FY 2021):

1. Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA)

2. ADRS Budget
3. VR Production and Average Hourly Working Wage
4. Mental Health Peer Support Pilot
5. Adapted Driving Program
6. Project SEARCH
7. Alabama Council for Developmental Disabilities
8. Workshops Empowerment, Inc.
9. VR Transition Program
10. VR Supported Employment Program
11. Lakeshore Facility

Revision of SRC bylaws. During FY 2021, the SRC did not amend its bylaws.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

The DSU has accepted all of the SRC's recommendations as stated above.

3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

The DSU does not reject any of SRC's input or recommendations.

B. REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS

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;

Jointly Funded Pre-Employment Transition Specialist: There are 134 school districts in Alabama. All school districts are offered the opportunity for jointly funded pre-employment transition specialist through a partnership with ADRS. The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services enters into these third-party cooperative agreements with thirty-one local education agencies. These agreements are written and carried out in compliance with 34 CFR 361.28. The agreements provide for jointly funded pre-employment transition specialist to provide pre-employment transition services that are not typically or customarily provided by the LEA. These pre-employment transition services are designed to prepare students with disabilities to enter competitive integrated employment by identifying and exploring career interests, as well as, increasing individual independence, self-sufficiency and inclusion of students with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, in their communities. Services provided by Pre-ETS Specialists are provided based on the individual needs of the student and may include: job exploration counseling, work- based learning experiences, counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs, workplace readiness training and instruction in self-advocacy, which can include development of a peer mentoring program. Students served by this program include: Any student with a disability, 9th grade or age 16-21, who is eligible for or potentially eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation Services, upon referral from the VR Transition Counselor. State Unit approval will be obtained before services are initiated. All services will be provided in accordance with the agency's approved State Plan. The agency has on record that no federal funds are used by the LEA to provide their share of the services. LEAs with which third-party

third cooperative agreements for Pre-Employment Transition Specialists are: Alabama Institute for Deaf & Blind, Alabama School for the Blind— Talladega County; Alabama Institute for Deaf & Blind Alabama School for the Deaf — Talladega County; Anniston City; Baldwin County; Bessemer City; Blount County; Clay County; Dekalb County; Escambia County; Etowah County; Fairfield City; Florence City; Gadsden City; Hale County; Haleyville City; Homewood City; Huntsville City; Lauderdale County; Limestone County; Marshall County; Monroe County; Pell City ; Piedmont City; Pike County; Shelby County; Sylacauga City; Talladega County; Tarrant City; Ft. Payne City; Mt. Brook City and Walker County.

Jointly Funded Full Time Instructor: The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services entered into this agreement to mutually serve students with disabilities in Pike County through cooperatively funding the professional services of one full-time nine-month instructor, housed at Charles Henderson High School and Troy/Pike Center for Technology. Instruction will be provided in an integrated classroom setting with peers who are not identified as students with disabilities and will focus on the area of pre-employment transition services. These pre-employment transition services, which are not typically or customarily provided by the LEA, will be provided in a group setting in a classroom or the community. The instruction of pre-employment transition services provided will be in the areas of: job exploration counseling, work- based learning experiences, counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs, workplace readiness training and instruction in self-advocacy. This instruction is designed to prepare students with disabilities to enter long term, competitive, integrated employment in high demand careers by identifying and exploring career interests, as well as, increasing individual independence, self-sufficiency and inclusion of students with disabilities in their communities. Students served by this program include any student with a disability enrolled at Charles Henderson High School and Troy/Pike Center for Technology, who is in the 11th or 12th grade, is eligible for or potentially eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation Services and has received a referral from the VR Transition Counselor, Special Education Teacher and/or school administrator. Course curriculum will consist of instruction in the following areas Basic Computer Skills, Financial Literacy, Problem Solving, Manufacturing, Job Acquisition. Course curriculum will also include discussion of local high demand careers, labor market information and activities that may include community-based experiences

Project SEARCH: Project SEARCH is a one-year internship program for students with disabilities in the last year of high school or with out of school youth. It is targeted for students and youth whose goal is competitive employment. The program takes place in a healthcare, government, or business setting where total immersion in the workplace facilitates the teaching and learning process as well as the acquisition of employability and marketable work skills. Students or youth participate in up to three (3) internships to explore a variety of career paths. The interns work with a team that includes their family, special education teacher and skills training instructor to create an employment goal, and to support the student during this important transition from school to work. The program is a cooperative arrangement between the employer, the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, the Alabama State Department of Education, the Alabama Council for Development Disabilities the Alabama Department of Mental Health, the local school systems and most importantly the employers. For youth programs partners include post-secondary education, local workforce boards and area One-stop Career Centers. The program is currently available in the following areas: Montgomery, Birmingham, Hoover, Huntsville, Tuscaloosa, Shelby, Lauderdale, Sheffield, Decatur, Dekalb/Ft. Payne, Etowah, Marshall, Baldwin, Calhoun and two (2) programs in Mobile. When participating in Project SEARCH, the intern actually goes to the employment site each day as opposed to going to school. For secondary sites, the LEA provides a classroom teacher(s) to provide employment instruction in the morning, and the students go to assigned internships the remainder of the day. Internships include patient escort, food service, central sterilization, pharmacy, maintenance, grounds keeping, and other settings at the business. No funds from other

participating agencies are used to match federal money drawn down by ADRS. State Unit approval is obtained before services are initiated. All services are provided in accordance with the agency's approved State Plan.

Individual Placement and Supports (IPS Supported Employment): IPS Supported Employment is an approach to support employment for individuals with serious mental illness and co-occurring substance use disorder. IPS is evidence-based SE that is founded on the following principles: (1) zero exclusion, (2) competitive employment in the community, (3) mental health treatment and employment services being integrated, (4) benefits planning provided, (5) job search occurs rapidly, (6) employment specialists develop relationships with employers in their communities, (7) job supports are continuous, and, (8) consumer preferences are honored. Currently IPS is being implemented at Chilton Shelby Mental Health (rural site), Altapointe in Mobile and Montgomery Mental Health Authority (both urban areas). No funds from other participating agencies are used to match federal money drawn down by ADRS. State Unit approval is obtained before services are initiated. All services are provided in accordance with the agency's approved State Plan.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

State Unit approval is obtained before services are initiated.

3. REQUIREMENTS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN WILL APPLY TO THE SERVICES APPROVED UNDER THE WAIVER.

All services are provided in accordance with the agency's approved State Plan.

C. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH AGENCIES NOT CARRYING OUT ACTIVITIES UNDER THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

1. FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS;

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services has cooperative agreements and working relationships with entities outside of the Statewide Workforce Development System. These agreements provide the agency with the opportunity to extend services to people with disabilities referred by other agencies, as well as the chance to utilize the services of other agencies for its consumers.

Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind (AIDB): ADRS enjoys an excellent working relationship with AIDB. AIDB is charged with the responsibility of providing elementary and high school residential education and outreach services for blind and deaf students in Alabama. Also, through its E. H. Gentry Community Rehabilitation Program, comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services including vocational evaluations, assistive technology, training, work experiences, job development, and supported employment services are provided to students, youth, and adults with visual, hearing, and other significant disabilities. Also, the agency works cooperatively with AIDB in providing appropriate services to students in the AIDB secondary schools for the blind, deaf, and deafblind. ADRS works collaboratively with the Alabama School for the Deaf (ASD) and the Alabama School for the Blind (ASB) to provide deaf and blind students with summer employment opportunities. ADRS also works actively with AIDB's Helen Keller School (HKS) that serves students who are deaf-blind, and/or have multiple disabilities. ADRS assists AIDB in transitioning these high school students into employment and/or training programs (to include college) by partnering to provide comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services. ADRS has written agreements with these programs including an agreement to provide pre-employment transition services to students who are blind or deaf in all public schools across the state. This is done through pre-employment transition specialists working collaboratively with LEA's and VR staff statewide. In addition, a longstanding collaborative

agreement with AIDB to jointly fund Vision Rehabilitation Therapists and Orientation and Mobility Specialists who provide instruction that enhances vocational opportunities, independent living skills, and the educational development of persons with vision loss is in place. These agreements also jointly fund Business Enterprise Representatives and Technicians who support the day to day operations of the state's Randolph-Sheppard program.

Department of Corrections: ADRS works in cooperation with the Alabama Department of Corrections. ADRS receives referrals on inmates who are in the prison system who will be transitioning back into their home areas through liaison counselors assigned to the prisons. ADRS has established a system to handle these referrals and to provide services to eligible individuals when they return home. An ADRS staff specialist in the State Office is overseeing this initiative. ADRS also provides transition services to eligible inmates in special education.

Department of Risk Management: ADRS works cooperatively with Alabama's Risk Management program. We receive referrals of individuals injured on the job to assist Risk Management in helping various state agencies retain individuals in employment who may have been injured. ADRS does not currently have a written agreement with the Department of Risk Management.

Governor's Office: ADRS receives referrals from the Governor's office on a regular basis. The Governor's office contacts ADRS to make referrals of individuals who have contacted them regarding various disability related issues. These referrals are received by an Assistant Commissioner of ADRS and forwarded to the appropriate local supervisor for follow up and assessment. Referrals that are beyond the scope of ADRS service provision are provided information about other resources. Efforts are made to provide the Governor's staff with an appropriate service outlet to address the needs of Alabamians with disabilities.

State of Alabama Indian Affairs Commission and Inter-Tribal Council of Alabama: ADRS recognizes the need for services to Native Americans with disabilities living in Alabama. The agency has liaison counselors assigned to receive referrals from tribal organizations including the Poarch Band of Creek Indians who are federally recognized and eligible to receive services through the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs. ADRS also coordinates services with the Inter-Tribal Council of Alabama which serves citizens from both state and federally recognized Tribes. ADRS provides services to American Indians with disabilities to the same extent as the agency provides such services to other significant segments of the population with disabilities residing in the state.

Alabama Department of Youth Services (DYS): The Department of Youth Services is the state agency responsible for administering and regulating juvenile justice programs and services. The expectation is that the services of DYS will prevent these youth from eventually advancing to the adult correctional system. ADRS has a specialist who is actively involved with DYS. This specialist receives referrals on a regular basis from DYS and forwards those referrals to the appropriate field staff. ADRS has a written agreement with the ADYS

Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH): ADRS maintains an ongoing relationship with ADMH. ADRS serves consumers with developmental disabilities, mental illness, and substance use disorder. ADRS has cooperative initiatives and memorandums of agreement to ensure services are provided to eligible consumers. ADRS maintains relationships with both ID/DD and MI/SA divisions of the department, including services to residential aftercare service providers. ADRS is working with ADMH to improve supported employment programs. This includes efforts in the areas of Employment First, extended supports, and collaborating on grants and RFP's through braiding of funding initiatives.

Alabama Head Injury Foundation (AHIF): ADRS continues its relationship with the Alabama Head Injury Foundation. This relationship is directed towards maintaining a service delivery system to address the needs of consumers affected by traumatic brain injury.

Community Rehabilitation Programs: ADRS maintains memorandums of agreement with a network of community rehabilitation programs throughout the state to provide services to consumers with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities.

The Alabama Disability Advocacy Program (ADAP): ADAP is the Alabama arm of the Protection and Advocacy program for people with disabilities. ADAP makes referrals to Alabama's toll-free number for information on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) through ADRS which coordinates the service.

Statewide Independent Living Centers: ADRS is represented on the State Independent Living Council and works closely with Alabama's three Independent Living Centers to coordinate services and referrals.

Governor's Office on Disability (GOOD): GOOD serves as a clearinghouse for resources related to people with disabilities. ADRS maintains an ongoing relationship with the Governor's Office in order to provide resources as needed.

Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP): ADRS partners with OFCCP to provide affirmative action training to employers on issues related to hiring and retaining workers with disabilities. ADRS continues to collaborate with OFCCP staff to provide information to employers on the 503 Federal Hiring mandates.

Social Security Administration (SSA): ADRS maintains an excellent working relationship with the SSA. The agency employs a Social Security Specialist that stays abreast of Social Security issues and provides technical assistance to agency field staff, community partners and consumers. The specialist provides training statewide on work incentives, Ticket to Work, Social Security eligibility and benefits counseling services. The Social Security Specialist manages a statewide benefits counseling program through a cooperative agreement with the Alabama Department of Mental Health to provide benefits counseling services and manages a five-year demonstration project in coordination with the Social Security Administration.

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC): The partnership between EEOC and ADRS involves staff cross training on disability and employment law in addition to ADRS linkage to public and private sector businesses to assist with non—discriminatory practices in the employment, retention, training and promotion of individuals with disabilities. ADRS is a regular trainer for the EEOC technical assistance seminars for employers as well.

Alabama Industry Liaison Group (ALILG): Represents Federal contractors' compliance issues to include those tied to disability (Section 503 of the Rehab Act). ADRS is the lead provider of information, training and resources related to outreach, employment and retention of individuals with disabilities to ALILG businesses and ALILG routinely trains ADRS business relations consultants and participates in local, regional and state conferences sponsored by ADRS.

Federal Office of Personnel Management (OPM): Representatives from a variety of Federal agencies throughout Alabama that function under the OPM work directly with the ADRS business relations consultants to implement Federal hiring mandates, Schedule A recruitment, accommodations, and employee retention impacting workers with disabilities in the Federal sector.

Department of Veterans Affairs: Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) program. ADRS collaborates with the VR&E program at the national and state level to serve and place into employment veterans completing the VR&E program. ADRS provides customized services including accommodations and return to work assistance through specialty counselors and rehabilitation technology specialists.

Veterans Employment Training Service (VETS): ADRS collaborates at the state and local level with the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) staff to assist wounded warriors in returning to work or obtaining employment with Federal contractors and other businesses. This includes access to the ADRS RAVE (Retaining A Valued Employee) program.

2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

ADRS participates in providing assistance to people with disabilities living in the state who have technology related needs through the Statewide Technology Access and Response (STAR) program. This is a statewide device reutilization program which loans needed equipment through a network of reutilization centers. ADRS also participates in the ABILITY loan program which provides loan guarantees to enable people with disabilities to obtain assistive technology.

3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

ADRS maintains a relationship with this office to receive referrals and provide assistance to consumers living in rural areas and to refer consumers for rural housing assistance.

4. NON-EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

ADRS has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Youth Services for the purpose of serving youth with disabilities in order to provide a seamless transition into employment or training. ADRS also serves out of school youth utilizing Community Rehabilitation Programs for employment services, including Supported Employment services. We have four out-of-school youth Project Search programs in cooperation with Post-secondary Education, local workforce boards, One-Stop Career Centers, Local Employers and Community Rehab Programs-with over 70% of participants achieving competitive employment.

5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

ADRS currently has no cooperative agreements to participate in state use contracting programs.

D. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS

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

Referrals for transition services and pre-employment transition services are carried out in a number of ways. Students can be referred by the LEA's, special education teachers, 504 coordinators, doctors, mental health professionals, parents, teachers, transition counselors assigned to the schools, or can be self-referred. Once referred to the VR counselor assigned to the school, the counselor works with educational officials to obtain pertinent documentation necessary for pre-employment transition services or transition services. Students may receive pre-employment transition services beginning in the 9th grade or age 16-21 (or younger if decided in the IEP). Students can be served as eligible or potentially eligible consumers. Students who require intensive services will require an application, be determined eligible

within the required 60-day period (unless for specific, documented reason an extension is necessary) and a plan for transition services will be written within 90 days. It is expected that all students requiring VR services to be successful in competitive integrated employment will have a plan before they exit high school. We anticipate that many of our under served, potentially eligible students will apply for services and become VR consumers in their 11th grade year. All Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for students ages 16-21 or in the 9th grade (younger if stipulated in their IEP) that are not served under potentially eligible, will have Pre-ETS services included in their IPEs.

Plans, policies and procedures for coordination with Education officials: ADRS is committed to providing pre-employment transition services to assist students with disabilities in the high school setting in making a seamless transition to the world of work or vocational/post-secondary education. ADRS maintains a formal Interagency Agreement with the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) for the provision of pre-employment transition services and transition services. This agreement serves to ensure that students with disabilities, who are eligible or potentially eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation Services, are provided services without unnecessary delay, as well as, to increase the collaborative efforts of the ADRS and ALSDE regarding the coordination of services that will improve transition outcomes for students with disabilities. The agreement describes (1) the scope of services to be provided by the ALSDE and ADRS; (2) the financial responsibilities of each party; (3) the methods of consultation and technical services needed to formulate IPEs; (4) the role of each agency in transition planning; and, (5) methods and strategies for identification of students needing transition services. Transition planning, sharing of student information, and consultation activities are included in the agreement.

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS): Federal mandate requires ADRS, in collaboration with the local educational agencies, to use 15% of ADRS federal allotment in providing or arranging for the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for all students with disabilities, 9th grade or ages 16- 21, in need of such services who are eligible for or potentially eligible for services. Pre-ETS required activities include: • 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 are provided in an integrated environment to the maximum extent possible. • Counseling and guidance on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institutions of higher education. • Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living. • Instruction in self—advocacy, which may include peer mentoring.

In order to achieve the 15% federal mandate, ADRS increased efforts to develop and improve transition partnerships, programs, and service models by implementing and expanding the following services/programs:
Transition Unlimited — A collaboration between the ADRS and Auburn Transition Leadership Institute. Transition Unlimited is a pre-employment transition services initiative designed to build capacity and connect services to appropriately implement pre-employment transition services throughout the state. The goal of the initiative is to provide guidance to transition stakeholders and LEAs during the development of action plans (collaboratively agreed upon by VR counselor and local school personnel) for the delivery of Pre-ETS that best meet the individual needs of students with disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible for vocational rehabilitation services. Transition Unlimited underscores ADRS's commitment to keep a focus on transition services at the local level by bringing specific Pre-ETS planning to each local high school, which builds upon previous planning efforts. Each team's action plan is accessible so that teams can learn from one another. This provides an opportunity to build awareness of pre-employment transition services throughout Alabama. Each team is responsible for monitoring services agreed upon in the collaborative planning process. Ongoing technical assistance is available to teams during quarterly progress monitoring.

Work based learning program - JET (Job Exploration Training) During the collaborative process for Transition Unlimited, students are identified who could benefit from work-based learning. These students participate in work-based learning experiences in community settings in order to develop general employment skills or specific job-related skills before the student is qualified for employment.

Smart Work Ethics Training (SWE) - SWE is a social skills curriculum that addresses communication skills and work place behaviors (attitude, work ethic, image and appearance, interpersonal skills, teamwork, time management, accountability) needed to obtain and maintain successful competitive employment. This curriculum is provided to the student and the LEA by a certified trainer from a Community Rehabilitation Program.

Jointly-Funded Pre- Employment Transition Specialist - ADRS is committed to providing jointly funded Pre-ETS specialist in local education agencies to assist with the provision of pre-employment transition services. This is accomplished through cooperative agreements with local education agencies (ADRS pays 75% LEA pays 25% percent). The jointly funded pre-employment transition specialist provide pre-employment transition services that are not typically or customarily provided by the LEA. These pre-employment transition services are designed to increase the likelihood of independence and inclusion of students with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, in communities, as well as, maximize opportunities for these students for long term competitive integrated employment. Currently, ADRS has 31 jointly funded pre-employment transition specialists in place through third-party cooperative agreements.

At the local level, the ADRS has procedures in place to ensure the agency is actively involved in the transition of students with disabilities from school to work. The agency has a counselor assigned to each high school to act as transition counselor. The counselor visits the school on a regularly scheduled basis to meet with teachers and guidance counselors in order to provide vocational rehabilitation information and to receive referrals of students with disabilities in need of rehabilitation services. The VR counselor meets with the student and parents in order to explain rehabilitation services to enable a student's informed choice regarding these services. School records and other information needed to serve a student as a potentially eligible consumer or needed for eligibility determination is obtained. Once eligibility is determined efforts are made to begin determining rehabilitation needs and a vocational goal. As appropriate and as necessary, the transition counselor can provide the student with a vocational evaluation while still in high school in order to assist a student in determining an appropriate and feasible vocational goal. When invited to attend, counselors make every effort to participate in IEP meetings. This provides the counselor the opportunity to discuss pre- employment transition services needed by the student, as well as address any issues in the IEP related to disability. The counselor also provides information regarding accommodations the student may need related to disability. Per ADRS policy, when transition services are being provided to an individual (student) with a disability who is also eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) is prepared in coordination with the appropriate LEA and includes a summary of the relevant elements of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) for that individual. The ADRS transition counselor will complete an IPE on each student determined eligible for vocational rehabilitation services by the time the student leaves the school setting.

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;

Technical Assistance is provided to LEA's and Special Education teachers in a multitude of ways throughout the year. Most LEAs attend the transition conference or Mega conference and VR presents at both conferences. Transition counselors also work with all special education personnel at the local level to provide updates on VR services, trends and practices. Additionally, VR met with 360 high schools in the state to provide technical assistance and foster collaboration in development of pre- employment transition plans for the high schools. 97% of the participants (LEAs, Special Education teachers, transition specialist, job coaches, 504 coordinators) stated that they better understood WIOA, 98% felt they received the guidance and technical assistance needed to develop viable action plans for collaborative services. 99% stated they were provided with a method of monitoring and evaluating transition services.

A formal MOU and Inter-agency agreement between the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services and the Alabama State Department of Education was last updated and signed on July 3, 2018. Issues such as consultation and technical assistance for both agencies' personnel, parents, students and advocates are identified under scope of services in sections A, B and C. Parent and advocacy groups have received information on WIOA. Pre-ETS, and transition services in multiple venues on multiple occasions. Section D of the agreement specifies the limitations and procedures for sharing documentation between VR and SEA for students/youth seeking sub-minimum wage employment (SWE). Competitive integrated employment is the first option however for those seeking SWE procedures are outlined in the agreement including all transition services under IDEA as written in the IEP and pre-employment transition services or transition services provided by ADRS. Documentation that the youth has applied for VR services and been found eligible or ineligible. Those students found eligible must have a plan for employment, worked towards a vocational outcome for a reasonable time without success and have a closed file. Youth must have received career counseling by the VR counselor, including information and referral services.

ADRS provides consultation and technical assistance regarding pre-employment transitions services, potentially eligible status, VR, application process, eligibility requirements, vocational assessments, job placement services, local service providers, post—secondary education, and other topics deemed appropriate that will lead to a successful employment outcome. ADRS partners with ALSDE and Auburn Transition Leadership Institute to host an annual transition conference. This conference is attended by a variety of transition stakeholders including staff from LEAs, ALSDE, ADRS, Community Rehabilitation Programs and parents of students with disabilities. This conference provides an opportunity for counselors and transition staff to be updated on the latest successful trends and practices related to transition. Transition counselors also participate in transition work groups, teacher workshops and transition fairs hosted by the LEAs. Technical assistance is also provided to the transition counselors and LEA staff through quarterly progress monitoring of the Transition Unlimited action plans. These activities allow ADRS staff excellent opportunities to interact with education staff and teachers.

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

The MOU between ALSDE and ADRS addresses transition planning and development of the IEP under scope of services for both ALSDE and ADRS collaboratively and individually.

ADRS emphasizes best practices in providing services to students in order to achieve a seamless transition from school to post school activities. ADRS has transition counselors assigned to each LEA who work closely with the special education and career and technical education teachers in the development of the IEP for those students/consumers with whom ADRS is involved and attend IEP Team meetings and/or provide input that will assist in making decisions about services that will be provided by the ADRS, such as assistive technology, career exploration or

work experience opportunities. ADRS emphasizes best practices in providing services to students in order to provide a seamless transition from school to post school activities.

C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;

The MOU between ALSDE and ADRS outlines the scope of services that both agencies agree to in terms of personnel, roles and responsibilities. The agreement further outlines what the agencies, and agency staff are responsible for including which personnel will be providing the service to prevent duplication.

The MOA clarifies that nothing under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act reduces the obligation of the LEA to pay for, or provide transition services that are considered special education services, or related services necessary for assuring a free and appropriate education for students. The agreement also states that all expenditures identified by the LEA and VR for provision of pre-employment transition services that are new, having a VR focus of preparing students with disabilities to access careers that will lead to long term competitive integrated employment, and are not duplicative of services provided by the LEA, be the responsibility of ADRS. It also clarifies in the memorandum of agreement, that expenditures approved by the VR Counselor for transition services that are provided to VR students with disabilities, eligible for VR services, that are vocational in nature and support and lead to the achievement of the employment goal in the IEP, will be the financial responsibility of ADRS.

ADRS recognizes the importance of clarifying the roles and responsibilities of each agency. Educational responsibilities rest with educational agencies that include the cost of accommodations for students with disabilities. Transition counselors are trained to assure responsibilities of the education agency are not transferred to ADRS while the student is in school. The educational agency is responsible for ensuring students with disabilities are provided equal access to education. The school is responsible for providing school records to be used in determining eligibility and planning a rehabilitation program. ADRS utilizes school records and other available information in order to develop a rehabilitation program. These roles and responsibilities are further defined in the formal interagency agreement with the Alabama State Department of Education.

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

Section C of the MOU between the ALSDE and ADRS, specifically numbers 5-7 addresses outreach to students with disabilities requiring transition services. This is also addressed in Section B11 in the Memorandum of Understanding.
Outreach efforts continually occur between LEA staff and the designated VR counselor. These counselors (who often have exclusively transition caseloads) work with teachers, guidance counselors, school nurses, psychometrists and other education staff to identify students with disabilities who need transition services. Additional outreach will occur during IEP meetings, community-based transition team meetings, teen transition clinic, job fairs, advocacy meetings, parent focus groups and other related events. These outreach efforts will inform school personnel, students, other state agency personnel, advocates, appropriate family members and other representative of the following:

a. Description of the purpose of VR

b. Information regarding eligibility requirements

c. Information regarding application procedures and

d. Scope of services that may be available to eligible individuals.

E. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) maintains a viable working partnership with 34 Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) statewide. The CRP Administrator and Specialists are responsible for initiating agreements with private non-profit organizations from which ADRS consumers receive services. CRP section staff review the qualifications of community rehabilitation programs to discuss fees and payment rates, and monitor service delivery through management/data reports and field visits.

Alabama's CRPs play a vital role in assisting the department with meeting its mission of providing quality employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Beginning March, 1 2017, ADRS requires that all new community providers meet the accreditation requirements of Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). Requiring CARF accreditation provides assurance that CRPs strive to improve efficiency, fiscal health and service delivery, creating a foundation for consumer satisfaction. The department continues to work cooperatively with CRPs statewide to improve services at the local level. The development and establishment of new services and programs will continue based on the assessments of consumer needs.

Based on an assessment of the capacity and effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation services currently provided by CRPs statewide, several trends appear to be taking place:
- Increased emphasis on serving individuals that are considered underserved, individuals with the most significant disabilities, and individuals residing in rural areas of the state.
- Increased emphasis on collaboration with our WIOA partners particularly in the area of serving out of school youth.
- Continued emphasis on serving high school students with disabilities through Pre-Employment Transition Services.
- Increased emphasis on job development for in demand jobs.
- Increased emphasis on employment offering health insurance and paying a livable wage.
- Increased emphasis on community-based services such as Work Based Learning opportunities.
- Increased emphasis on specialized community-based services, through our CRP and Supported Employment network, for consumers with visual and hearing disabilities.
- Continued emphasis on consumer choice.
- Continued emphasis on serving ADRS consumers in their home communities.
- Continued emphasis on competitive integrated employment outcomes.

Annual meetings and trainings are organized to provide the opportunity to discuss issues of mutual concern, improve communication, and focus on the continuous improvement of the partnership to improve service provision for Alabamians with disabilities.

Supported employment is available in Alabama to individuals who require intensive support and extended support services for an appropriate and successful employment outcome. Supported employment services are available through 45 community-based providers in the state. These services are currently provided in all regions of the state through cooperative agreements with community based organizations and agencies.

Services provided by the CRPs are monitored in a variety of ways. The CRP dashboard enables ADRS to monitor number of individuals successfully employed, cost per successful closure, various time lines of service provision, and average wage.
Monthly reports of employment services are required. Liaisons are assigned to monitor CRP

referrals, and receive updates on progress. Additionally, they assist with authorization reviews and individual concerns that may arise. State office staff are available to assist with any area of need and questions arising from CRP service delivery.

F. ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Supported Employment (SE) is available in Alabama for individuals with the most significant disabilities who require intensive support services, and extended support services for an appropriate and successful employment outcome. These services are provided in all regions of the state by 45 approved community—based organizations. Supported Employment services are available to individuals regardless of their disability. Currently, the primary disabilities served include persons with significant intellectual disabilities, severe mental illness, cerebral palsy, autism spectrum disorders, visual and hearing impairments, severe orthopedic impairments, traumatic brain injury, and other most significant disabilities. The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services currently utilizes a Milestones service and payment process. Milestones, a service and outcome based payment system, has significantly improved the quality of supported employment throughout the state, while proving to be more cost effective for the agency. Providers of supported employment are paid for successful outcomes achieved by individuals participating in supported employment. The Milestones program segments the rehabilitation process into four distinct areas: (1) Determination of Needs/Person Centered Profiles and the Discovery Process, (2) Hire, (3) Job Retention/Coaching and (4) Closure. Extended supports including natural supports are available at the job site, and are provided for the duration of the employment. Providers of long term supports are required to document at minimum twice monthly contact with each consumer successfully working in the community, and to maintain this documentation in case files for the duration of that consumer's job. ADRS can fund extended supports to youth for up to 4 years or until they reach the age of 25 and are no longer considered a youth. If VR is funding extended services, the case must remain open until the individual is receiving these supports funded through another source.

To ensure the highest quality of services, collaborative training is provided by ADRS, ADMH and Virginia Commonwealth University's Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Workplace Supports. This training is provided to improve the consistency of service delivery by job coaches, pre-employment transition specialist, skills training instructors, AIDB staff, IPS staff and others in the community that offer employment services to individuals with most significant disabilities. This training includes information on the provision of extended services, customized employment and supported self-employment. Training is available to all SE providers as well as other agencies that collaborate to provide supports to an individual working in the community. These agencies include the Alabama Department of Mental Health, The Alabama Department of Education, the Social Security Administration, and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Project SEARCH, a statewide initiative to improve transition services for students with most significant disabilities began in Alabama in FY 2012 with two pilot sites. Prior to COVID, Alabama had 16 Project SEARCH sites for students and youth with disabilities including those with most significant disabilities. We now 9 secondary and 1 youth program due to the inability to carry out these activities during the pandemic. Efforts are under way to reestablish these Project SEARCH programs which had to be suspended. We will continue to work to expand this program.

Cooperative Agreements between the Local School Systems (LEA's), Alabama State Department of Education, Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, the Alabama Council for Developmental Disabilities, the Alabama Department of Mental Health, Community Rehabilitation Programs and the local employer supporting the program. Youth programs are in partnership with Postsecondary Education, local workforce boards, One-stop Career Centers,

Community Rehabilitation Programs and the employer. In a collaborative effort with Alabama Department of Mental Health, we are initiating a braided funding stream using the Milestone payment system and Medicaid dollars in order to move people from pre-vocational services in segregated settings to competitive integrated employment.

Individualized Placement and Support (IPS) Supported Employment is an evidence based approach to supported employment for individuals with serious mental illness. IPS, based on zero exclusion, competitive employment in the community, mental health treatment and employment services being integrated, benefits planning is included, job search occurs rapidly, employment specialist develop relationships with employers in their communities, job supports are continuous, and consumer preferences are honored. Currently IPS is being implemented at Chilton Shelby in West Alabama (rural site) and Altapointe in Mobile County and Montgomery (urban sites). We currently have a cooperative agreement with the Alabama Department of Mental Health that includes both the DD Division of the Department and the MI/SA Division. This agreement gives and Overview of both Departments including their purpose, changes reflected in WIOA, the Legal basis for the agreement, Overview of the Departments and the Responsibilities of the Partners, Eligibility, Plan Development, Referral Process for the Departments, State level shared objectives, Responsibilities and Implementation- including extended services to individuals with most significant disabilities.

G. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

1. VR SERVICES; AND

ADRS is committed to a "dual customer" approach in working with employers to identify competitive integrated employment opportunities and career exploration opportunities for the consumers we serve. ADRS focuses on developing effective working relationships with employers by providing business services that meet the disability-related needs of business and which assist our agency in the provision of VR services. Alabama VR has developed and delivered appropriate products and services to assist employers with their outreach and recruitment; job placement, retention and advancement; accommodations; disability-education; resource linkages; and consulting services for individuals with disabilities. The development and delivery of appropriate products and services enables Alabama VR to meet the needs of business as specified in WIOA regulations. ADRS has a business relations unit, "READI-Net" (Resources for Employment And Disability Information Network), led by a State Office Administrator of Business Relations and staffed by specially trained Business Relations Consultants (BRCs) in a classification separate from the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. The Administrator serves as the ADRS representative with full oversight of collaborative relationships with businesses developed by BRC staff or other VR agencies in The NET (VR's National Employment Team) that wish to establish or grow their partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation in Alabama. At the state level, the Administrator is the lead liaison to workforce partners, community organizations and other agencies that establish partnerships with business and is the "rating supervisor" of the business relations consultants. At the local level, the BRCs are charged with establishing and maintaining effective relationships with business to create employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities or to assist business with the retention of workers whose job is affected by illness, injury or disability.

BRCs develop and deliver other disability-related services needed by business and are accountable for the quality and effectiveness of those services. They simultaneously assist consumers (including youth and adults) with job readiness preparation (through group or one-on-one sessions), job development, job search, job retention and follow-up. In addition, ADRS works with a network of community-based organizations on customized placement services for consumers, necessitating coordination with employers. These partnerships include special assistance to students and youth with disabilities, transition services, and supported

employment assistance. This coordination with business also involves internal ADRS staff specializing in job readiness and placement services for individuals who are blind, visually impaired, deaf or hard of hearing and may include Deaf Support Specialists, audiologists, or other contract employment specialists focusing on visually impaired. Engagement with businesses through the ADRS RAVE (Retaining A Valued Employee) program also necessitate collaboration with business and includes ADRS vocational rehabilitation counselors, BRCs, rehabilitation technology specialists and other rehabilitation professionals. To foster collaboration among these resources, thus avoiding duplication of effort with employers while maximizing assistance to consumers, the BRCs participate in local collaboration teams facilitated by workforce partners to include any and all local entities that assist VR consumers with job readiness, placement and retention services and who reach out to employers on behalf of those consumers. These groups meet either monthly or quarterly and can include: ADRS staff, community rehabilitation programs, supported employment projects, jointly funded pre-ets specialists with the school systems, disabled veterans organizations, workforce partners, staffing companies, state and Federal agencies, and more. To enhance coordination with employers, the ADRS READI-Net program and BRCs also engage with entities that represent business and disability-related issues, such as staffing companies, Society of Human Resource Management, Chambers of Commerce, Alabama Industry Liaison Group, EEOC, OFCCP, Disability: IN Alabama and other partners that represent the needs of employers. BRCs work through these entities to deliver needed disability-related services to the business.

Operating under an "employer account system" to ensure accurate record keeping of services provided to employers and to organize outreach to employers, ADRS has an employer data base, "Mr. ED", that maintains permanent records on every business contacted by BRCs or with whom BRCs have a working relationship. These records reflect the following: 1) Company name and detailed demographics on contact info, staffing patterns, benefits, referral processes, type company (e.g. Federal contractor, Federal agency, private sector, etc.) and more; 2) Specific services provided to the company by ADRS; 3) Job vacancies, particularly those from businesses under affirmative action mandates - ADRS works with people with disabilities in all special populations such as minorities, women, felons, LGBT, dislocated workers, poverty level, age and others; 4) Employment and retention outcomes with the company; 5) Archived records that reflect the history of the partnership and track repeat business. A number of customized services to businesses to enhance hiring opportunities of individuals with disabilities by the business, include a variety of the following, which require coordination with the business and delivery by ADRS staff or partners: Pre- hire work experiences; Mentoring or internships; Summer work experience; On-the- Job training support (fiscal and programmatic) after hire; Apprenticeship Sponsorship opportunities, Career Advancement services, Targeted Job Tax Credits; Accommodations at the job site such as: job coaching, delivery and set up of accommodation resources, and additional follow up services to ensure success; and RAVE services to assist existing employees with disabilities.

Under section 511 of WIOA, employers who hold 14C Certificates and pay subminimum wage to individuals with disabilities must meet guidelines under WIOA. ADRS Supported Employment Specialists meet employees who are currently receiving subminimum wage to provide career counseling, information and referral including information about local training opportunities. Additionally, information is provided by the local One-stop Career Centers and benefit specialists. Employers have been contacting ADRS specialists to provide this information to new and existing employees. Youth seeking subminimum wage employment (SWE) must apply for VR services and be found ineligible, or eligible with an IPE, and have worked toward an employment outcome without success or had their VR case closed. These youth must receive career counseling including information and referral to federal and state programs and other

resources in their area prior to entering SWE.

2. TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

ADRS will also coordinate with employers in order to facilitate the provision of transition services for students and youth with disabilities. ADRS will also coordinate with employers to provide pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities. ADRS will accomplish this by working with employers to arrange work- based learnings experiences for students with disabilities. These work-based learning experiences will include setting up worksite tours, job shadowing and mentoring opportunities, paid and unpaid internships, and other learning experiences within business and industry sectors. ADRS will also involve employers in informational interviews and other mentoring activities in order to provide instruction in self-advocacy for students receiving pre-employment transition services. Lastly, employers will be used to provide information about in-demand industry sectors and occupations as well as labor market information, which can be used in providing job exploration counseling to students with disabilities receiving pre-employment transition services.

H. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

1. THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT;

The State of Alabama Independent Living (SAIL)Service, a division of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, provides comprehensive services for individuals needing personal care and other supports to remain in their communities. Those individuals who receive Medicaid Waiver services and indicate an interest in employment are served through the SAIL division utilizing specialized case managers trained to provide both Targeted Case Management and Vocational Rehabilitation services. These combined services allow for a holistic approach to employment outcomes by managing home and workplace support needs to increase employment success.

In addition, SAIL Division staff collaborate regularly with Alabama Medicaid to train staff, manage federal Medicaid rule changes and ensure consistency of service provision. Services provided through the SAIL Division of the Department of Rehabilitation Services are administered within the guidelines of the CMS SAIL waiver and in accordance with the collaborative agreement with Alabama Medicaid.

2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

Alabama Department of Mental Health is responsible for providing services to individuals with developmental disabilities, and ADRS works collaboratively in our state to increase competitive integrated employment, particularity for individuals with more significant disabilities. Initiatives such as Project SEARCH, that currently serves over 100 individuals with significant disabilities at 9 different locations throughout the state. These Project SEARCH sites provide the interns opportunities through development of training sites embedded in businesses in their communities.

ADRS and ADMH also collaboratively provide trainings for Project SEARCH skills trainers, community-based job coaches, community based rehabilitation partners, school personnel, jointly funded pre-ets specialists, IPS employment staff and other community providers.

ADRS and ADMH braid funding to serve individuals through Milestones and Medicaid waivers, who are in prevocational and day programs, to improve the likelihood of community based, integrated employment outcomes.

Both ADRS and ADMH have a current cooperative agreement in place that outlines the roles and responsibilities of partners, overview and function as well as the state level shared objectives. This agreement is for both the ID/DD and MI/SA divisions of the department.

3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

IPS SE is a collaborative effort between the Alabama Department of Mental Health and the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services to serve individual with severe mental illness and co—occurring substance use disorder. We currently have three IPS programs in Alabama, Chilton Shelby (rural), Mobile (urban and the mental health center in Alabama that serves the most individuals) and Montgomery (another urban area). The memorandum of agreement with the ADMH and ADRS includes roles and responsibilities (including fiscal responsibilities) and measurable objectives.

ADRS benefits counseling staff work in collaboration with IPS staff coordinating services and providing additional support.

I. COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT; DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

1. SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

A. QUALIFIED PERSONNEL NEEDS

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;

In fiscal years 2020 & 2021, the total number of consumers served by staff was 37,349 and 37,069, respectively. Among those with an Individualized Plan for Employment, the vast majority (94%) of individuals served were coded in case files as having significant disabilities or higher.

2021 RSA—2 Personnel Reporting Categories, Number Employed

Administrative Staff, 47

Counselor Staff, 200

Staff Supporting Counselor Activities, 190

Other Staff, 2

Total, 439

II. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CURRENTLY NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY; AND

Those classified as “counselor staff,” can be somewhat deceiving because it includes specialty staff (vision rehabilitation therapists and orientation and mobility specialists) that may not be considered actual vocational rehabilitation counselors. It also includes five “hybrid” counselors who work under the State of Alabama Independent Living Program (SAIL) and serve consumers who dually qualify for independent living services and vocational rehabilitation services. The actual number of DVR rehab counselors is closer to 172. These are counselors who provide

services through our field offices and One—Stop Career Center sites. Each of these counselors currently averages a caseload of approximately 167 consumers.

There is currently a state hiring freeze; however, the State Finance Director has granted a blanket approval for ADRS - DVR to fill direct service and direct-support service vacancies which are federally funded. With this approval, DVR will continue filling vacancies with qualified rehabilitation counseling staff.

A database is used to track the educational backgrounds and experience of the active counselors and field supervisors within the department for the express purpose of encouraging and enabling all staff to reach the state's highest definition of 'qualified rehabilitation professionals.' This database supports already existing systems and contains information gathered from educational transcripts required upon application to this job classification.

The agency employs vision rehabilitation therapists, orientation and mobility instructors, interpreters, and rehabilitation employment specialists (business relations consultants). A vision rehabilitation therapist must have at least a bachelor's degree and one year of experience are also employed ; however, most of these staff members have master's degrees. A qualification for orientation mobility instructor is an ACVREP or NOMC certification. Interpreters must be licensed or permitted by the Alabama Licensure Board for Interpreters and Transliterators. The business relations consultants may come from a business background or a vocational rehabilitation service background with appropriate degrees.

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.

Approximately, thirty-two (32) rehab counselors, thirty-three (33) clerical support staff, fifteen (15) supervisors from the "administrative staff" and six (6) specialists will be eligible to retire within the next five years based on their years of service. These numbers represent actual positions currently filled and do not include those budgeted positions presently not filled. In addition, field supervisors and rehabilitation specialist positions are included in this number because counselors are often promoted into these supervisory roles, leaving counselor vacancies. Therefore, we can project the need for approximately thirty-two (32) counselors over the next five years to remain staffed at the current budgeted level.

It is difficult to project/predict the number of 'Staff Supporting Counselor Activities' and 'Other' staff who may retire over the next five years; however, there are 86 DVR employees who will be eligible.

The department's Leadership Training Institute (LTI) graduated twenty-four (24) staff members in 2021, including fifteen (15) DVR employees. These graduates actively compete for leadership roles when vacancies occur. Another method of preparing LTI graduates for leadership roles is involving them in departmental task forces and special assignments. It gives current leadership the chance to see how well LTI graduates perform and the strengths they possess.

Rehabilitation counselors hired to work with the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services have to possess master's degrees from accredited colleges or universities in Rehabilitation Counseling, Rehabilitation Services, Rehabilitation Administration, Vocational Evaluation, or Counseling. These minimum requirements uphold the higher education standards of the program while creating a larger applicant pool to fill future vacancies.

There are currently 172 filled rehabilitation counselor positions, 16 vacancies, and 32 potential vacancies projected over the next 5 years.

There are currently 20 filled rehabilitation field supervisor positions, 0 vacancies, and 15 potential vacancies projected over the next 5 years.

There are currently 5 filled orientation and mobility specialist positions, 1 vacancy, and no anticipated vacancies projected over the next 5 years.

There are currently 9 filled interpreter positions, 4 vacancies, and 2 projected vacancy over the next 5 years.

There are currently 5 filled rehabilitation audiologist positions, 0 vacancy, and 0 projected vacancies over the next 5 years.

There are currently 18 filled vision rehabilitation therapist positions, 2 vacancies, and 2 potential vacancy over the next 5 years.

There are currently 10 filled rehabilitation technology specialist positions. There are no vacancies and there is 1 potential vacancy over the next 5 years.

B. PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

I. A LIST OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE THAT ARE PREPARING VR PROFESSIONALS, BY TYPE OF PROGRAM;

Currently, Alabama has five universities that offer the master's degree in rehabilitation counseling and eleven that offer counseling degrees in other areas. The universities are listed below.

ALABAMA A&M UNIVERSITY (Rehab Counseling)

ALABAMA STATE UNIVERSITY (Rehab Counseling)

AUBURN UNIVERSITY (Rehab Counseling & Other Counseling)

TROY UNIVERSITY (Rehab Counseling & Other Counseling – 4 campuses)

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA (Rehab Counseling & Other Counseling)

AUBURN MONTGOMERY (Other Counseling)

UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO (Other Counseling)

In addition to the master's-level rehab counseling and counseling programs mentioned above, there are also two other universities that offer CACREP accredited programs in Alabama: Jacksonville State University, University of North Alabama, University of South Alabama, and University of Alabama Birmingham. Updated enrollment and graduate data as reported by these four universities may be available to ADRS with the next CSPD reporting period. All of the above institutions can provide excellent candidates for available counseling positions. This translates into increased candidates for the department to recruit into employment.

The State Personnel Department's qualifications for rehabilitation counselor currently require specific master's degrees; therefore, ADRS will not be presented with candidates without appropriate degrees. Furthermore, candidates must provide an official transcript to ADRS prior to being appointed to a counselor position.

With the inclusion of master's degrees in counseling which are not specifically rehabilitation counseling, ADRS is able to increase the number of qualified candidates for employment in counseling positions.

II. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS, BROKEN DOWN BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; AND

Institution, Students Enrolled (Most recent information as reported by the universities below):

ALABAMA A&M UNIVERSITY, 25 (Rehab Counseling)

ALABAMA STATE UNIVERSITY, 18 (Rehab Counseling)

AUBURN UNIVERSITY, 24 (Rehab Counseling)

TROY UNIVERSITY, 95 (Rehab Counseling – 4 campuses)

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA, 58 (Rehab Counseling

AUBURN MONTGOMERY, 85 (Other Counseling)

UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO, 131 (Other Counseling)

In addition to the master's-level rehab counseling and counseling programs mentioned above, there are also four other universities that offer CACREP accredited programs in Alabama: Jacksonville State University, University of North Alabama, University of South Alabama, and University of Alabama Birmingham. Updated enrollment and graduate data as reported by these four universities will be submitted with the next CSPD reporting period, if available. Contact was not made with one of the universities and the other three universities did not respond to ADRS' request for data.

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.

Institution, Graduates from the previous year (Most recent information as reported by the universities below):

ALABAMA A&M UNIVERSITY, 5 (Rehab Counseling)

ALABAMA STATE UNIVERSITY, 13 (Rehab Counseling)

AUBURN UNIVERSITY, 24 (Rehab Counseling & Other Counseling)

TROY UNIVERSITY, 30 (Rehab Counseling & Other Counseling – 4 campuses)

AUBURN UNIVERSITY MONTGOMERY, 29 (Other Counseling)

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA, 8 (Rehab Counseling)

8 (Other Counseling)

In addition to the master's-level rehab counseling and counseling programs mentioned above, there are also four other universities that offer CACREP accredited programs in Alabama: Jacksonville State University, University of North Alabama, University of South Alabama, and University of Alabama Birmingham. Updated enrollment and graduate data as reported by these four universities will be submitted with the next CSPD reporting period, if available. Contact was not made with one of the universities and the other three universities did not respond to ADRS' request for data.

2. PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

With the addition of master's degrees in counseling which are not specifically rehabilitation counseling, ADRS is able to increase the number of qualified candidates for employment in counseling positions.

ADRS works diligently to implement strategies necessary to address personnel issues. Since 2002, the department has a dedicated staff specialist devoted to the issues of recruitment and retention. This individual works with the executive leadership team and task forces to create and implement a recruitment and retention plan that is updated to address the projected personnel needs of the department. However, ultimately the State Department of Personnel is the entity that provides and oversees hiring practices, salary schedules, and staff vacancies among other personnel issues. Within the strategic planning and implementation process, the following issues are addressed:

1. Maintain a strong relationship with key personnel at the State Department of Personnel and representatives of the universities offering educational opportunities for potential ADRS employees. Unpaid internships will continue to be offered as a recruiting tool for students in the field of rehabilitation. Paid internships are offered as a recruiting tool for rural areas, areas where certain degree programs do not exist, and specialty fields such as deaf services. The professional trainee job class may be used to attract individuals to pursue professions in rehabilitation requiring experience such as vision rehabilitation therapist. The trainee position allows dedicated individuals to train while gaining the experience needed to be eligible for hire. Currently, there are no professional trainees in the vision therapist field who are counted in the rehab counselors numbers, but they have been used and will be used in the future, when needed.

2. A hiring procedure known as 'disability preference' continues to enable ADRS to recruit qualified individuals with disabilities. Other avenues to recruit individuals with disabilities are made possible through specialty areas such as rehabilitation teaching and orientation and mobility. Also, educating consumers with the potential to pursue rehabilitation professions is a recruitment tool as well as supporting entry-level staff to pursue professional positions through a process of "grow your own." Additionally, ADRS participates in recruiting efforts/career fairs including those for persons with disabilities.

3. There is a continuation of promotions of deserving rehabilitation counselors to the senior rehabilitation counselor level. Promotions are based on exemplary performance of job duties and the ability to take on additional duties within the unit. This provides incentive for younger counselors to remain with the department and addresses the issue of supervisory succession planning. The counselors who are promoted and retained are then in line to fill supervisory vacancies, with proper training.

4. There are regularly scheduled exhibits at various professional, educational, and disability organization meetings to share employment opportunities with potential candidates. Exhibits are used for recruiting students into the field of rehabilitation and for recruiting professionals into positions within the department. Several ADRS administrators have served on advisory boards for rehabilitation counseling programs and are also asked to sit on interviewing panels for RSA scholarship recipients.

5. The ADRS recruiter maintains an active role on the advisory committees of Alabama A&M University and Alabama State University. Both universities are known as historically black colleges/universities and provide opportunities to recruit students from more diverse backgrounds to positions within the department. Seasoned and retired staff are encouraged to work as adjunct professors within the graduate rehabilitation counseling programs which affords a practical application of information to the students.

6. The development of marketing tools, created through annual meetings with educators, is being used to increase interest in the field of rehabilitation from high school students and encourage undergraduate students to pursue master's level work in one of the rehabilitation or counseling programs. Departmental transition counselors are used to recruit high school students across the state. There has also been increased participation in high school career events to educate students of the many professions within the department.

The ADRS public website includes an expanded career opportunities section that can be accessed by college career services, advocacy groups, and students. This section provides information on career opportunities and employee benefits available within the department.

The development of an orientation program for new employees, which includes a disability etiquette section, serves as a recruitment and retention tool. It provides information for new employees to effectively interact with individuals who have disabilities as well as knowledge regarding legal obligations and work procedures.

3. PERSONNEL STANDARDS

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

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services' standard for rehabilitation counselors is a master's degree in rehabilitation specific programs or counseling programs. Official transcripts are required prior to the appointment of candidates to counselor positions. The addition of the master's degree in counseling to the State standard has allowed for a larger applicant pool especially in rural areas and areas where rehabilitation counseling programs do not exist. The listed salary range of our beginning rehabilitation counselor positions is $40,065.60 - $60,746.40 and consists of eighteen pay steps. The senior rehabilitation counselor pay range is $42,103.20 - $67,008.00 and consists of 20 pay steps. Anticipated cost of living increases effective in October 2022, as proposed by Honorable Kay Ivey, Governor of Alabama, may again increase the salary rates of DVR counselors and senior counselors.

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.

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services' standard states that rehabilitation counselors will have a master's degree in rehabilitation specific programs or counseling programs. Further consideration beyond the minimum qualifications is given for candidates who have experience working with persons with disabilities, have obtained or are eligible to sit for the CRCC, have obtained licensure in counseling, and/or have vocational or evaluation coursework.

4. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

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

The Department has an extensive in-service training program. The department maintains a departmental training team that meets to identify, plan, and coordinate training. A department wide training plan, reviewed by this team on an on-going basis, targets core subjects as well as new topics related to particular job classifications or specialty areas.

(A)These topics may include, but are not limited to, the Americans with Disabilities Act, case management, Social Security work incentives, personally identifiable information, policy on agency data breach and data breach reporting guidelines, employment development, WIOA, medical aspects of disability, disability etiquette, assistive technology, assessment, job placement, ethics, and multicultural issues. At least two assistive technology expos/symposiums

are held annually to assist in carrying out section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998. The National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials is accessed as well as RSA webinars to disseminate knowledge to staff from research and other sources.

The department utilizes MAESTRO learning management software to track training records for each staff member. This software allows for input from both field and state office staff. MAESTRO will track an individual's training record, training dates, and future training needs. Zoom webinar system and in-house video-on-demand capabilities have broadened the counselors' ability to participate in training programs, webinars, and receive valuable time-sensitive information despite the on-going Covid pandemic. The use of webinars and Zoom for training increased greatly in an effort to eliminate in-person training and safely continue to provide professional training for ADRS employees during the Covid pandemic.

B. PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE FROM RESEARCH AND OTHER SOURCES TO DESIGNATED STATE UNIT PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS.

DVR coordinates with the Human Resource Development (HRD) and Business Relations (BR) to determine the information and training needs for professional and para- professional staff to assist in obtaining and disseminating professional information. HRD meets with and/or surveys staff to identify areas directly and indirectly related to the field of vocational rehabilitation. Based on the information obtained from staff and administration, DVR seeks training programs, webinars, and presenters demonstrating expertise knowledge in disabilities, technical issues, and federal and state policies, procedures and guidelines. In turn, DVR, BR, and HRD utilize the gained knowledge to develop instructor-led training programs and videos and to evaluate/offer appropriate webinars to staff. DVR administration and staff have attended national and state conferences, search professional internet sites, and review professional magazines, articles and federal and state guidelines to stay abreast of current trends in the field of vocational rehabilitation. Trainings, both formal and informal, are developed and presented regarding current trends to ensure that staff has up-to-date knowledge to provide services to consumers. Some of the topics of vocational rehabilitation knowledge provided to professional and para-professional staff include orientation for new counselors, orientation for new DVR supervisors, ethics in relation to vocational rehabilitation services and practices, social media/technology and ethics, WIOA guidelines, HIPPA, different aspects of various disabilities, mental health issues, (i.e., suicide, substance abuse, etc.), assistive technology, Social Security Administration and Work Incentives, labor market and work force trends/data, and leadership. These trainings have been presented virtually by providing webinars and Zoom in an effort to eliminate in-person training and safely continue to provide professional training for ADRS employees during the Covid pandemic.

The department's Leadership Training Institute (LTI) has been continuously changed and updated since 1994 to include new approaches and concepts of leadership. The 10th cohort of the LTI graduated September 2021. This LTI class includes fifteen (15) DVR field staff. LTI has proven to sufficiently meet the changing needs of the department by preparing staff to fill vacant leadership positions statewide.

The State Department of Personnel offers supervisory training in the areas of performance appraisal, progressive discipline, FMLA, sexual harassment, employment law, interview and selection, and the dynamics of supervision. A portion of these trainings are required for all new supervisors. During the pandemic, many of these trainings were offered virtually by the State Department of Personnel.

5. PERSONNEL TO ADDRESS INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS

ADRS maintains regular communication with programs providing specialized training in the areas of deafness and blindness. Communication is maintained with Western Oregon University

to train staff in the area of deafness. Staff members serving the deaf and hard-of-hearing populations attend an annual training conference to address issues relative to deaf services and to meet with students at the Alabama School for the Deaf. The department also remains actively involved with Mississippi State University's blind program. Mississippi State also assists the blind programs with consumer satisfaction surveys. Staff members serving the blind and low vision populations attend training programs annually to address issues relative to blind services.

The department possesses Braille and large print producing capabilities in local offices to address the needs of Braille and large print users. UbiDuos and video phones are available in the reception areas, resource rooms, and counselor offices to assist staff and consumers with communication and hearing difficulties. ADRS requires all counselors for the deaf to be proficient in sign language to communicate with deaf consumers in their native language. To qualify for both the VR counselor and deaf support specialist positions, a person must possess an Intermediate rating on the Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI). In addition, ADRS currently employs 9 full-time, nationally certified sign language interpreters. These interpreters help to facilitate communication between the deaf community and any ADRS staff. Our staff interpreters make every effort to provide services as needed but when necessary, qualified contract interpreters are also made available.

ADRS continues to work with Alabama A&M University to target and recruit candidates for the rehabilitation counseling program in either the blindness or deafness tract. This two-year master's program includes the second year in Mississippi (MSU Vision Specialist) or Tennessee (UT's Orientation to Deafness) for the specialized training. Troy University and Winston-Salem University in North Carolina both have new deaf concentrations in their rehabilitation counseling programs and work closely with ADRS.

ADRS applicants and eligible individuals who speak limited English can be provided interpreters or are able to access vendors for remote interpreter services. The ADRS consumer guide has been translated into Spanish, and can be translated into other languages based on the needs of the consumer. Spanish instruction is encouraged by using technology and individual instruction either online or in person for staff.

6. COORDINATION OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

Approximately half of ADRS cases served and the closures obtained, involve transition students. In FY 2019, 16,987 eligible youth and students received services. Among these, 1,861 were successfully rehabilitated. Also, in this time period, 13,297 potentially eligible students with disabilities were provided pre-employment transition services. The department continues to strengthen the jointly funded pre-ets specialist program with thirty-one (31) LEAs across the state and two (2) with the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind (AIDB). This program is designed to provide pre-employment transition services, that are not typically or customarily provided by the LEA, to prepare students with disabilities to enter competitive integrated employment by identifying and exploring career interests, as well as, increasing individual independence, self-sufficiency and inclusion of students with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, in their communities. The program is supervised by local VR service staff with input from school system staff and employs full-time and part-time pre-ets specialists. Students, parents, rehabilitation counselors, local school special and regular education staff, and the pre-ets specialists, work together to plan for students' successful and smooth transitions to adult life and work.

ADRS continues efforts to develop and improve transition partnerships, programs and service models to meet the needs of students with more—significant disabilities and overcome barriers to employment and community living. College Prep Program services were offered at twelve sites around the state, with more than 250 students participating.

Collaboration with the Special Education Division of the Department of Education and the Department of Corrections continues as ADRS implements the Prison Transition Initiative for youth with disabilities incarcerated in adult prisons.

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is annually provided an opportunity to give input about the department's CSPD initiatives. Current and future personnel issues are presented by field services program directors. Detailed information is presented through discussions, handouts and questions and answers. Comments and suggestions are requested at any time throughout the year.

Coordination for staff development and training to disseminate pertinent information, changes in the law, requirements for agencies, etc. occurs in various ways and in various venues. ADRS participates in trainings hosted by ALSDE at both the statewide level (Mega) and at the local level through advisory boards. We participate and collaborate on the Transition Conference hosted by Auburn Transition Leadership Institute (ATLI) jointly participating in planning all the training for the conference. ADRS also collaborates on the local level with special education personnel (LEA's, special education teachers, transition teachers, pre-employment transition personnel and 504 coordinators in planning pre-employment services to all students at the local high school level through Transition Unlimited. These services are conjointly decided upon, monitored and evaluated through a website developed for this purpose. Staff have been provided training and have been introduced to all the changes in WIOA that are related to students and youth with disabilities.

J. STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT

1. PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE REHABILITATION NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING WITHIN THE STATE, PARTICULARLY THE VR SERVICES NEEDS OF THOSE:

A. WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

A Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment was completed for Fiscal Year 2020. Local Stakeholder Input Meetings were completed within each of Alabama's seven workforce regions in the fall of 2019. These public forums were conducted by Governor's office staff and were well attended by members of Alabama's disability community. From these meetings, seven key areas of need emerged:

- Improved access to public transportation, especially in rural areas, would broaden access to opportunity;
- Better availability of quality childcare would, for those with young families, remove barriers and disincentives to labor force participation;
- Greater ADA compliance and disability accommodations would enable more individuals to enter and sustain employment;
- Greater access to technology including broadband access in rural areas would open doors to participation in training and employment;
- Enhancements in quality and equity in education and training opportunities;
- Improved coordination and accountability among Workforce System service providers; and
- Greater access to health and healthcare benefits.

Findings of the 2020 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment indicate that Alabamian's with the most significant disabilities (more so than others) need highly individualized employment services, specialized training and equipment, help with auxiliary problems, and an

extended duration of support. Within fiscal years 2018 through 2020, among 19,360 individuals that were closed after receiving service, 4,789 (25%) had been designated to the agency's Most Significant Disability (MSD) category. Individuals in the MSD group were more likely to have a disability attributed to Autism Spectrum Disorder, Intellectual Disability, Deaf-Blindness, Traumatic Brain Injury, Serious Mental Illness (especially Schizophrenia and other Psychotic Disorders), Spinal Cord Injury, Congenital Conditions or Birth Injury (such as Cerebral Palsy or Spina Bifida), Neurological Disorders (arising from Epilepsy, Stroke, or Parkinson's), Blindness, and Deafness. The average cost of purchased services for individuals in the MSD category was over $1,000 dollars higher per case than non MSD individuals. The higher amount appears due to differences in both the type and intensity of services purchased. With regard to type of services, individuals in the MSD category had much higher than average expenditures on Medical Supplies, Wheelchairs, Personal Assistance, Surgery and Treatment, and Vehicle Modification and other Transportation related services. With regard to intensity and/or duration of services, higher than average expenditures for persons in the MSD group were noted for Therapy (Speech, OT, PT, etc.), Job Coaching, Paid Work Experience, Diagnostic Medical Services, and Vocational Evaluation.

By examining data obtained from respondents to the Alabama State Rehabilitation Council's 2017 Unmet Needs Survey, we learned that Alabamians with disabilities who have been unemployed for long periods of time were more likely to report employment challenges related to transportation and their maintenance of health. Consistent with the 2014 iteration of this survey, a large number of narrative responses expressed frustration over transportation resources, especially those living in rural areas. Many expressed concerns over the affordability of housing and health care. Several individuals expressed a fear of losing government benefits. Another finding consistent with the 2014 survey (especially among those with the greatest functional limitations) is the expression of a need for more intensive job placement services. Several individuals desired that the agency take more proactive steps aimed at helping them get "a foot in the door" with employers. This year's narrative responses also included quite a few comments regarding the specific needs of individuals experiencing limitations due to mental illness. Many expressed concerns over limitations experienced due to the cyclical nature of mental illness, unmet treatment and medication needs, and a desire for more individualized services that are sensitive to unique challenges among those with mental health diagnoses. Several individuals expressed interest in VR providing employment services through Certified Peer Support Specialists. A pilot Peer Support Specialist program was launched in 2020.

Yet another perspective on the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities was available by examining the services most often anticipated for MSD individuals by counselors during the eligibility determination process. From 2018 to 2020, 61% of persons with MSD had a supported employment goal on their IPE. More often than those in other eligible categories, persons deemed MSD were anticipated to require Supported Employment Services, Customized Employment Services, Job Readiness Training, and Rehabilitation Technology and/or Devices.

By definition, Supported Employment is a unique employment service for individuals with the most significant disabilities who require ongoing support services to succeed in competitive employment. In one sense, the employment needs of individuals requiring supported employment are the same as would be expected of anyone else; inclusion in the community, opportunity for advancement, competitive pay and benefits. The uniqueness of supported employment is its proactive role in the course of job development, customization of tasks, and the provision of long-term supports. Program data and input from the SRC cited above indicate increasing demand for these services. ADRS recognizes the value of supported employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities and has continued to increase strategic investments in these services despite budget challenges and constraints. Considerable efforts have been made to expand availability, enrollment and the array of providers statewide.

B. WHO ARE MINORITIES;

While results of the 2017 and the 2020 CSNA's did not indicate any specific ethnic groups with limited access to VR services, ADRS continues to assess its services to individuals with disabilities from minority populations. For the most part, the needs of minority respondents to the 2017 SRC Unmet Needs Survey were parallel to those of individuals of non—minority backgrounds. However, some differentiation can be noted. Respondents from minority backgrounds were more likely than others to report difficulties with transportation, housing, and access to training services. Although not reflected in the SRC survey, external research regarding minorities with disabilities identify language barriers as a concern, particularly among those of Hispanic or Asian origin. ADRS remains sensitive to language and cultural barriers that may occur during outreach and service delivery.

Recent Data from the American Community Survey (ACS) indicates a higher prevalence of disability among persons who may be considered minorities with the exception of those of Asian or Hispanic origin. African American individuals make up nearly 27% of Alabama's total population and there is a 17% disability rate among Alabama's African American Population as compared to a 14% rate among whites. Data from the Census Bureau regarding individuals who may be considered minorities in Alabama demonstrates a level of unemployment that is nearly double the rate of non-minorities in 2015. This disparity ranks Alabama 34th among states. While rates of disability and unemployment are higher among minorities in Alabama, so too is VR program participation among those same minority groups. For example, whereas Alabama's African American population comprises 27% of the total populous, African Americans make up 43% of those participating in VR services over the last three fiscal years. Findings of the 2017 and 2020 CSNA suggest a significant increase in the number of Hispanic individuals with disabilities present within VR's service population. While 4% of Alabama's total population are of Hispanic decent, only 1.48% of Alabamians with disabilities are of Hispanic origin. More recent data from the 2020 census indicate the Hispanic or Latino percentage of the population in Alabama increased to 5.2%. Program data support the conclusion that VR services are made available equitably across all areas of the state. Representative diversity among minority populations can be demonstrated in terms of outreach, eligibility and program outcomes. Nevertheless, efforts will continue at the local level to be sure that minorities are aware of agency services and programs. Furthermore, the agency employs a diversity & recruitment coordinator to ensure that we have a diverse staff to meet the varied needs of the consumers served by the agency. ADRS maintains a diversity plan that has been approved by the administration. This plan indicates strategies to hire minority staff to work within the agency. The agency conducts diversity training for all agency staff to address the needs of diverse consumers the agency serves. ADRS recognizes and has addressed statewide needs for contract interpreting services, particularly among individuals within the Hispanic population, but within other populations as well.

C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

Regarding "underserved" individuals, federal guidelines do not prescribe specific groups for analysis. Rather, it has been suggested that each state should examine matters from multiple perspectives to identify potentially underserved populations. This CSNA considered input received from the State Rehabilitation Council via the 2017 Unmet Needs Survey and also by way of its Report of Public Forums. It also conducted an analysis of internal program data, and in doing so, this CSNA defined the term "underserved" as any group for whom it may be shown that any of the following conditions are true; a higher than average percentage of those closed from eligibility for reasons that the individual's disability was too severe, or, a rehabilitation rate that is far below that of the agency average, or average weekly earnings far below the agency average. All things considered, the 2017 CSNA identified the following groups as potentially underserved: A.) Individuals with Autism, B.) Individuals who are Blind, C.) Individuals who are Deaf, D.) Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities, E.) Individuals with Major Physical Impairments, F.) Individuals with Serious Mental Health Impairments, and G.) Individuals with Disabilities who receive Social Security. Evaluation of the 2020 CSNA does not

contradict the earlier findings in the 2017 CSNA and offers further support for the groups identified in the 2020 state plan.

Group A —Individuals with Autism: The top vocational rehabilitation needs identified among those with autism spectrum disorders were: Supported Employment, Extended Supports, Living Wage & Benefits, Applied Social Skills Training, and Employment Preparation & Job Placement that capitalizes on the individual's strengths and interests. VR program data examined over a six year span indicate that the majority of VR consumers with an autism diagnosis were in need of supported employment services. While the agency's rehabilitation rate for individuals with autism outperforms the agency average from FY 2014 through 2016, weekly wage outcomes were significantly lower than the agency norm. Training compatible with the individualized interests of persons with Autism Spectrum Disorders has been shown to positively impact rehabilitation outcomes and earnings.

Post-secondary education support for those meeting college admission requirements should include efforts to insure adequate post-secondary accommodations and college preparation. Persons with Autism who do not require supported employment have been found in need of individualized job development more so than most other disability types. The nature of functional limitations associated with Autism Spectrum Disorders can often complicate interpersonal relationships. Situational coaching and applied social skills training have been found useful in this regard.

Group B — Individuals who are Blind: The top vocational rehabilitation needs identified among individuals who are blind were: Orientation & Mobility Training, Assistive Technology, Transportation, and Career Guidance. While the agency's average weekly wage for individuals who are blind outperforms the agency's total average from FY 2014 through 2016, the rehabilitation rate for blind individuals (57.4%) was significantly lower than the agency norm (67.5%) for the time period. Many rehabilitation outcomes were hindered due to limitations in personal independence and transportation. Research has shown orientation & mobility training, education, and competence with assistive technology has been shown to positively impact rehabilitation outcomes and earnings (Bell, 2015). SRC members representing the blind community have emphasized the need for career guidance that supports preparation for in-demand careers, such as those within science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

Group C — Individuals who are Deaf: The top vocational rehabilitation needs identified among individuals who are deaf were: Interpreting Services, Assistive Technology, Career Guidance, and Training for In-Demand Occupations. Although agency outcomes (in terms of rehabilitation rate and average weekly wage) for individuals who are deaf are both above the agency average, many individuals who are deaf and working were found to be in un-skilled, semiskilled or other manual occupations. Historically, there has been an under representation of the deaf population in professional and administrative occupations. Concerns have been raised that jobs held by individuals in this population are frequently characterized by low job security and little opportunity for advancement beyond entry-level. Research has shown that, though reliable and stable employees, the average individual who is deaf and working earns 72 percent as much as the average individual with normal hearing in the labor force. Pre-vocational individuals who are deaf have greater difficulty in obtaining employment. The average levels of educational completion fall below that of the general population, further handicapping their ability to compete. Obstacles surrounding communication are important factors related to the earnings and occupational attainment of these workers.

Group D — Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities: The top vocational rehabilitation needs identified among individuals with intellectual disabilities were: Community Inclusion, Fair Wages, Employment Supports and Benefits. Agency outcomes in FY 2014 through 2016 for persons with intellectual disabilities for both rehabilitation rate and weekly wage were significantly lower than the agency norm. VR program data examined over a six year span

indicate that the majority of VR consumers with an intellectual disability were in need of supported employment services. Many publications acknowledge the importance of school to work transition outcomes, that early exposure to a wide range of work-based learning experiences plays a large part in later outcomes for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Regarding those who have already made the transition from secondary education, it will be important for VR to monitor and address the need to offer VR services to those individuals who are currently being served within day programs.

Group E —Individuals with Major Physical Impairments: The top vocational rehabilitation needs identified among individuals with major physical impairments were: Accessibility, Transportation, Assistive Technology, Housing, and Medical Care & Supplies. Many persons with physical limitations made their voices heard in the 2017 SRC Unmet Needs Survey and also at SRC Public Forums held around the state. Transportation and accessibility remain formidable barriers for wheelchair users, often presenting a more daunting challenge than work itself. Many told us of ongoing health care needs that are expensive and impossible to manage without proper medical benefits. Others emphasized the challenges they face finding accessible, affordable housing.

Group F —Individuals with Serious Mental Health Impairments. The top vocational rehabilitation needs identified among individuals with mental health impairments were: Access to Mental Health Care & Treatment, Individualized Placement Supports. Persons with mental health impairments are well represented in the ADRS service population, and are found in adequate proportion in all areas of the state. In terms of rehabilitation outcomes, however, agency data reveals that both weekly wage outcomes and rehabilitation rate were below the agency norm for the period. It has been established that some persons with Mental Health Disabilities, particularly those with the most significant disabilities, require specialized services that are sensitive to the unique limitations and treatment needs that are common among this population. Along this line of reasoning, several participants in this year's SRC Unmet Needs Survey expressed interest in VR's backing of the Individualized Placement and Supports model, as well as funding for Certified Peer Support Specialists.

Group G —Individuals with Disabilities who receive Social Security: To be eligible for Social Security Disability Insurance (DI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), a person must be deemed unable to engage in substantial gainful activity (SGA) due to a significant and long-lasting health condition. Because of this requirement, once receiving benefits, those who may be willing and able to work are often afraid of losing their benefits if they earn too much. Others are confused by the complex program rules governing benefit receipt for beneficiaries who work. Still others are unaware of the various incentives that SSA provides to encourage beneficiaries to return to work. VR Customers on the roles of SSI/SSDI need guidance tailored to their unique circumstances. This guidance should come with persons who possess a deep knowledge of the relationship between SSA work incentives and the VR process.

D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

Each year, Alabamians with disabilities are served by other workforce programs, sometimes while duly enrolled with VR, and others exclusively by workforce programs. The primary need of individuals with disabilities participating within workforce programs is that the services and training offered should be accessible. Among those duly enrolled with VR, there is a need for services to be coordinated and unduplicated. Regarding accessibility, ADRS maintains a very active relationship with its workforce partners to ensure the accessibility of one stop career centers across the state. Regarding service coordination and the non-duplication of effort, we anticipate improvement in the coming years as implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act more closely aligns ADRS with its workforce partners.

E. WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

Findings from the 2020 CSNA indicate that Alabama's Youth with Disabilities continue to be affected by disproportionately high dropout rates, markedly lower rates of enrollment and completion of postsecondary education, and significantly higher rates of unemployment or underemployment. These observations are borne out by data from the Alabama Department of Education, the Census Bureau, as well as ADRS's own program statistics and survey research. Recently published findings from the National Longitudinal Transition Study demonstrated that Youth with an Individualized Education Plan are more likely than their peers to be socioeconomically disadvantaged, experience difficulty completing typical tasks independently, and find themselves the object of bullying. Youth with an IEP were found to be suspended at higher rates and to lag their peers in planning and taking steps to obtain postsecondary education and jobs (Lipscomb et al., 2017). Furthermore, Youth with autism, deaf-blindness, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, and orthopedic impairments appear to be at highest risk for challenges making a successful transition from high school.

The problems and disadvantages described above may be reframed in terms of rehabilitation service needs. For Youth and Students with Disabilities to achieve their maximum potential, rehabilitation services should be made available that: a.)support optimal secondary education outcomes, b.) provide early exposure to a range of high quality career and higher education information, c.) create early opportunities for work based learning in competitive, integrated environments, d.) support the development of healthy self-esteem, self-advocacy, and self-determination, e.) promote attainment of in-demand skills and credentials. Data reviewed in this CSNA suggest that Youth and Students whose disabilities present the greatest functional limitations require the same set of services, yet the means of service delivery needed by these individuals is often more intensive and individualized. This holds true for Youth and Students with Disabilities affected by poverty, a limited social support network, and/or involvement in the juvenile justice system.

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

While the findings of the 2017 CSNA do not suggest the need to establish further community rehabilitation programs within the state, changes underway that concern implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act make clear the need for certain developments and improvements. Since passage of WIOA in 2014, ADRS has worked closely with its Community Rehabilitation Program partners to adjust and implement WIOA's historic mandate. Influencing these historic changes are:

- Regulations on Transition Services and Pre-Employment Transition Services
- Regulations on Employment Outcomes and Competitive Integrated Employment
- Regulations on Supported Employment
- Regulations concerning VR Performance Indicators
- Regulations on Section 511 and Limitations on Use of Sub-Minimum Wage

The process of re-allocating our resources with the CRP program has already begun with Pre-Employment Transition Services and so far is considered a success. Of the total CRP set-aside dollars authorized to date in FY 17, 33% is for Pre-ETS service. Of all the consumers who had an authorization in the set aside, over 50% of these were students with disabilities. However, the number of adults and students with disabilities experienced a significant decline in FY 21 due to the pandemic. As access to schools has occurred, the numbers served appear to be returning to near pre-pandemic levels. The provision of Pre ETS through CRPs is an essential component of the department's plan to meet the needs of students with disabilities. In order to continue at

this pace and to provide the services our consumers need to become better equipped to work, the method of payment for services provided by the CRP needs to transition from a performance or outcome based system as in STEPS I, II, and III to a service based system as we have done with Pre-ETS. It is proposed that these services be phased in as the CRP becomes prepared to provide them and meet the demands of the counselors. However, most of the CRP's are already equipped to or are providing these services.

The restrictions placed on access to sub-minimum wage and the expansion of supported employment opportunities are significant but not particularly new in the VR program. Sheltered employment at below minimum wage has not been a suitable outcome for VRS for almost 20 years. WIOA simply made it much more difficult for a person to by-pass VR and select sub-minimum wage employment. Most of the traditional community rehabilitation partners in the state have relinquished their Department of Labor (DOL) sub-minimum wage certificates in favor of paying at least the minimum wage in what was traditionally called "sheltered employment". With supported employment, the law places an emphasis on providing services to youth with disabilities and for providing extended supports for a longer period of time before the ongoing support is transitioned from VR to another provider.

Counselors are being trained on the new WIOA initiatives and requirements. An emphasis is being placed on providing services that will make a person more capable of getting and maintaining a job than they were when they applied for VR services. This might include sponsorship in vocational, technical, or post-secondary training. It may include purchase of and training in the use of adaptive equipment or adaptive driving to overcome employment barriers. Or it may involve a referral to a CRP for job readiness, Smart Work Ethics, transitional employment, vocational assessment, work adjustment, career assessment, paid work experience, on the job evaluation or any other number of services to prepare and orient a consumer to the demands and skill requirements of work.

The WIOA performance indicators which will now be imposed on VR programs have been utilized for many years by our DOL partners. These performance indicators place a greater emphasis on employment retention and earnings after the employment outcome has been achieved. While VRS will still be judged on persons who maintain employment for 90 days and are closed as successfully rehabilitated, equal or greater weight will be given to whether that person has maintained employment for up to a year after services have been discontinued. Median earnings of all persons who retain employment is also a new standard for VR. These two indicators are intended to bring about a change in the services rendered to consumers. AVRS requires CRP partners who are committed to outcomes in which consumers maintain employment and earn a living wage.

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

ADRS recognizes that the provision of pre-employment transition services on an effective, equitable, statewide basis raises the bar for partnership with our secondary education partners. Section 113 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) requires VR agencies to go well beyond the level of coordination with
education officials that has been established since 1973. Identification and referral of students is now but one aspect of VR's coordination with education officials. VR must also have in place processes and procedures for ensuring eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities are aware of pre-employment transition services, and that they participate whenever the service is needed.

It is fortunate that prior to new WIOA requirements for students with disabilities, ADRS had enjoyed a long and productive relationship with the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE). ADRS maintains a formal Interagency Agreement with the ALSDE for the provision of transition services. At the state level, ADRS participates as an equal partner in the Alabama State Interagency Transition Team. At the local level, the ADRS has a counselor assigned to each high school to act as transition counselor. Furthermore, ADRS has for years been committed to the financial support of jointly funded positions, i.e. Pre-Employment Transition Specialists, in local education agencies to assist with the provision of transition services. Shortly after the final WIOA regulations were released in August of 2016, however, ADRS recognized the need for a comprehensive effort to build upon existing capacity and foster greater connections between ADRS staff and their Department of Education counterparts at the local level.

It is upon the foundation outlined above that ADRS collaborated with the AuburnTransition Leadership Institute to launch an effort entitled Transition Unlimited. Transition Unlimited is an Alabama pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) initiative designed to build capacity and connect services to appropriately implement pre-employment transition services throughout the state. Transition Unlimited accomplishes this through the development of transition teams at the local level. These teams meet face to face to assess the LEA's unique pre-employment transition needs, documenting these within a web-based "Action Plan." Each action plan documents levels of need across each of the five pre-employment transition service types, as well as the "who, what, where and when" questions inherent to service provision. Action plans are monitored and followed up upon and all team members have access to the plan via the Transition Unlimited web-portal. In the summer of 2021, ADRS elected to renew Transition Unlimited for the 2022 fiscal year. The annual Transition Unlimited Team meeting was held virtually to provide information on Pre-ETS and transition updates. After the virtual meeting the counselors met with their Transition Unlimited Teams in their schools to develop action plans. Through the efforts of nearly 750 persons in attendance, 364 high schools developed Action Plans. Once plans are developed, team members are given online access to the Transition Unlimited site, wherein they can monitor progress, receive technical assistance, share resources, and collaborate to achieve action items.

Findings gathered from these 364 action plans suggest that student needs for pre- employment transition services vary by school system and by characteristics unique to each individual student. Individual variation of student Pre-ETS needs were dependent upon multiple factors such as age and grade level. In several schools, students participated in school led Pre-ETS activities during grades 9 and 10. Variation of Pre-ETS needs by school system was found to be relative to a system's availability of transition focused resources. Transition Unlimited helped illustrate that while some schools have ample human and capital resources for transition related services, others do not. These findings lend support to the assertion made above regarding the demand for Pre-ETS — not all students who may benefit from Pre-ETS are in need of these services within each and every academic year.

After completion of five years of Transition Unlimited, ADRS administration felt that the initiative's value as a tool to extend coordination with education officials for the provision of pre-employment transition services had been proven. It is anticipated that the initiative's collaborative model and tools will continue to be useful for years to come

K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES

Data from the American Community Survey estimate Alabama's population to have a 16.3% rate of disability in 2018. This rate has remained fairly consistent over the past ten years. Of roughly 4.82 million citizens of all age groups (in 2018), over 786,000 were said to have disabilities. Many of those represented in this broad statistic would not be among the target population for VR services. ADRS estimates its potential service population as being comprised of four groups:

A. Unemployed labor force participants,

B. Under-employed labor force participants,

C. Non-participants in the labor force are students or those who may be characterized as "marginally attached" or "discouraged" workers. This would also include individuals who have never been employed due to disability or have left the work force due to a disability.

D. Potentially Eligible Students with Disabilities

The most recent information from the American Community survey estimates a population of 335,800 persons in Alabama between the ages of 16-20. The ACS estimates that 6.8% of this population are persons with disabilities, or an estimated 22,834. Information from the American Community survey estimates a population of 2,718,000 persons in Alabama between the ages of 21-64. The ACS estimates that 14.9% of this population are persons with disabilities, or an estimated 404,982.

The estimate for employed persons with disabilities in the age group of 16-20 is 18.3% or 4,178 young people who are of transition age and are likely to be in school. The estimate for the adult population 21-64 is that 28.9% or 117,040 persons with disabilities are employed,

The total population of person with disabilities in the two age groups equals 427,816, of which 306,598 are not employed and 121,218 are employed. Valid underemployment data is not readily available and may be invalid in 2022 due to the pandemic. However, the most recent data suggest a conservative estimate of 11.1% of workers are underemployed. Using this estimate, an additional 13,455 persons with disabilities could be candidates for VR service. This results in a total of 320,053 individuals who could be candidates for VR services. As Alabama's annual population growth is approximately .0025, the changes in the available population are more likely to be affected by individuals entering into or exiting the selected ages ranges than by population growth within the 16-65 age range. Therefore, we will use the estimated population of potential candidates for VR services for the year's 2022 and 2023 as 320,053.

Of the potential population (described above), the ADRS estimate for total individuals to be served in FY20 was 35,000 including potentially eligible students with disabilities. However, a continued growth of consumers served as potentially eligible and eligible transition age youth increased the total population to 37,349 in FY 2020 and 37,068 in FY 2021. Although the pandemic has reduced the number of new VR applicants and students with disabilities over the last two years, the transition aged students who received services as potentially eligible and often eventually apply for services and receive services in subsequent years as a regular participant will remain stable. This total distinct number of individuals served is expected to remain stable at approximately 37,000 in FY 2022 and 2023.

Based on this analysis, ADRS estimates a total of 37,000 individuals to be served through the VR program in FY 22 and 23. Of this 37,000 approximately 10,000 individuals will be served as potentially eligible or eligible with funds set aside for Pre-Employment transition services. The estimated amount of these funds for FY 22 is $10,353,499.

For Fiscal Year (FY) 22, beginning October 1, 2021 ,it is estimated that of the 37,000 individuals who will receive services, 23,000 will be eligible for services under the VR program. It is estimated that 800 additional individuals will receive assessment and diagnostic services as applicants without moving to eligibility or service status. Over the previous two years ADRS has consistently implemented new plans on average to 7,000 new individuals. It was estimated that ADRS would implement approximately 7,000 new plans in FY 20 with approximately 14,000 individuals implementing plan at the beginning of the period. This target estimate was exceeded with 7,700 new plans and 16.700 individuals with a plan in FY 21. This increase was due to an increase in the number of consumers moved from potentially eligible status to eligible status during the year. It was estimated for FY 22 the numbers will return to FY 19 levels and remain

stable as the large influx of students with disabilities becoming eligible will not be as great as the first few years of implementation of Pre-Employment Transition Services. However, the estimate for FY 21 of 23,000 individuals was exceeded by 1,400. FY 22, and 23 should return to pre-pandemic levels with 23,000 individuals being served as eligible under the VR program.

2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

A. THE VR PROGRAM;

During FY 22 it is estimated 23,000 individuals will be eligible for services under the VR program. It is estimated 19,300 people with disabilities will be served under part B of Title I and 3,700 will be served under Part B of Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.

During FY 23 it is estimated that the numbers will remain stable with a small increase in the number served under supported employment instead of title I. It is estimated 19,200 people with disabilities will be served under part B of Title I and 3,800 will be served under Part B of Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.

B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

It was estimated 3,500 individuals with disabilities will have a supported employment plan in FY 21, and is it is estimated that approximately 3,700 in FY 22, and 3,800 in FY 23 will have supported employment plans.

C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION.

ADRS is not in 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

ADRS is not in an order of selection.

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.

For FY 22, the following estimates apply: It is estimated a total $92,352,821 will be available to deliver services which includes Title I funds, state matching, Social security reimbursement and funds earmarked for the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services. In FY 21 approximately 59% of the Students receiving Pre-Employment Transition Services were students who were potentially eligible or not yet eligible for VR. Subtracting an estimated 59% ($6,108,564) of the estimated $10,353,499 reserved for Pre-Employment Transition services, the funds available for the delivery of services to eligible consumers and applicants is $86,244,257.

FY 22

Estimated Number to be Served 23,000

$86,244,257 Total Funds available

Average Cost of Services Part B Title I Funds = $3,750

FY 23

Estimated Number to be Served 23,000

$86,244,257 Total Funds available

Average Cost of Services Part B Title I Funds = $3,750

For FY 22 it is estimated there will be 3,700 eligible consumers under Title VI.

The federal grant award for Title VI funds available is projected to be $316,667 for each fiscal year.

The average cost of serving an eligible consumer is approximately $3,750. Therefore only 84 eligible individuals will be served with the available Title VI federal grant award. 50% or more of these individuals will be consumers who are youth with the most significant disabilities. The remainder of the consumers receiving services under a supported employment plan will receive such services under Title I funds. It is estimated that funding under Title VI will remain stable.

These estimates of funds available and number of persons served will be the same for Fiscal Year 22 and 23.

FY 22- $316,667 with 84 individuals to be served with the available Title VI fund grant award.

FY 23- $316,667 with 84 individuals to be served with the available Title VI fund grant award.

L. STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

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

The goals below were jointly developed and agreed to by the agency and the State Rehabilitation Council. The SRC and the agency jointly reviewed the goals and jointly agreed to any revisions. These goals were developed after analysis of available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program including reports and recommendations from the SRC and the statewide needs assessment.

2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

State Plan Goals PY 2020 and 2021

1. Expand and improve competitive integrated employment, job retention and advancement opportunities for youth and adults with disabilities.

2. Improve services, outcomes, approaches, and supports for Alabamians with the most significant disabilities including supported employment opportunities.

3. Maintain high levels of consumer satisfaction.

4. Continue to serve all eligible applicants and avoid an order of selection.

Additional State Plan Goals for PY2022 and 2023 based on the most recent Comprehensive Needs Assessment

5. Assure that Alabamians with disabilities negatively affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic are of special interest and concern within planning and operational efforts aimed at recovery.

6. Advance efforts that improve the department's working alliance and integration with the Alabama Workforce Development System.

7. Improve outreach and service delivery to unserved and underserved Alabamians with disabilities.

8. Develop and improve training and other resources for community rehabilitation programs.

9. Advance collaboration between administrative and field staff to improve operational efficiencies, develop needed training, and update antiquated or unclear policies and procedures.

3. ENSURE THAT THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES ARE BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

A. THE MOST RECENT COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT, INCLUDING ANY UPDATES;

These goals and priorities are based on the most recent comprehensive statewide needs assessment completed in the fall of 2017 and 2020.

B. THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

At the beginning of PY 20, ADRS had three years of baseline data for Measurable Skill Gains. Based on this baseline, RSA and ADRS negotiated an MSG rate of 28% as a target for PY 20. The actual attainment for PY20 was 42.2% based on a significant increase in the number of skill gains achieved. RSA has indicated the MSG performance measure expected and targeted goals will be reassessed based on more recent information and will be included in this 2023 updated state plan for PY 22 goals.

Three years of baseline data is available for the following

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit); Three years
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); Two years
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); Three years
- Credential Attainment Rate Two years

C. OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON THE OPERATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE VR PROGRAM, INCLUDING ANY REPORTS RECEIVED FROM THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL AND FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MONITORING ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED UNDER SECTION 107.

These goals and priorities are based on: A)the most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, B) the state's performance under the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA, C) other available information from the State Rehab Council and D)input from 107 monitoring team in July 2018.

M. ORDER OF SELECTION

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

This agency is not implementing an Order of Selection. Should an Order of Selection become necessary, this section will be amended to include a description of the above criteria.

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER

This agency is not implementing an Order of Selection. Should an Order of Selection become necessary, this section will be amended to include a description of the above criteria.

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS

This agency is not implementing an Order of Selection. Should an Order of Selection become necessary, this section will be amended to include a description of the above criteria.

D. TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER; AND

This agency is not implementing an Order of Selection. Should an Order of Selection become necessary, this section will be amended to include a description of the above criteria.

E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

This agency is not implementing an Order of Selection. Should an Order of Selection become necessary, this section will be amended to include a description of the above criteria.

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

This agency is not implementing an Order of Selection. Should an Order of Selection become necessary, this section will be amended to include a description of the above criteria.

N. GOALS AND PLANS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS

1. SPECIFY THE STATE'S GOALS AND PRIORITIES FOR FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER SECTION 603 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) has an extensive history and commitment to providing supported employment within the state. ADRS matches Supported Employment grant dollars at over 10 times the amount of the grant award. Our state currently receives a formula grant award of $300,000 in Title VI funds. Our state currently receives a formula grant of 300,000 in Title VI funds. We request additional reallocated dollars when available. These Title VI funds are only spent on individuals in supported employment after an employment outcome is achieved. Our state currently expends over 4.5 million dollars on supported employment assessments and services. IPS moved from a contracted service to a fee for service. Additionally, we typically spend over 1 million on contracted services for Project SEARCH. This amount was reduced last fiscal year due to the pandemic causing some sites to go on hiatus. Most of our sites will be retuning this year.

The priority of the department is to improve services to Alabamians with the most significant disabilities. ADRS distributes supported employment funds to its rehabilitation counselors who in turn purchase needed supported employment services through a network of approved vendors utilizing a Milestones outcome based payment system. This process provides payments to authorized supported employment providers for assisting individuals to reach Milestones toward successful employment. Supported Employment providers are reimbursed for the following Milestones:

1: Determination of Needs (18% - 22% of total depending on assessment type)

2. Job Development and Hire (18% - 22 % of total)

3. Job Coaching and Retention (23% - 27% of total)

4. Successful Closure (Employment Stability for 90 days) (31% - 36% of total, newly implemented exceptional wage would increase this percentage) Depending on assessment type (Discovery, IPS profile, Person Centered Profile) and if the closure qualifies for exceptional wage outcome (including hours worked) 80% or more of funding occurs on or after a person is employed in supported employment.

Each provider receives funding based on the milestone achieved for each person served. Provider goals are based upon past performance, input from the ADRS liaison counselor, and the estimated need for supported employment services in each service area of the state. Supported employment services are provided utilizing an individualized, customer driven approach, encompassing each person's individual support needs to ensure an appropriate and successful job match. Additionally, The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services has committed to improving successful supported employment outcomes through collaboration and coordination with other agencies and organizations including sharing or braiding funding. ADRS is currently participating in the following collaborative efforts to help achieve supported employment priorities:

Prior to the pandemic we had 16 Project SEARCH sites. Last year we had 4 programs. We currently are back up to 9 secondary and 1 youth program as of July 2021. For the secondary programs, this collaboration involves Alabama Department of Mental Health-that provides extended services for students and youth, Alabama Council on Developmental Disabilities that provides funding for training and technical assistance, the local school systems that fund a teacher (some programs also fund a teacher's aide), local Community Rehabilitation Partners that train and supervise the skills training instructors on site, and our department that funds two skills training instructors at each site. Our state is unique in that our Project SEARCH sites are led by a state team which provides oversite to the programs and participates in the steering committee meetings. This state team consists of members of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, the Alabama State Department of Education, and the Alabama Department of Mental Health. For the youth Project SEARCH programs, ADRS funds the skills training instructor(s), local workforce boards also fund a skills training instructor. The One-stop Career Centers provide work based learning and Post-secondary Education provides the instructor.

Individual Placement and Support (IPS) Supported Employment- This program serves individuals in supported employment who have serious mental illness and co- occurring substance use disorder. This is a collaboration between the Alabama Department of Mental Health and the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services. Our state currently collaborates for three IPS programs, Altapointe Mental Health, Chilton/Shelby Mental Health, and Montgomery Mental Health Authority. Long term support is provided by the therapeutic team or through case management at the local mental health centers.

Connections is a program that serves students and youth on the Autism Spectrum and provides support services for parents. This highly successful transition program is provided in four locations throughout the state. These include Decatur, Birmingham, Montgomery and Enterprise. Because of the pandemic, for the last 2 years Connections has been offered virtually. The program will resume as an in person platform to these four areas when COVID subsides but will continue to be offered virtually to other areas in the state.

We have seen an increase in SE services over the past several years and anticipate, through pre-employment transition services, to continue serving those with more significant disabilities at an earlier age. Providers are encouraged to provide work based learning experiences to individuals with more significant disabilities.

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

Extended service provision is provided to youth with the most significant disabilities in a variety of ways. This includes the Medicaid waiver, state dollars set aside to support youth in Project SEARCH, case management services for IPS, fund raising, private pay and ADRS for youth for up to four years or until they no longer meet the definition of a youth. ADRS does

provide extended services to youth who do not receive Medicaid waiver services through ADMH. For youth who are on the waiting list for services through the Alabama Department of Mental Health, the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services recently approved a 5 year demonstration grant to address individuals on the waiting list including those individuals seeking competitive integrated employment. We have conducted training to ADRS counselors and supervisors and ADMH case management staff to better serve these individuals through braiding of funding to include extended support services to those in supported employment. With the implementation of pre-employment, it is anticipated that we will see an increase in youth requiring extended services funded by ADRS.

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.

Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services has forged a collaborative partnership with the Alabama Department of Mental Health to provide evidence based supported employment services (IPS) to recipients of community mental health services in Mobile, Montgomery and Chilton/Shelby Counties. We are currently partnering with ADMH to support youth in Project SEARCH requiring extended services. Fund raising and private funding is also being utilized to support extended services to youth. It is anticipated that many new individuals that were on the waiting list for services, will be provided additional support services, including extended support services and other services available under the waiver through a braiding of services mechanism.

O. STATE'S STRATEGIES

1. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The agency employs a number of strategies to expand and continuously improve services. The sections below will describe some of the specific methods and strategies to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities in Alabama.

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

The agency has multiple strategies to provide access to technology services and devices statewide during all phases of the rehabilitation process. The agency has a statewide network of degreed and qualified rehabilitation engineering specialists and assistive technology specialists. The team members are located strategically throughout the state, so all staff can access their expertise. This team meets periodically with partner agencies to discuss various new products and advances in assistive technology services. These meetings also provide vendors the opportunity to demonstrate new and innovative pieces of technology to the team. This team acts as a training agent for rehabilitation staff throughout the state. Team members attend unit meetings throughout the state to discuss and demonstrate assistive technology to frontline counseling staff. The team members also participate in national conferences, such as the Assistive Technology Industries Association (ATIA) conference, to learn about innovative and state-of-the-art technology. The rehabilitation engineering and assistive technology team continue to provide training at various state conferences throughout the year. They provide training at events such as the Alabama Association of Persons in Supported Employment (APSE) conference, the MEGA conference for the Department of Education, and the Technology Symposium for the Alabama School for the Blind. This rehabilitation engineering and assistive technology specialist team provide a resource for counselors to purchase and utilize technology for consumers throughout the rehabilitation process, including evaluation, IPE development and implementation, training, and employment.

The agency has multiple strategies to provide access to technology services and devices on a statewide basis during all phases of the rehabilitation process. To start, the agency has a statewide network of degreed and qualified rehabilitation engineering specialists. The team members are located strategically throughout the state, so all staff have access to their expertise. This team meets on a quarterly basis to discuss among themselves, and with partner agency staff, various new products and advances in assistive technology services. These meetings provide vendors the opportunity to demonstrate new and innovative pieces of technology to the team. This team will act as a training agent for other agency rehabilitation staff throughout the state. Team members will attend unit meetings throughout the state to discuss and demonstrate technology to frontline counseling staff. The team members will also continue to attend national conferences, such as the Assistive Technology Industries Association (ATIA) conference, where they will be exposed to innovative technology. The rehabilitation engineering and assistive technology team will continue to present at various conferences throughout the year. Conferences they will attend and present at include the Alabama Association of Persons in Supported Employment (APSE) conference, the Alabama Assistive Technology & Expo Conference, the Technology Symposium (which focuses on blind and low vision technology), and other conferences as appropriate. As part of this statewide team of rehabilitation engineering specialists, the agency also employs assistive technology specialists, two of whom specialize in educational and learning technology, one who specializes in deaf and hard of hearing technology, and one who specializes in blind and low vision technology. Having this team of rehabilitation engineering and assistive technology specialists provides a resource for counselors to purchase and utilize technology for consumers throughout the rehabilitation process, including evaluation, IPE development and implementation, training, and employment.

The agency also has a state-of-the-art Adaptive Driving Program. The agency has twenty (20) vehicles equipped with varying levels of comprehensive adaptive driving equipment. These vehicles are utilized within the ADT program by two (2) Certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialists and twelve (12) Certified Driving Instructors who provide adaptive drivers training to Alabamians with disabilities statewide. The program is unique in that a through and cooperative arrangement with the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency, Driver's License Division, authorizes the agency's certified adaptive driving staff to give the driver's license road test to our consumers and confer upon them a certificate for the driver's license. The ADT program operates two highly specialized vehicles with the latest high-tech equipment available worldwide, to allow the program to serve the most severely disabled consumers.

In partnership with the UAB Center for Low Vision, the agency's Adaptive Driving Program is the premier provider of comprehensive evaluation and training for bioptic driving. Bioptic driving is a method of driving that utilizes both the individual's general vision in combination with intermittent spotting through a small telescopic system that improves the sharpness of the individual's far vision. This has been a very successful partnership and an avenue of independence for many individuals served by the agency. ADT staff continue to attend and provide training at the annual Alabama Assistive Technology & Expo Conference at Auburn University as well as the annual Technology Symposium at the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind.

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

ADRS is committed to effective outreach to racial and ethnic minority groups and other disadvantaged and underserved populations. ADRS outreach procedures are aimed at eliminating barriers to participation and ensuring representative diversity and inclusion. We believe this commitment begins with diverse, well trained staff members. The agency employs a diversity & recruitment coordinator to ensure that we have a diverse staff to meet the varied

needs of the consumers served by the agency. ADRS maintains a diversity plan that has been approved by the administration. This plan indicates strategies to hire minority staff to work within the agency. The agency conducts diversity training for all agency staff to address the needs of diverse consumers the agency serves.

ADRS recognizes and has addressed statewide impediments to participation that arise from language barriers. ADRS has established an account with Linguistica International to provide interpreting on a real time basis so staff can converse with non-English speaking consumers and minimize any language barriers. To assure that limited English proficient populations can access VR services, essential written and online materials have been made available in all languages spoken by at least 500 people in the state.

Regarding "unserved" populations, ADRS is fortunate in that it has never operated under an order of selection and has therefore never instituted a waiting list or turned away eligible individuals from services. Alabama's VR program does not have "unserved" population in this sense of the term. Another interpretation of the term "unserved" might consist of Alabamians with disabilities likely to meet eligibility guidelines who never apply for services. This group presumably consists of: those in need of services who are unaware of the VR program and, those who are aware but elect to pursue employment independently or via other resources. Concerning the first group, those in need of services unaware of the VR program, ADRS directs ongoing outreach efforts through multiple channels on a statewide basis. ADRS services are made available, for example, via every One-Stop center and public high school in the state. Furthermore, the VR program broadcasts its availability through strategic partnerships with the Department of Mental Health, the Alabama Head Injury Foundation, and the Alabama Council on Developmental Disabilities, to name a few. The number of eligible individuals who never apply for services has been affected by the COVID pandemic and subsequent interruptions to services as identified in the 2020 CSNA. In mid-March of 2020 Alabama began to experience the full impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Governor Kay Ivey's "Stay at Home" order began on March 15th and expired on April 30, 2020. This order was proceeded by the "Safer at Home" order. Fiscal year 2020 saw 8,324 applicants come into the program, a decline of 16% from average. FY 2021 saw similar declines. The majority of the decline may be accounted for due to reduced access to students within school systems; however, other referral sources such as mental health and drug & alcohol treatment centers are diminished as well. As noted elsewhere in this report, a significant decline in service provision (in terms of purchased services) may be demonstrated across several categories including Pre-Employment Transition Services, Supported Employment, Job Readiness Training, and Job Placement Assistance. The pandemic has created an unprecedented circumstance where a great many expected participants are unavailable or unwilling to proceed as normal with rehabilitation services. One way VR program is addressing these issues by pursuing on-line services for students in collaboration with school systems in order to reach unserved students. All staff are working on-site in offices, schools, and career centers within the parameters allowed by COVID restrictions in order to provide services to unserved populations.

The 2020 CSNA identified underserved populations based on those with the highest number exiting the VR program without an employment outcome. In comparing those that exited with and without employment, the following observations were made:

45% of those that were closed for the reason "unable to locate or contact" were between the ages of 19 and 24. This may be indicative of changes in address and/or contact information after high school.

Disability groups with the lowest rehabilitation rates over the prior 3 years included those with Blindness, HIV/AIDS, Schizophrenia or other Psychotic Disorders, Muscular Dystrophy, Depression or other Mood Disorders, and Traumatic Brain Injury.

Education level is an obvious factor in employment outcomes. The rehabilitation rate among those lacking a high school diploma was nearly 20% lower than those with a diploma or its equivalent.

Referrals from the VA, through the VR web page, or from attorneys, mental health, social security or child protective health also had lower than average rehab rates.

The CSNA also identified the following groups as having lower than average wages: Individuals with Autism, Intellectual Disabilities, Schizophrenia, Cerebral Palsy, HIV/AIDS, Depression, and Epilepsy.

Groups with the lowest average hours worked included: Individuals with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Schizophrenia, and Intellectual Disabilities.

Regarding services to Individuals with Autism: Autism is an emerging disability with increasing numbers requesting services from the public rehabilitation program. This holds true for Alabama. ADRS, in collaboration with the Regional Autism network and the Autism Center for Excellence provided a statewide Autism training to the Community Rehabilitation Personnel This training was designed to improve the chance of success in employment and retention of employment. This training was also recorded to share with new employees of community rehabilitation provider agencies so they can better serve this growing population. VR staff have participated in several training programs during the current fiscal year related to autism. The agency will provide consultation to supported employment projects and CRPs who need technical assistance and support in serving this expanding population. This effort is intended to build capacity within our existing provider network. We have identified Triumph, Inc., a successful supported employment provider for individuals with autism, to serve as the consulting organization. Triumph continues as a vendor to provide supported employment services. Lakeshore Rehabilitation Facility hosts a Connections programs for students, youth and young adults with Autism. This year—long social skills training takes place in the classroom, but then is applied in real world settings in the community where classroom skills taught are then utilized. Nearing completion of the program the participants are referred to community— based rehabilitation programs for employment or supported employment based on their needs. We currently have four (4) Connections programs, but now (largely due to the pandemic) have determined that a virtual program is beneficial and will be offering Connections virtually to other areas, so that the program can spread to additional areas around the state. The goal is to expand this program throughout the state so that individuals and their parents will have access to this program. Many of the programs have a parent support group component that meets in conjunction with the Connections classes.

The agency maintains an excellent service delivery system to consumers who are blind or have low vision. This service delivery system includes a network of Rehabilitation Counselors specializing in blindness, Vision Rehabilitation Therapists, Orientation and Mobility Specialists, Assistive Technology Specialists, Pre- Employment Transition Specialists, and Vision Rehabilitation Assistants who provide a wide range of services to individuals who are blind or have low vision. Additionally, there is a State Coordinator of Blind Services who oversees these services. ADRS Blind Services semi-annually partners with the Alabama School for the Blind Alumni Workers Association and the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind to provide a statewide Technology Symposium. During the symposium, blindness professionals conduct training sessions related to activities of daily living, independence, recreation, and employment for staff members, Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVI's), school administrators, and consumers and their families. Vendors are also on hand to showcase and demonstrate the latest assistive technology devices. ADRS's blind and deaf division developed a new class of employees called Blind and Deaf Pre-Employment Transition Specialists to identify and serve students in the public-school systems who are blind or deaf. In addition to these new outreach activities these specialists provide direct pre-employment transition services to blind and deaf

students in public schools across the state. This is done through the Blind and Deaf Pre-employment Transition Specialists working collaboratively with LEA's and VR staff statewide.

ADRS has a long-standing commitment to the full inclusion of Alabama's deaf community. ADRS continues its strong working relationship with Troy University and their Interpreter Training Program. ADRS Staff interpreters help mentor Troy students as they progress through the program. This will increase the supply of interpreters and eventually mean more support for deaf consumers. In conjunction, the agency is attempting to establish an interpreter job classification to hire permit level interpreters who can be promoted to nationally certified positions after passing the test. The agency will also continue its active involvement in the One-Stop Career Center system to ensure full inclusion of consumers who are deaf. The agency will utilize the Deaf Advisory Committee (DAC) to help shape ADRS policy in terms of service provision to the deaf community. The DAC is comprised of members from state/national organizations such as the Alabama Association of the Deaf (AAD) and the Alabama Black Deaf Advocates (ABDA). The Committee also serves as an advocate to legislators and other state officials and is a subcommittee of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC).

The agency has made significant efforts over the last several years to identify and work with the most significantly disabled. The agency has a Rehabilitation Administrator and Statewide Supported Employment Specialist overseeing the growth and expansion of the agency's supported employment efforts, including IPS Supported Employment. A new specialist has recently been hired to assist with the rollout of the Community Waiver program which is projected to serve approximately 1000 new consumers in supported employment over the next 5 years. The growth and expansion of this states supported employment program includes the expansion of project SEARCH sites including youth Project SEARCH programs, Individualized Placement Support programs for individuals with serious mental illness and co-occurring substance use disorder, and expansion of the Connections program for individuals with Autism and the rollout of the new employment services under the waiver. We are currently collaborating with the LEAs and training rehabilitation transition counselors on provision of services to students at an earlier age while in the secondary setting. This should increase participation of students with more significant disabilities including individuals with intellectual disabilities, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy or mental illness and provide those services earlier. We currently have jointly funded Pre-ETS specialist contracts with secondary education for students with most significant disabilities. ADRS will collaborate with local school systems to develop and implement a transition initiative; ensuring students who are appropriate for SE services have access to providers prior to their exit from high school. SE providers will be active in the local high schools to present information regarding their programs to parents, students and staff. Students will also have the opportunity to participate in community-based assessments before they exit school, to facilitate a seamless transition. Many students with most significant disabilities are participating in our summer JET program which is a work-based learning experience and includes paid work.

The agency is the lead state agency on traumatic brain injury and has active programs in serving these individuals. The agency has a statewide coordinator who oversees all programs related to traumatic brain injury and secures/directs traumatic brain injury grants. The agency has a statewide head injury task force that coordinates the State TBI Plan to establish priorities based on input from people with lived experience, their caregivers, family members and service providers. The Task Force includes an advisory council of individuals with lived TBI experience from all over the state, rural and urban, and members of various social service organizations, the medical community and non-profits who have contact with individuals with traumatic brain injury. This organization meets on a quarterly basis to address the current 5 priority areas/ needs of this population which includes: education and awareness, community reintegration, infrastructure, services access and pediatrics along with exchanging of information/resources which will benefit services access to individuals with traumatic brain injury. The agency has a network of pediatric and adult TBI care coordinators located strategically throughout the state.

The role of the TBI care coordinators is to receive the initial referral of someone with a brain injury, then provide counsel and assist the individual and family in accessing the state's network of services from hospital, to home, community/school and work. This includes services of the agency and services of other agencies. Alabama has three specialty TBI caseloads in Montgomery, Mobile and Birmingham dedicated to serving individuals with TBI from hospital to work. These 3 counselors along with the TBI Care Coordinators also serve as a resource to other counselors around the state who may receive a TBI referral. The agency also holds the statewide Head and Spinal Cord Injury Trauma Registry to ensure that individuals with head and spinal cord injuries are linked to agency, community, and specialty services statewide to increase outreach and reduce gaps and barriers to essential services after injury.

Regarding outreach to individuals with disabilities receiving social security, ADRS makes benefits counseling services available to all eligible individuals. Individuals receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Insurance Income (SSI) have the lowest employment rate. A primary factor contributing to this trend is the lack of accurate and timely benefits counseling services. Fear of a loss of benefits and misinformation has prevented or deterred individuals from entering employment or increasing wages. ADRS hires, trains and employs SSA trained and certified benefits specialists. As of July 1, 2021, ADRS absorbed the benefits specialists into the adult VR program allowing benefit specialists to provide services to all active ADRS consumers, opting to discontinue the previous partnership with SSA as a WIPA provider. Benefits counseling services are provided to all eligible individuals with active/open cases. Benefits Counseling services can begin as soon as Application status, allowing both the consumer and counselor to be aware and prepared for any impact of paid work on cash or health care. Services continue up to closure but can also be provided in post-Employment, with the goal of preserving employment if there are benefit related issues or concerns potentially jeopardizing continued employment. Written benefit summaries are provided to both consumers and the primary caseload counselor at all phases of the VR process from Application to include pre-closure preparation. Fear of loss of other state specific benefits has also been a barrier for people with disabilities seeking to enter or return to work. DAVID is an online interactive assessment tool designed specifically for Alabama and can be drilled down to county level, benefit specific, and family size. The online tool helps individuals understand how much money they will gain through paid employment and helps them cope with the loss of public assistance as they progress through their career . It was designed to help individuals visualize how their incomes will increase over time as they move toward self-sufficiency. Benefit counseling staff and supervisor received training and micro-credentials in administering the DAVID tool. Benefits Specialists can administer the DAVID tool to active ADRS consumers receiving other state specific benefits and is not limited to Social Security benefits. The combination of benefits counseling services for Social Security beneficiaries and utilization of the state benefit specific DAVID tool is intended to increase employment outcomes by addressing the potential loss or reduction of both federal and state benefits. The DAVID tool can be administered with or without other benefits counseling services.

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)

ADRS continues to collaborate and coordinate transition services with the LEAs. ADRS has increased efforts to develop and improve transition partnerships, programs and service models by implementing and expanding the following services/programs:

Work based learning to include JET (Job Exploration Training), workplace readiness and job exploration - Students are provided training in the areas of job exploration, career assessment, social skills training, mock interviewing, resume preparation, and self—advocacy training. Paid

work experiences in a community setting are arranged for each student satisfactorily participating in the JET training. Project SEARCH training is also expanding so that students receive career exploration and increase social skills by participating in up to 3 internship rotations. This program enhances skills in various training areas so students with significant disabilities, including those with more significant disabilities can receive work based learning that gives them a better idea about what type of career they would like to pursue.

Smart Work Ethics Training (SWE) - SWE is a social skills curriculum that addresses communication skills and work place behaviors (attitude, work ethic, image and appearance, interpersonal skills, teamwork, time management, accountability) needed to obtain and maintain successful competitive employment. This curriculum is provided to the student in the LEA by a certified trainer from a Community Rehabilitation Program.

Jointly - Funded Pre-Employment Transition Specialist - ADRS is committed to providing jointly funded pre-ets specialists in local education agencies to assist with the provision of pre—employment transition services. The jointly-funded specialists provide pre-employment transition services which are not typically or customarily provided by the LEA. These pre-employment transition services are designed to increase the likelihood of independence and inclusion of students with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, in communities, as well as, maximize opportunities for these students for competitive integrated employment. Currently, ADRS has 40 jointly funded pre-ets specialists in place through third-party cooperative agreements.

Career Assessments - Provided by a local community rehab provider to students with disabilities, who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services, to assist in determining interests and skills needed for employment in their community. For those students who are planning to enter post-secondary training, counselors may refer eligible VR consumers for an LD evaluation to determine interests, learning styles, accommodations that may be needed and to obtain documentation necessary for disability supports services.

Engage Alabama - Engage Alabama is a collaborative effort of the ADRS, Alabama State Department of Education, Alabama Council on Developmental Disabilities and Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program to develop and provide an app for students with disabilities to improve the student's knowledge of transition services; assist the student in identifying and utilizing strategies to improve transition services and increase the student's capability to better advocate for transition service through the student led IEP process. Students may access Engage Alabama via the internet at engageal.com, or by going to the Apple Store or Google Play store where students can download the app at no charge. Once all questions in the app are answered a transition plan will be generated that the student may print and share with his/her family and IEP case manager prior to the IEP meeting. This plan will serve as a self- advocacy tool to assist the student in successfully leading his/her IEP meeting, in discussing transition goals and what is needed for the students to reach those goals. Students may access this app as often as need during the school year to make any necessary changes, but it is recommended that students access the app on an annual basis prior to his/her IEP meeting. It is important to note that while the Engage Alabama application was designed for use by students who are receiving services under an IEP, any student with a disability (including those that would meet the requirements for 504 services) may access the app to assist with identification of needed pre-employment transition services and to develop transition goals.

Prison Transition Initiative - The agency continues to maintain collaborative efforts to assist those students with disabilities in transitioning back to the community upon release from adult prisons by making referrals to local VR counselors 90 days prior to release. However, with the agency's ability to serve students with disabilities who are potentially eligible, VR now has the capability to provide pre-employment transition services to those students, who are receiving services under an IEP, while incarcerated. A state office staff member will to work with the Special Service Assistant and Case Manager to identify those students with disabilities who can benefit for pre-ets services and obtain documentation needed to serve those potentially eligible consumers. This staff member will then coordinate and authorize for the provision of these services with a local community rehab provider. These services are designed to increase the likelihood of a successful transition back into the community and employment.

Jointly Funded Full Time Instructor - The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services entered into this agreement to mutually serve students with disabilities in the Pike County and Troy City Boards of Education through cooperatively funding the professional services of one full-time nine-month instructor, housed at Charles Henderson High School and Troy/Pike Center for Technology. Instruction will be provided in an integrated classroom setting with peers who are not identified as students with disabilities and will focus on the area of pre-employment transition services. These pre-employment transition services, which are not typically or customarily provided by the LEA, will be provided in a group setting in a classroom or the community. The instruction of pre-employment transition services provided will be in the areas of: job exploration counseling, work- based learning experiences, counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs, workplace readiness training and instruction in self-advocacy. This instruction is designed to prepare students with disabilities to enter long term competitive integrated employment in high demand careers by identifying and exploring career interests, as well as, increasing individual independence, self-sufficiency and inclusion of students with disabilities in their communities. Students served by this program include any student with a disability enrolled at Charles Henderson High School and Troy/Pike Center for Technology who is in the 11th or 12th grades, is eligible for or potentially eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and has received a referral from the VR Transition Counselor, Special Education Teacher and/or school administrator. Course curriculum will consist of instruction in the following areas Basic Computer Skills, Financial Literacy, Problem Solving, Manufacturing, Job Acquisition. Course curriculum will also include discussion of local high demand careers, labor market information and activities that may include community-based experiences.

Jobs for Alabama Graduates (JAG) - The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services have twenty-five collaborations with local school systems to support the JAG programs in our state which jointly serve students with disabilities who are participating in the JAG program. Through the JAG program, students with substantial barriers to employment and who are at risk of dropping out of high school, are exposed to over 700 hours (beginning in the 9th grade) of services (workplace readiness training, career exploration, work-based learning) with the goal of increasing the student's likelihood of graduation and entry into employment or post-secondary training.

5. IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE

As the agency continues serving the more significantly disabled, there may be the need to provide additional training to CRPs. Three potential areas of Community Rehabilitation Program improvement were noted: (1) increased availability of comprehensive learning disability evaluations, (2) services to individuals with autism, and (3) working with community

rehab programs to build capacity for the delivery of Pre- ETS to students with disabilities while still providing quality employment services to individuals with disabilities. The agency will invite CRP staff to specific trainings in order to improve and elevate skills of CRP employees in areas such as Pre-ETS, autism and social skills training.

6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

At the completion of PY 20, The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program completed the three years of collection of baseline data for all 3 of the 5 core measures. The MSG number and rate data collection was completed in PY 19 and RSA negotiated a performance target of 28%. However, this performance rate will be renegotiated based on information from RSA. Expected rates, target rates, and adjusted rates will be negotiated during calendar year 22 to be applied to PY 22 performance. This baseline data was not yet available when the four-year state plan for PY's 20-23 was submitted. The information is now available for 3 of the 5 measures and can be used to evaluate strategies to improve performance with respect to the performance accountability measures under WIOA. The ADRS performance is displayed in the following table.

Measure	PY17	PY18	PY19	PY 20 Target	PY 20
Employment Q2 Number		3250	3744	na	3811
Employment Q2 Rate		62.8	59.0	na	55.3
Employment Q4 Number			3209	na	3828
Employment Q4 Rate			57.5	na	54.2
Median Earnings		$3,568	$3,798	na	$3872.65
Credential Number			374	na	769
Credential Rate			24.5	na	31
MSG Number	259	2134	2170	na	4031
MSG Rate	17.0	36.9	25.7	28	42.2

At the beginning of PY 20, ADRS had three years of baseline data for Measurable Skill Gains. Based on this baseline, RSA and ADRS negotiated an MSG rate of 28% as a target for PY 20. The actual attainment for PY20 was 42.2% based on a significant increase in the number of skill gains achieved. RSA has indicated the MSG performance measure expected and targeted goals will be reassessed based on more recent information and will be included in this 2023 updated state plan for PY 22 goals.

Three years of baseline data is available for the following:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit); Three years
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); Two years
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); Three years
- Credential Attainment Rate Two years

In addition, data on effectiveness in serving employers is collected and reported in the combined state plan. However, ADRS has developed strategies through the Business Relations Program to address this common measure.

In order to develop further strategies to improve the performance of the state, it is necessary to evaluate the baseline data in relation to anticipated and actual performance. Previous strategies implemented for Program Years 2016-2019 may have had had a positive impact and should continue and there may be new strategies to implement which have become apparent in the period in which baseline data was collected and the resulting establishment of the performance requirements.

Retention of employment in the second and fourth quarters after exit requires proactive efforts to improve the likelihood that individuals will seek, attain, and retain jobs which are consistent with the individual's choice and will meet their needs in terms of adequate earnings, benefits, and future opportunities. VR has designated two staff persons to function in the role of WIOA Compliance Specialists whose responsibility includes conducting the required second and fourth quarter follow-ups on participants who have exited the program. This activity involves the collection, validation, documenting and recording of both UI and supplemental wage data. The information collected and reported resulted in a second quarter after exit employment rate of 62.8% in PY 18, 59.0% in PY 19 , and 55.3% in PY 20. Although this appears to be a decline in rate, the number of consumers who were employed 2nd quarter after exit were 3250, 37744 and 3811 respectively for PY 18-20. The rate declined because of an increase in consumers exiting each program year which changed the denominator. A similar increase in consumers who retained employment in the fourth quarter after exit occurred with the number of persons employed increasing while the rate declined. This again was caused by an increase in the number of people exiting compared to the number retaining a job. Although putting resources into a follow up process is not necessarily a strategy to improve the performance, it is a strategy to assure VR is basing other strategies upon accurate outcome data and is able to measure the effects of past and future strategies. The recently acquired knowledge of participant retention and wages data provides counseling and management staff with feedback on the value of the services provided in terms of long-term successful employment for VR consumers.

Strategies which have led to successful retention and will continue are the provision of services which lead to skill gains and credential attainment. Providing the individual with a disability with the employer required skills or credentials enhances the likelihood the individual will be able to enter into, retain, or maintain satisfactory employment for the four quarters beyond exit quarter and longer. Although skill gain and credential attainment are separate measures under WIOA, these two actions can and do result in enhanced long-term successful employment. Counselors will use current labor market information to assist consumers in making informed choices regarding in-demand skill level occupations rather than attaining an entry level job that does not require any specific skills or credentials. VR counselors will access training offered through junior colleges, vocational schools, and other WIOA providers in order to enable the participant to have an improved opportunity for success. For consumers who are employed but need VR assistance to maintain or advance in employment, the RAVE (Retaining a Valued Employee) program is a proven strategy for insuring job retention and job satisfaction. The agency recognizes that adequate transportation is a major factor in job retention, especially for persons with the most significant disabilities. Resources are being directed toward enabling participants to manage their own transportation requirements through driving training, accessing and managing personal transportation, and vehicle modification assistance.

The agency will provide specific services to consumers that will enhance skill levels and assist in obtaining credentialing that will lead to specific jobs. School age students will be provided Pre-Employment Transition Services which are mandated in WIOA. These services are centered around Career Exploration, Work Based Learning Experiences, Counseling on Post-Secondary Education opportunities, Workplace Readiness, and Self-Advocacy. The agency will increase

opportunities for College Preparation training and the agency will work with public schools statewide in order to plan vocational services and increase VR counselors' presence in the schools. In order to ensure that individuals with disabilities have access to services offered through career centers, VR will collaborate with workforce partners by having regular workforce meetings and by assuring the agency is represented on all local workforce boards. The agency will continue to assist consumers with gaining the skills necessary to compete for in-demand jobs through collaboration with technical schools, universities, and partnerships with agencies such as the Alabama Industrial Development Training (AIDT).

The measure of effectively serving employers is a combined effort with all WIOA partners and is reported separately from other VR specific measures. The VR agency will effectively serve employers through business services provided through its long-standing Business Relations Program called READI-Net. In order to improve the performance of the state in respect to this performance accountability measure, the READI-Net program will continue to provide disability resources, information and services to businesses in order to meet their disability and employment-related needs. The READI-Net program will also continue to develop new and innovative services for businesses. These new and innovative services will be driven by specific input from long-term ADRS business customers who serve as advisors to ADRS through the VR State Rehabilitation Council's Employment Committee, through the Disability: IN Alabama, which is the state chapter of the national Disability: IN, and through Business Roundtable Events. The input gained from these business customers will be used to develop strategic plans with businesses which will facilitate the customization of business services in order to assist businesses with their outreach, recruitment, hiring and retention needs, as well as staff training needs, affirmative action planning, metric and record keeping, and customized, company specific, disability-related services. The agency will work in collaboration with the Core Workforce Partners to record and report on the required measurements of Retention and Repeat business. The agency; however, will work in partnership with the Core Workforce Partners to develop an alternate means of measuring its effectiveness in serving employers, as allowed by WIOA regulations.

The median earnings for second quarter after exit is $3568 for PY 18, 3798 for PY 19, and 3873 for PY 20. Although this is the result for Alabama, the Statistical Adjustment Model has not been applied as of yet. VR does not have enough information to determine if these results are within an appropriate target. Comparing the ADRS wages to other states indicates these wages are acceptable, especially considering the economy of the state of Alabama. However, there has been an increase each year and the pandemic only affected four months of PY20. Significant disruption in the work force has occurred during the pandemic and although many workers left jobs, employment opportunities were created and hourly wages have been increased to entice workers to take employment opportunities. There is an expectation that median wages will increase as a result of the pandemic, which is not related to the ADRS strategies. Strategies to improve median wages would include efforts to improve skill gains and credentials to enhance the post-exit earnings of participants. Counseling and guidance utilizing labor market information to guide individuals to education or training programs which lead to higher earnings capability will also be provided. The VR agency's RAVE (Retaining A Valued Employee) program will increase earnings for consumers based on the fact that these are employed individuals needing rehabilitation services who are receiving higher wages due to time on the job. Successful rehabilitation of these consumers, results in a higher average wage for the agency and benefits the consumer and employer. agency will also focus on providing services centered around career advancement within their employment. This will allow consumers to acquire additional skills that will elevate opportunities for higher earnings. Employment outcomes with higher wages will also be emphasized with counselors.

The measurable skill gains rate for PY 18 was 36.9%, PY 19 was a lower 25.7%, and PY 20 was a much improved 42.2%. VR currently has a high number of consumers in secondary education and a reasonable number of adults also participating in post-secondary, vocational, or technical

training. These individuals who are in a training program which leads to a credential can earn a measurable skill during each year of participation. Considering the Alabama VR strategy to increase retention and earnings is to guide more participants to training which will lead to higher earnings and job satisfaction, this increase will naturally lead to an increase in attainment of a measurable skill gain. However, the issue is complicated by the ability of the agency to collect and properly document measurable skill gain attainment. Counselors have had difficulty obtaining school records to prove completion of a skill gain or credential. Without proper documentation, the skill gain cannot be recorded. A strategy to improve our documentation of skill gains earned will include data sharing agreements with both post-secondary and secondary education institutions as well as improved methods of obtaining documentation from consumers. As the number of participants in an education program which results in a credential rises, the documentation requirements will also increase and the counselors will need to keep pace with the increased record collection demands.

7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The agency maintains a very productive relationship with the Workforce Development System of Alabama. The ADRS Commissioner sits on the Statewide Workforce Development Board and the Governor's office on education and workforce transformation board. Consequently, the agency has a voice at the table to advocate for the needs and issues of individuals with disabilities. The agency has counselors stationed on a permanent basis in One-Stop Career Centers in several of the larger cities in the state. These staff members receive referrals and provide advice and information to other staff in the One-Stop Career Centers on how to serve individuals with disabilities. The agency will have staff participate in the state Workforce Conference and serve on local workforce boards. The agency sits on the planning council of the workforce conference so that various breakout sessions related to the needs of individuals with disabilities are included on the agenda. The agency is currently working in collaboration with the Career Centers and Workforce Development Partners on assessing all the Career Centers in the state for accessibility. Recommendations will be made by the agency and the Workforce Development Core Partners will work together to ensure that the Career Centers continue to be accessible for all individuals with disabilities. Also, as mentioned previously, the agency has established a Video Interpreting Network. Should a deaf individual come into the local One—Stop Career Center, a video interpreting situation can be set up for that individual to be served. ADRS continues to collaborate with workforce boards to provide services to students and youth with disabilities. These collaborations bring together several Workforce Development partners such as Post-secondary Education, ADRS, Alabama Department of Labor and Alabama Department of Commerce.

8. HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

Strategies to support Goal 1 - Expand and improve competitive integrated employment and advancement opportunities for youth and adults with disabilities.

• Expand and improve employer and state agency partnerships to achieve Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act common performance measure outcomes. ADRS will build upon the existing business engagement activities, as well as state partnerships with the Alabama Workforce Development Board, Adult Education, local workforce boards and One-stop Career Centers to promote work-based learning opportunities for ADRS participants with an emphasis on in-demand occupations.

• Enhance career guidance competencies of VR counselors through participation in local work force boards fostering knowledge of local labor-market information and in-demand careers.

• Enable consumers to access training and certificate programs necessary to enter or advance into middle skills or other occupations which are in demand.

• Improve counselor competencies regarding career guidance and job placement efforts for older individuals with prior work experience to capitalize on prior existing skills and abilities.

• Engage with employers and industry professionals with the goal of improving the alignment of training to employer needs.

• With youth and students, emphasize early work-site experiences with real employers in the community. Emphasize work-based learning, such as paid internships or cooperative education.

• Engage with non-profit organizations to develop paid work experiences (work-based learning) for individuals with disabilities.

• Implement, when feasible, new reports and tracking systems which align with WIOA performance measures and are designed for staff use. Provide training on the data reports, performance measures, and tracking systems underpinning WIOA implementation. Build upon existing data analysis capacity and tools to support data—driven decision making.

• Enable consumers to enter careers where they can earn a living wage, have long term stability, advancement opportunities and are consistent with the goals listed on their individualized plan for employment.

Strategies to support Goal 2 - Improve services, outcomes, approaches, and supports for Alabamians with the most significant disabilities including supported employment opportunities.

• Maintain access to a broad range of assistive technology services for individuals with disabilities on a statewide basis.

• Monitor and address the need to offer VR services to those individuals who are currently being served within day programs, for individuals with severe and persistent mental illnesses and individuals with significant development disabilities.

• Support and advocate for efforts aimed at improved access to transportation for individuals with disabilities.

• Continue to support and advocate quality independent living outcomes for individuals with disabilities in Alabama through an active partnership with the State Independent Living Council.

• Develop further options, resources, and capacity for Customized Employment services.

• Improve access to and reporting of benefits counseling services received by VR consumers. • Maintain and increase the number of Project Search sites in Alabama.

• Continue to improve supported employment service delivery for individuals with serious mental illness and co-occurring substance use disorder through evidence-based practices including Individualized Placement and Supports and the use of peer supports.

Strategies to support Goal 3 - Maintain high levels of consumer satisfaction.

• Align the VR General, VR Blind, and VR Deaf consumer satisfaction surveys to provide the same core set of measures.

• Implement an internal method of collecting consumer satisfaction from active cases for use in counselor performance appraisals.

• Improve upon existing efforts to communicate consumer satisfaction results to counselors and their supervisors.

• Utilize satisfaction survey results more extensively in leadership meetings, and supervisory discussions.

• Set and attain consumer satisfaction goals at the state and unit level.

• Provide training and support, ensuring staff have the knowledge and skills needed to deliver quality vocational rehabilitation services.

• Continue to invest in practices and technologies that make VR counselors more accessible to their consumers.

Strategies to support Goal 4 - Continue to serve all eligible applicants and avoid an order of selection

• Continue efforts aimed at drawing the maximum federal share available for Alabamians with disabilities, and when possible/necessary re-allotment funds.

• Monitor and manage service delivery timeframes to ensure efficient processing time and eliminate potential bottlenecks or other delays in eligibility determination or initial plan development.

• Investigate and implement case management system improvements which streamline the eligibility determination, vocational assessment, and plan development processes.

• Ensure that counselors have sufficient resources to meet caseload demands.

• Continue efforts to promote efficient spending, the utilization of comparable benefits, and the management of indirect/administrative costs.

• Seek additional sources of revenue as needed to include braiding of funding with other state agencies.

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Strategies to support Goal 5 - Assure that Alabamians with disabilities negatively affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic are of special interest and concern within planning and operational efforts aimed at recovery.

• Work with LEAs to identify and reach-out to students that were unserved or under-served during the pandemic.

• Anticipate and plan for higher-than-normal participation in Pre-Employment Transition Services in when normal operations are again possible.

• Analyze program data to identify and reach out to all referral sources with fewer applicants during the pandemic.

• Encourage counselors to reach out to existing consumers that elected to place their employment plans on hold.

• Coordinate with Community Rehabilitation Programs to accommodate an anticipated return to pre-pandemic referral rates.

Strategies to support Goal 6 - Advance efforts that improve the department's working alliance and integration with the Alabama Workforce Development System.

• Improve upon training and dissemination of local labor market information organized at the Workforce Development Council level.

• Develop improved knowledge of Credentials of Value within local workforce regions. Disseminate localized information and train VR counselors.

• Disseminate and train counselors regarding the presence of "benefits cliffs" and other work disincentives. Train staff in the use of Alabama's DAVID system - Dashboard for Alabamians to Visualize Income Determinations. https://emar-data-tools.shinyapps.io/alabama

• Expand upon work with Workforce Development Region representatives to develop specific opportunities for Alabamians with disabilities within targeted industries.

• Continue and expand collaboration on Summer Work Experiences for youth, and Project Search.

• Develop new opportunities though VR financial participation in pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, and customized training.

• Continue to enhance and push the use of our internal LMI Dashboard which can provide detailed Labor Market and Occupational Information specific to each of the 10 Workforce Regions in Alabama that includes in-demand jobs, declining jobs, in-demand skills, underserved areas.

Strategies to support Goal 7 - Improve outreach and service delivery to unserved and underserved Alabamians with disabilities.

• Further evaluate and respond to the needs of individuals in under-served rural communities

• Build upon existing specialized service delivery methods for persons with Serious Mental Illness and related Substance Abuse Disorders.

• Further evaluate and respond to regional disparities in service delivery for special populations such as individuals with autism spectrum disorders.

• Remain vigilant that services are made available in an equitable and accommodating manner.

• Utilize Labor Market Information to monitor unemployment levels in each of the 10 Workforce Regions in Alabama and target those areas with outreach

•Utilize our internal Labor Market Information Dashboard to determine areas of the state that may be underserved in terms of number of open VR cases and target those areas with outreach.

Strategies to support Goal 8 - Develop and improve training and other resources for community rehabilitation programs.

• Grant CRPs access to the authorization browse module of VR's case management system. This will enable CRPs secure, real-time access to financial transactions concerning consumers that have been referred for services.

• Develop a comprehensive electronic portal for CRP programs; one that would offer content such as training materials, announcements, performance data, access to policy and other guidance, and ultimately the ability to electronically submit billing, reports, and other communications.

• Modify CRP fee schedules to incentivize desired employment outcomes such as living wages and employer provided benefits.

• Promote activities and training that increase CRP collaboration within Workforce Development initiatives.

Strategies to support Goal 9 - Advance collaboration between administrative and field staff to improve operational efficiencies, develop needed training, and update antiquated or unclear policies and procedures.

• Develop a range of accessible audio-visual training modules that cover essential training topics.

• Develop an improved system for the dissemination of agency policy, procedure, technical assistance, and training documents.

• Implement approved suggestions concerning streamlining of the SMILE case-management system.

B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

Consistent with the findings of the 2017 and 2020 comprehensive statewide assessment, the established goals and priorities of this plan, and collaborative efforts with the SRC, innovation and expansion funds will be targeted to the following:

1. Ongoing support of the efforts of the State Rehabilitation Council.

2. Development of Work Based Learning opportunities for Students with Disabilities to include partnerships with new industry in Alabama to offer simulated work experiences for students to lead to direct employment in skilled level jobs with the partnering industry.

3. To improve vocational outcomes for persons with significant mental illness by developing and expanding joint programs with mental health providers to train and certify peers in Vocational Peer Support to work with individuals with severe mental illness and co-occurring substance use disorder.

4. Explore, design, and implement Virtual/E-Leaning modules to support and standardize delivery of pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities targeting workplace readiness training and instruction in self-advocacy. Explore, design and implement E-Learning training for employment specialists to improve consistency of skill levels and improve outcomes for persons with disabilities.

5. Expansion of participation in formalized apprenticeship for VR consumers who can benefit from such training opportunities.

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.

ADRS has committed additional staff to address the needs of people with the most significant disabilities in order to improve access to services. Additional staff members have been added to expand and improve supported employment services for this population. Pre-employment transition specialists have been added to serve students and youth for the general program and for the blind and deaf program.

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services strives to ensure that there is equitable access to the State VR Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program for all potentially eligible and eligible consumers. For participating in VR services all forms of auxiliary aids, as defined by the ADA, are provided to consumers based on individual needs including assistive technology.

In order to alleviate language barriers, ADRS offers written and oral interpreting and translation services at no cost to individuals who are applying for or receiving services. A notice of these available services is included with all important documents and notifications. Counselors and staff have access to language interpreters through a language line service, as well as language interpreters through our vendor system. In addition, correspondence and other print materials are provided in the consumers format of choice to include large print, braille, electronic, etc.

Our VR counselors for the deaf are required to possess an intermediate rating on the Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI) ensuring that deaf consumers are communicated to in their native language. In addition, we have 11 full-time nationally certified sign language interpreters located in our offices statewide, as well as access to additional sign language interpreters through our partners and vendor network.

To address the barrier of transportation in terms of access, we have 19 offices throughout the state. In addition, we have staff that are co-located in 29 One Stop Career Centers that are located throughout the state. As appropriate, and when necessary to promote access, itinerant services are provided in homes, schools, workplaces, etc. ADRS also has liaison counselors for all secondary and post- secondary schools, prisons, and select hospitals.

Specific strategies to overcoming identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals in the State Supported Services Program include continued collaboration with the Alabama Department of Mental Health to promote and expand the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model of supported employment and to assist with braiding of funding efforts for moving individuals off their waiting list that are seeking CIE. These are individuals that likely have not been in workforce and face significant barriers to employment. We also anticipate that we will serve more individuals on the Autism Spectrum through Connections by providing this service using an eLearning platform. This should help us serve more individuals in remote, underserved area of the state. State Supported Employment Specialists have contacted all entities in the state that hold sub-minimum certificate to arrange career counseling and information and referral activities to the entities, individuals served by the entities, and their families. These efforts focus on providing access to information and services that will enable them to achieve competitive integrated employment and include benefits counseling. These efforts are ongoing.

P. EVALUATION AND REPORTS OF PROGRESS: VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT GOALS

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

Many strategies were used to accomplish these goals including: (1) concerted efforts by counselors who work with consumers with more significant disabilities, (2) an increased participation in projects like; Project SEARCH , and IPS Supported Employment, and , (3) working with students with more significant disabilities earlier in secondary education.

Aided by advocacy efforts with Alabama legislators, ADRS continued to benefit from state level financial support that enabled matching of all available federal award dollars. Furthermore, ADRS was successful in its strategy to pursue additional federal dollars through re-allotment. With financial footing secured, ADRS also took steps to ensure that services continue to be available on an equitable and timely basis across the state. For example, data was analyzed to identify high-demand, low output caseloads. Additional resources were then aligned to support areas of identified need. Caseloads were re-assigned or more evenly distributed to accommodate the work of serving potentially eligible individuals. Where caseload sizes were at their largest, 7 new counselor FTE slots were allotted.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

Changes to the VR program under WIOA were historic and significant. Full compliance required fundamental modifications in policy, practice, reporting, and performance management. Although much work has been accomplished, systems change associated with the full implementation of WIOA posed significant challenges over the prior five program years. The

effects of these system changes were most noticeable in their impact upon VR counselors and purchased services.

Regarding VR counselors, it should be stated that the counselor's role has become more demanding and complex. Fully serving Alabama's population of potentially eligible students with disabilities has meant a significant increase in the average caseload size (an average increase of 50 cases per counselor). Furthermore, the increase in service population coincides with amplified work load in terms of data collection and case documentation. These increased demands have presented challenges to both operational efficiency and morale.

All goals were affected by the COVID pandemic and resulting work stoppages, delays, and interruptions. There was a decline in the number of VR applications in 2020 and 2021. There were multiple school closings and limited access to students. Referral sources including mental health centers were affected causing reductions in referrals and limiting access to services from those providers. There was a resulting reduction in such services as pre-employment transition services, supported employment, job readiness training, and job placement assistance.

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

Many strategies were used to accomplish these goals including: (1) concerted efforts by counselors who work with consumers with more significant disabilities, (2) an increased knowledge and subsequent referrals for IPS supported employment and the creation of the Peer Support Program within a mental health center, (3) working with students with more significant disabilities earlier in secondary education and (4) an increase in the amount of provider agencies in the area of supported employment and counselors seeing the continues success of consumers in supported employment.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

We accomplished our goals in Supported Employment and continues to see the success of this program within the VR agency. The pandemic created some very difficult situations as many of the community rehabilitation programs shut down. We also experience staff shortages within the VR agency as counselors contracted COVID or had to be at home with sick family members. Some schools went virtual, some stayed in person, some went back and forth creating difficulty with access to students. Some schools that were in person did not allow anyone into the schools other than school personnel. Some that were virtual did not initially have the equipment or capability to deliver eLearning. Some school systems allowed counselors but did not allow community rehab personnel. All of these pandemic related anomalies created difficulties within the VR program.

Program such as Project SEARCH were greatly impacted by the pandemic. We went from a high of 16 programs to 4 in 2021. All of our programs were located within hospitals. The 4 that were able to continue last year were relocated into other businesses in the community. Many parents didn't want their children participating due to health concerns, some school districts simply didn't have staff or went virtual. We had staff and students become ill. Despite this the 4 programs that were not on hiatus did very well with employment outcomes. This year we still have some on hiatus but are up to 10 active programs. Although ADRS provides most of the funding to support the program we do received extended support funding through the ADMH – one of our collaborative partners for this program.

IPS Supported Employment faces challenges in relation to the belief within the mental health provider system, that individuals with serious mental illness and cooccurring substance use

disorder can attain competitive integrated employment. Recently, Alabama Department of Mental Health was awarded a five-year demonstration grant to address the waiting list for services. Through a braiding of funding effort, we will not be able to move more individuals into CIE and provide a higher level of support including longer and more intensive extended services. This, however, will impact the number of individuals we serve in supported employment which has steadily increased for the last several years.

3. THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

Program Years 17, 18, and 19 were baseline years for Performance Accountability under section 116 of WIOA for Measurable Skill gains. Expected levels of performance were included in the 2020 state plan and negotiated at 28% for PY20 and 30% for PY 2021. New expected levels are included in this 2022 revision. The goal of 28% was exceeded by reaching a performance rate of 42.2% in PY 20.

At the time of this writing, three years of completed data is available regarding the agency's performance on indicator 1) 2nd Quarter After Exit Employment Rate and indicator 3) Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit. Data obtained from the ETA-9169: Annual Performance Report for Alabama 2020 indicate a second quarter employment rate of 55.3%. For the same reporting period, ADRS attained Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit of $3,872.65. Only two years of baseline data has been completed for Employment rate Q2 and Credential Rate. In PY 2020 on the ETA-9169, the employment rate Q4 was 54.2% and the credential rate was 31%.

Regarding indicator 6) Effectiveness in Serving Employers, ADRS submits agency data to the Alabama Department of Commerce. The Commerce Department then aggregates ADRS data with that of other workforce partners to obtain statewide performance for this indicator. Baseline performance data is not yet unavailable.

4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED

Innovation and Expansion (I&E) funds were used to support activities of the State Rehabilitation Council. This included support for a portion of the SRC Director's salary and benefits, as well as operational expenses including travel and office expenses to assist in carrying out the functions of the SRC including providing input regarding the VR program. The I&E expenditures totaled $122,308 in 2020, $119,063 in 2021, $119,063 in 2022, and are projected to total $119,063 in 2023.

Innovation and Expansion (I&E) funds were also used to develop more E-learning services to support and standardize the delivery of pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities targeting workplace readiness training and career exploration. 1250 seats for Virtual Job Shadowing at a cost of $30,563 were purchased to provide students with the benefits of job shadowing and comprehensive career exploration through a virtual platform. This service is facilitated by VR staff as well as CRP staff depending on the needs of the consumer. Additional seats will be purchased in the future based on the need for this service.

Q. QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

1. THE QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) remains committed to the provision of quality services to individuals with the most significant disabilities through the provision of supported employment services. ADRS provides supported employment services through a collaborative/partnership effort with 45 service providers statewide in PY 2021. These

providers cover all counties in the state. These providers offer services to individuals with a variety of significant disabilities without restrictions regarding disability type. The SE providers are distributed throughout the state in order to ensure maximum availability to those in need of supported employment to obtain or maintain competitive integrated employment or advancement in employment.

Service providers receive funds for the provision of supported employment through an outcome-based payment system. Providers must submit evidence that each milestone has been achieved. Some milestones include consumer and employer satisfaction surveys. Consumer satisfaction is designed to reflect satisfaction with the job or identify any consumer concerns or issues. The employer satisfaction survey is designed to reflect the consumer's job performance, stability and training needs. Supported employment funds are distributed to each provider agency based on the milestone achieved by each individual served. Job skills training is provided to individuals on site at the work setting. Supported employment services include placement in competitive integrated employment settings for the maximum number of hours possible and is based on the strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, interests and informed choice of the individual. In PY 2021, the SE program: had 1,003 consumers' complete situational assessments and/or the Discovery process. 662 consumers were closed with supports in competitive integrated employment. These consumers worked an average of 25 hours a week and made an average of $9.29 an hour.

Each supported employment provider operates under a milestone/outcome-based program to ensure quality outcomes and appropriate employment options based on individual choice. Consumers are offered the opportunity to participate in community-based assessments to facilitate an informed decision regarding their employment goal. Job development is provided on an individual basis to locate employment based on the consumer's interests, skills, limitations and community living needs. Job coaching is also provided at the work site to ensure that the individual has the necessary training, skills and supports to work. Once the consumer is stable in the workplace, extended services are planned and implemented to protect the long-term success of the job. Consumer and employer satisfaction regarding the services provided are measured at the time of employment and again before case closure. Extended services are a continuation of ongoing support services provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities. These extended supports are provided at the completion of stabilization, during the successful rehabilitation Milestone and beyond ADRS case closure. The option for Discovery and Customized Employment, or for Person Centered Profiles along with assessments are available to consumers to maximize success for individuals in supported employment. Supported Self-employment is also available for individuals wanting to start their own business.

ADRS continues to seek methods to increase participation of individuals with all types of disabilities in supported employment programs. Initiatives for improving transition services for students with more significant disabilities are being implemented. Since WIOA students with more significant disabilities are being referred and receiving services at a much earlier age. SE providers are providing Pre-Employment Transition Services to these students with an emphasis on work-based learning. Pre-employment transition specialist (jointly funded), as well as community rehabilitation programs are working with students at a younger age to increase the likelihood of competitive integrated employment for students with more significant disabilities. We will continue to explore innovative opportunities and collaborations including student led enterprises, participation in work-based learning at a younger age, and successful programs like Project SEARCH. We will continue to work with career and technical education to develop programs that address internship and apprenticeship opportunities as well as certifications in employment areas, especially in high demand areas for our state. We will continue to work with Workforce development to identify and provide services to youth, especially underserved youth and those with more significant disabilities. All these identified entities are a part of our Employment First efforts in Alabama. Through expansion of Project

SEARCH, we currently have 4 youth programs in collaboration with Workforce Boards, Post-Secondary Education, and Alabama One-Stop Centers for internships and employment.

We continue to collaborate with Alabama APSE (Association of Persons Supporting Employment First), Alabama Department of Mental Health, and the Alabama Council for Developmental Disabilities (DD Council), to provide training to staff, pre-employment transition specialist, skills training instructors, SE providers, IPS staff and other employment personnel in Alabama that serve individuals with disabilities. Customized Employment and Discovery are included in this training. ADRS continues to expand services within the state to increase opportunities for individuals to access to supported employment services. All counties in Alabama have trained supported employment providers to serve consumers in their area. Many of our community rehabilitation programs provide paid work-based experiences in order for students to acquire employment skills and real work experiences. Providers are strongly encouraged to prioritize employment development efforts within in-demand career pathways.

Through the agency's Supported Employment Administrator and two Supported Employment Specialists, ADRS provides training and technical assistance to monitor supported employment services and outcomes. Two Rehabilitation Specialists for Supported Employment assist the counselors and providers with quality supported employment and to provide training as needed to both groups. Additionally, another state office specialist assists the statewide transition specialist. These specialists' help assure that we are providing quality services to students, youth, and adults with more significant disabilities that require supported employment. The following initiatives have been implemented by these specialists:

- Continual training and consultation on Supported Employment, Milestones, Discovery, Person Centered Profile Development, WIOA, IPS Supported Employment, Self-Employment, Pre-Employment Transition Services and Project SEARCH for students and youth.

- Continued collaboration with the Alabama Department of Mental Health on moving consumers from facility-based services to community based, competitive integrated employment. This includes making sure counselors have a better understanding of Medicaid waivers, SS implications, including work incentives. Specialist staff consult with providers who don't contract with VR to explain our application and eligibility process, supported employment services, the availability of benefit planners and section 511 of WIOA. SE Specialists have been working with 14C providers known to VR to provide career counseling, information and referral, and benefits counseling to individuals working in subminimum wage employment. This includes information on the supported employment providers in their area. We have also worked with school systems in our state to provide documentation and instruction on limitations and requirements for youth entering subminimum wage employment. VR, in collaboration with the State Department of Education, developed procedures and documentation for both the LEAs and VR. This, in addition to efforts to reach students at a younger age, should encourage competitive, integrated employment as a first option for students and youth with more significant disabilities.

- In partnership with the Department of Mental Health, ADRS recently released an RFP to provider agencies that contract with both departments. The purpose of the RFP is to move individuals from pre-vocational services in day-habilitation settings into community integrated employment. The effort seeks to braid funds from the two agencies to secure additional funding for intensive supports and extended support services.

- Alabama currently has 3 Individual Placement and Support (IPS) Supported Employment sites. This evidence-based employment-first practice is designed to serve individuals with serious mental illness and co-occurring substance use disorder. The program is being implemented at three locations: Chilton Shelby Mental Health (a very rural area), Altapointe Mental Health in Mobile and Montgomery Mental Health Authority (both urban areas).

Connections is designed for students and youth who have social skills deficits, specifically those with Autism. The program runs the entire school year and not only teaches social skills the classroom, then moves those skills into real world settings in the community to practice them. This year long social skills acquisition program is then followed by supported employment services or employment services based on the needs of the participant. This program began in Birmingham, Alabama and is now available at 4 locations across the state.

2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES

The plan for Supported Employment specifies the services under supported employment that will be provided, the extended services needed, and the source of extended services. Extended services may include natural supports. If it is not possible to identify the source of extended support when the individuals plan for employment is developed, the counselor must describe the basis for the conclusion that there is a reasonable expectation that sources for extended support services will become available. Extended support services in Alabama, come from a variety of sources. These sources include the Medicaid waiver, state dollars set aside to support Project Search, grant funding, private funding, and fund raisers. Extended support services are included in contractual agreements with community rehabilitation providers who have supported employment programs. Extended services begin when the employed individual has reached stabilization for an agreed upon period of time that meets the vocational goal and work hour goal on the IPE, or amended IPE.

VR can fund extended services to youth with most significant disabilities for up to 4 years, or until the youth reaches the age of 25 and they no longer qualify as a youth. VR must identify another source of extended services to ensure there is no interruption of services. These cases will require a review every 6 months to determine if continued services are needed, and to assure that another provider of extended supports will be identified-this may include natural supports at the workplace. We have updated the policy and counselor resource manual to provide clarity on extended services.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL) CERTIFICATIONS

1. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE,) IS AUTHORIZED TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 (REHABILITATION ACT), AS AMENDED BY WIOA[14], AND ITS SUPPLEMENT UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT[15];

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE

Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services

2. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES, THE (ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY)[16] AGREES TO OPERATE AND ADMINISTER THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN[17] , THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[18] , 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;

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY

Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services

3. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AGREES TO OPERATE AND ADMINISTER THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN[19] , THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[20] , POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER TITLE VI ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

4. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND/OR THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO PERFORM THE FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE REGARDING THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT;

5. THE STATE LEGALLY MAY CARRY OUT EACH PROVISION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

6. ALL PROVISIONS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT ARE CONSISTENT WITH STATE LAW.

7. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO RECEIVE, HOLD, AND DISBURSE FEDERAL FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT;

ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Jane Elizabeth Burdeshaw

8. THE (ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND THE SUPPLEMENT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Commissioner, Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services

9. THE AGENCY THAT SUBMITS THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT HAS ADOPTED OR OTHERWISE FORMALLY APPROVED THE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

FOOTNOTES

CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE

Signatory information	Enter Signatory information in this column
Name of Signatory	Jane Elizabeth Burdeshaw
Title of Signatory	Commissioner, Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services
Date Signed	February 11, 2022

ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include	Include
1. Public Comment on Policies and Procedures: The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.	
2. Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement: The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.	
3. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan:	
3.a. The establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.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 (A or B must be selected):	
3.b.(A) “is an independent State commission” (Yes/No)	No
3.b.(B) “has established a State Rehabilitation Council” (Yes/No)	Yes
3.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	
3.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	

The State Plan must include	Include
accordance with section 101(a)(3)	
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)	No
3.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)	No
3.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) See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan	Yes
3.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	
3.i. All required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.j. The requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.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	
3.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	

The State Plan must include	Include
3.m. The submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4. Administration of the Provision of VR Services: The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:	
4.a. Comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.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	
4.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)	Yes
4.d. Determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.e. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.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	
4.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	
4.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	

The State Plan must include	Include
Rehabilitation Act	
4.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	
4.j. With respect to students with disabilities, the State,	
4.j.i. Has developed and will implement,	
4.j.i.I. Strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and	
4.j.i.II. 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	
4.j.ii. Has developed and will implement strategies to provide pre-employment transition services (sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(25))	
5. Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement:	
5.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	
5.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	
5.c. The designated state unit will coordinate activities with any other State agency that is functioning as an employment network under the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency program under Section 1148 of the Social Security Act	
6. Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program:	
6.a. The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated	

The State Plan must include	Include
State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(G) and (H) of the Rehabilitation Act	
6.b. The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act	
7. Provision of Supported Employment Services:	Yes
7.a. The Designated State Agency Assures That it Will Provide Supported Employment Services as Defined in Section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act	
7.b. The designated State agency assures that:	
7.b.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	
7.b.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	

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	58.0%	58.0%	59.0%	59.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	56.0%	56.0%	57.0%	57.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$3900	$3900	$3950	$3950
Credential Attainment Rate	32.0%	32.0%	33.0%	33.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	43.5%	43.5%	44.0%	44.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

VII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AUTHORIZED UNDER THE THE CARL D. PERKINS CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION ACT OF 2006, AS AMENDED BY THE STRENGTHENING CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY ACT (PERKINS V) (TITLE 20, UNITED STATES CODE (20 U.S.C. 2301 ET SEQ.))

A. PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND CONSULTATION

The Governor's Office, The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), The Alabama Community College System (ACCS), the State Workforce Development Board, and partner agencies to the combined state Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) plan participated in joint state planning meetings beginning in June 2019. In order to achieve a unified workforce development system for the State of Alabama, the partner agencies worked to achieve consensus on comprehensive local needs assessments, plans to reach special and disconnected populations, stakeholder input, local and state performance targets, program quality and performance indicators, and alignment of programs in the combined state plan.

Meetings were held in the following locations:

Informational Meeting and the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment, 5:30 to 7:30pm

Region One—July 18, Calhoun Community College

Region Two—July 25, Gadsden State Community College

Region Three—August 1, Shelton State Community College

Region Four—August 8, Lawson State Community College

Region Five—August 15, Trenholm State Community College

Region Six—August 22, Enterprise State Community College

Region Seven—August 29, Coastal Alabama Community College—Bay Minette

Local Stakeholder Input, 5:30 to 7:30 pm

Region One—September 12, Calhoun Community College

Region Two—September 19, Gadsden State Community College

Region Three—September 26, Shelton State Community College

Region Four—October 3, Lawson State Community College

Region Five—October 10, Trenholm State Community College

Region Six—October 17, Enterprise State Community College

Region Seven—October 24, Coastal Alabama Community College—Bay Minette

(Appendix 1—See Stakeholder Invitation)

Fourteen regional meetings as described above were held to solicit stakeholder input. Stakeholders were provided a Quick Response (QR) code in which they could provide feedback. Stakeholders could also provide feedback by leaving handwritten comments at the meeting, viewing recordings of the meetings and leaving comments on the platform that hosted the recordings, or directly emailing the CTE section of ALSDE.

On November 1, 2019, a copy of the draft State Plan was placed on the Alabama State Department of Education (SDE)(www.alsde.edu) website and the Perkins V website (www.Alabamactso.org/PerkinsV) for 60 days of public review and comment.

B. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

1. **State's Vision for Education and Workforce Development**

1. a. **Provide a summary of State-supported workforce development activities (including education and training) in the State, including the degree to which the State's career and technical education programs and programs of study are aligned with and address the education and skill needs of the employers in the State identified by the State workforce development board. (Section 122(d)(1) of Perkins V)**

Governor Ivey will submit a 2020 four-year Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act state combined plan in February 2020. The combined plan will meet the requirements of section 122 of Perkins V section 103 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3113). By braiding federal and state workforce and education funding streams to produce an education-to-workforce pipeline that begins with literacy and numeracy, career exploration and discovery among all 16 clusters, seamless transition from secondary to postsecondary education, multiple entry and exits points for special and disconnected populations, alignment between secondary and postsecondary CTE, and co-enrollment between adult education and postsecondary CTE, Alabama's workforce development system permits entry into an in-demand career pathway for Alabamians in all seasons of life.

The combined state plan takes advantage of aligned definitions in WIOA and CTE, including "career pathways," "sector strategies," and "programs of study" to develop articulated career pathways in all 16 career clusters that begin with career exploration, transition to pre-apprenticeship, which then culminate in a registered or industry-recognized apprenticeship. These fully-articulated career pathways allow secondary CTE concentrators to earn a high school diploma, an associate degree mapped to industry-recognized credentials, and work-based learning experience in an aligned occupation at the time of high school graduation. Adults who are disconnected, from the workforce or those who are underemployed may upskill or become essential skills proficient through multiple on and off ramps from workforce training and employment through stackable credentials mapped to a traditional associate degree. Shortened career pathways for in-school youth will hasten their ability to enter the workforce and lengthened career pathways, with multiple points of entry and exit, for adults will allow for a flexible progression and persistence through a competency model and career pathway.

b. **Describe the State's strategic vision and set of goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including special populations) and for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers, including in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations as identified by the State, and how the State's career and technical education programs will help to meet these goals. (Section 122(d)(2) of Perkins V)**

Goals:

- Provide work-based learning activities during the following continuum:
    - Career awareness in elementary grades: learning about work
    - Career exploration in middle grades: learning about work
    - Career preparation in high school: learning through work
    - Career training in high school and beyond: learning for work
- Matriculate into a rigorous college or career pathway
- Recruit and retain highly qualified career/technical teachers and administrators
- Provide relevant and focused professional development
- Develop and utilize rigorous, progressive and evidence-based, career/technical education curricula
- Increase core academic skills for career/technical students
- Ensure programs continuously improve through quality monitoring
- Expand Equity and Access to Special Populations
- Close Technical and Academic Gaps

The touchstone of Governor Ivey's workforce development strategic plan is the Success Plus postsecondary education attainment goal of adding 500,000 credentialed workers to the workforce by 2025. To make progress against Alabama's postsecondary education attainment goal of adding 500,000 credential holders to the workforce by 2025, Alabama established a committee of the Alabama Workforce Council (Alabama's blue-ribbon business investment

council) called the Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways (ACCCP). The ACCCP, and its series of technical advisory committees, composed of business and industry members, representing each sector, responsible for evaluating credentials and determining if they should be placed on the Alabama Compendium of Valuable Credentials—Alabama's list of credentials of value.

Industry-recognized credentialing organizations will be a required partner for vetting credentials of value added to the Alabama compendium of valuable credentials. State-level credential organizations, based on industry sector and working through the relevant technical advisory committee (TAC), will be consulted when national, sector-level credentialing organizations are not available for participation. The P-20W Council, consisting of each of the agency heads who are a partner to the ATLAS on Career Pathways, Alabama's inter-agency data-sharing system will work with all agencies involved with secondary and postsecondary education and workforce training in Alabama to institute best practices for sharing verifiable student learning records and data on non-degree credentials, in accordance with best practices established by the National Student Clearinghouse, the Quality Assurance Commons for Higher and Postsecondary Education, the Comprehensive Digital Learner Record standard, and the Competency Calibrator. Each industry sector will be represented by a TAC, and the TAC will develop an industry-endorsed technical and academic competency model for each occupation code within the industry. Each competency model will include an approved, stackable sequence of industry-recognized credentials. Requiring employer participation in the identification of valuable credentials for inclusion on the Alabama compendium of valuable credentials will generate more interest among employers in hiring credentialed employees possessing the competencies reflected in stackable credential sequences vetted by the ACCCP. Alabama is committed to aligning its CTE and WIOA funds to the in-demand career pathways and credentials of value identified by the ACCCP. The competency models developed by each TAC will establish credential attainment as the "common denominator" between progression from secondary to postsecondary education and training programs. Alabama will reach the "tipping point" goal of publishing over half of the credentials in the state to the ATLAS on Career Pathways by 2022. ALSDE is committed to the attainment goal and credentials of value list and will continue to modify the K-12 list of credentials to ensure the goal is met. As a result, recognized credential attainment will be chosen as the state determined indicator of program quality for Alabama's Perkins V State Plan and to ensure that ESSA (College and Career Indicators) goals are met.

With Alabama's labor market conditions nearing full employment, meeting the Success Plus postsecondary education attainment goal will require mitigating the factors that result in individuals not entering the labor market. The labor force participation rate includes all persons between 16 and 64 who are employed or who are seeking employment. Furthermore, Governor Ivey's workforce development strategic plan includes an equity-based imperative to close attainment gaps among the special populations Governor Ivey has identified in the 2020 WIOA state combined plan, including veterans, justice-involved individuals, people recovering from substance abuse and addiction, single parents with dependent children, individuals with a disability, the long-term unemployed, individuals who are basic skills deficient, and individuals with significant cultural barriers. Many of the 41.2 percent of Alabamians who are not in the labor force belong to one or more of the aforementioned special populations. Based on stakeholder feedback from Alabamians during the 14 public WIOA state planning engagement meetings that were held between July and October 2019, Governor Ivey has identified the greatest barriers to education and workforce training for members of special populations in each of Alabama's seven workforce regions. The most significant barriers include transportation, child care, basic skills deficiencies, and benefits cliffs. Competency-based career pathways and credentials of value provide the basis for multiple points of entry and exit into and out of the workforce and education and workforce training to permit an individual to earn progressive wage increases by signaling the mastery of new skills to employers through earning

stackable credentials linked to traditional academic coursework while on the pathway to earning a degree or terminal credential. Furthermore, individuals who are reticent to enter the workforce will recognize a positive incentive to enter the workforce through the security of a competency-based career pathway linked to credentials of value that provides portability and transferability between and within firms and industries. To achieve Governor Ivey's human capital development strategy of ensuring that all Alabamians are self-sufficient, the work to develop competency-based career pathways must be coupled with a continuum of services approach to provide wrap-around services that generate a negative marginal tax rate for Alabamians who are struggling to overcome benefits cliffs and to persist in a career pathway.

Across all titles, WIOA and Perkins V focus on serving (individuals with barriers to employment), defined in WIOA section 3(24) and seek to ensure access to quality services for these populations. Each special population category listed in Perkins V and WIOA overlap except two, which will be included by the Governor. Governor Ivey has determined a common set of special populations for the 2020 WIOA combined state plan. The populations included in the (individuals with barriers to employment) in WIOA sec. 3(24) include:

1. Displaced homemakers (as defined in WIOA sec. 3(16));
2. Low-income individuals (as defined in WIOA sec. 3(36)) also in Perkins;
3. Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians (as defined in WIOA sec. 166(b));
4. Individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities (as defined in WIOA sec. 3(25) (includes individuals who are in receipt of Social Security Disability Insurance) also in Perkins;
5. Older individuals (age 55 and older) (as defined in WIOA sec. 3(39));
6. Ex-offenders ("offender" as defined in WIOA sec. 3(38));
7. Homeless individuals or homeless children and youths (also in Perkins);
8. Youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system (also in Perkins);

(i) Individuals who are:

(1) English language learners (WIOA sec. 203(7)) also in Perkins,

(2) Individuals who have low levels of literacy (an individual is unable to compute or solve programs, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, or in the individual's family, or in society); and

(3) Individuals facing substantial cultural barriers;

(j) Eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers (as defined in WIOA sec. 167(i)(1-3);
(k) Individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime TANF eligibility;
(l) Single parents, including single pregnant women (also in Perkins);
(m) Long-term unemployed individuals (unemployed for 27 or more consecutive weeks) also in Perkins V; and
(n) Such other groups the Governor determines to have barriers to employment.

Perkins V Specific:

(1) individuals preparing for non-traditional fields;

(2) youth with parents on active duty in the armed forces.

c. **Describe the State's strategy for any joint planning, alignment, coordination, and leveraging of funds between the State's career and technical education programs and programs of study with the State's workforce development system, to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in section 122(d)(2) of Perkins V, including the core programs defined in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102) and the elements related to system alignment under section 102(b)(2)(B) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 3112(b)(2)(B)); and for programs carried out under this title with other Federal programs, which may include programs funded under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and the Higher Education Act of 1965. (Section 122(d)(3) of Perkins V)**

The Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Transformation (GOEWT) was established to implement Governor Ivey's workforce development strategic plan by coordinating workforce development and education for the State of Alabama. GOEWT is housed within the Office of the Governor, is led by the Coordinator of GOEWT, and is charged with three goals: to increase the labor force participation rate; to surpass the Alabama post-secondary attainment goal; and to create career pathways in all 16 career clusters for in-school youth, out-of-school youth, adults, at-risk populations, and disconnected populations. GOEWT has been assigned three objectives to achieve the three goals: braid Alabama's federal education and workforce development funding streams to support an education-to-workforce pipeline; create and manage the Alabama Terminal for Linking and Analyzing Statistics (ATLAS) on Career Pathways (a state inter-agency data-sharing system); and identify valuable credentials and career pathways aligned to secondary, post-secondary, and adult education programs of study.

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) Act and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) will provide for state leadership activities to align secondary, postsecondary, and adult workforce development programs to career in-demand pathways. The Perkins CTE provides for a 10-percent state leadership set-aside and a 5-percent administration set-aside, which do not require a state match. WIOA Title I (the adult, youth, and dislocated worker programs) provides for a 15-percent Governor's leadership set-aside fund for statewide workforce activities, which does not require a state match. Five percent of the Governor's set-aside may be used for administration and 10 percent may be used for statewide leadership activities. WIOA Title II (programs funded under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) provides for a 12.5-percent state leadership set-aside, which requires a 12.5-percent state match (the state match may be cash or in-kind). The required and permissible use of state leadership and administrative funds under Perkins V and WIOA Title I and II are directly aligned to the goals, objectives, and strategies identified by GOEWT. The WIOA Title I Governor's 15-percent set-aside has seven required uses: dissemination of the state list of eligible providers of training services; evaluations of state workforce investment programs; assistance to local areas for local and regional planning; technical assistance to local areas not meeting required performance accountability measures; assistance to local areas in establishing One-Stop delivery systems; assistance to local areas with high concentrations of eligible youth; and operation of a fiscal and management accountability system in order to report on and monitor the use of WIOA funds. Allowable uses for the Governor's 15-percent set-aside include: administration of state activities; provision of incentive grants to local areas for performance; research and demonstration projects; supporting financial literacy; implementation of innovative training programs, such as layoff aversion strategies and sector and industry partnerships; and technical assistance to local areas implementing pay-for-performance strategies. WIOA Title II permits the use of state leadership funds to align adult education programs to other core and partner WIOA programs, to provide technical assistance to adult education providers, and to align adult education programs to career pathways.

a. **Describe how the eligible agency will use State leadership funds made available under section 112(a)(2) of Perkins V for each of the purposes under section 124(a) of the Act. See Text Box 2 for the required uses of State leadership funds under section 124(a) of Perkins V. (Section 122(d)(7) of Perkins V)**

Under Perkins V, the 10-percent state leadership set aside must be used for five required activities: support for programs for special populations, and other activities that expose students, including special populations, to high-skill, high-wage and in-demand occupations; individuals in state institutions; recruiting, preparing, or retaining of CTE teachers; providing technical assistance to eligible recipients; and reporting on the effectiveness of this funding stream in achieving the state's strategic vision. Perkins V also includes 25 permissible uses for the 10-percent leadership set-aside funds, including developing statewide programs of study; establishing statewide articulation agreements; establishing statewide sector or industry partnerships; awarding incentive grants to eligible recipients; supporting the adoption and integration of recognized postsecondary credentials and work-based learning into programs of study; and increasing data collection associated recognized postsecondary credentials and employment outcomes or consultation with other state agencies on licenses or certifications. The Governor's Office entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Alabama Department of Commerce (the fiscal agent for WIOA Title I), the Alabama Community College System (the fiscal agent for WIOA Title II), and the Alabama State Department of Education (the fiscal agent for Perkins V CTE) to transfer state leadership and administration funds to GOEWT for the purposes of implementing the required and permissible activities for state leadership activities under WIOA Title I, WIOA Title II, and Perkins CTE. Due to the close alignment between the required and permissible activities under WIOA and Perkins and the goals and objectives of GOEWT, implementing the required and permitted activities for statewide leadership under Perkins and WIOA will permit GOEWT to achieve its goals and objectives.

Required Uses of State Leadership Funds

The use of state leadership funds will be used to support professional learning activities and provide targeted technical assistance. Alabama is committed to strengthening the professional growth and development of teachers, school counselors, and school/district leaders. With support from the National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity Education (NAPE) , the Alabama State Department of Education intends to provide professional development and technical assistance and research-based toolkits designed to build educators' capacity to implement effective solutions for increasing student access, educational equity, and workforce diversity. The toolkits include the following:

- Exploring Non-traditional Careers
- Exploring STEM
- Inspiring Courage to Excel through Self-Efficacy
- Ensuring Equity in Problem-based Learning
- Realizing Potential with Mindset NAPE offers a three-phased solution to improve the recruitment, participation and retention of underrepresented individuals in CTE and nontraditional careers. Alabama

has adopted the 16 National Career Clusters and the Alabama Department of Labor has identified the top 40 high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand occupations and will be used for the development of all secondary Alabama CTE Courses of Study. Sub-recipients of Perkins V funds will submit a plan for promoting high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand occupations to non-traditional participants. The high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand list of pathways that will be

supported with state and federal funding and technical assistance that will be provided are based on research between the Alabama Department of Labor (Alabama's Labor Market Information Agency) and the Alabama State Department of Education. A Labor Market Information tutorial is located on the Alabama Department of Labor's website for public use. High-skill jobs are defined as needed nationally recognized business industry credentials, certificates at the secondary level, and/or degrees and education beyond the high school experience apprenticeship, postsecondary, and higher education.

Programs at the Department of Youth Services will use a needs assessment to determine the activities for students who are enrolled in programs at these special campuses. Funds are used to assist in providing services that will allow these students to enter the programs in the local school systems from which they are sent to these alternative education programs.

Post-secondary will provide career and technical education training to correctional institutions of varying levels of security, and the instruction is delivered through six colleges. Perkins V funds will be used to provide postsecondary correctional CTE program activities based on needs prioritized by college Strategic Analysis Teams (SATs), which include community stakeholders. Among the areas assessed by SATs are appropriateness of technology and access to technology. SAT activities will be supported with Postsecondary Perkins V funds.

Postsecondary Perkins V funds will also be used to purchase equipment and other technology needed to ensure that program concentrators possess current industry skills.

Professional development will be provided to pending career and technical education baccalaureate degree teacher education recipients. Alabama will contract with the Southern Region Education Board to utilize "Teach to Lead" during "New Teacher Institute" four times a year. "New Teacher Institute" will be mandated for teachers who enter Career and Technical Education through an alternative certification route. Classes will be offered to allow teachers, counselors, and administrators to grow in their profession through regional, state, and national conferences.

Technical assistance is available for all eligible recipients. Summer Conference is an annual state conference for both tachers and directors. Program conferences are held annually at the region, state, and national levels. The Alabama State Department of Education will conduct a New Administrators Academy annually, a directors' meeting annually, and an electronic grant application work day annually.

Jobs for Alabama's Graduates (JAG) programs will provide eligible students with the support necessary to remain in school, to obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in today's workforce, and to transition to postsecondary education. Career coaches, Success Coaches, and Vocational Rehabilitation counselors/specialists will be available to students to ensure levels of preparedness are achieved by all subgroups.

Compliance Monitoring - All LEAs, including those with schools receiving Perkins V funds, receive formal Compliance Monitoring reviews on a five-year cycle, with some LEAs being monitored more frequently based on a risk-based rubric. As part of the monitoring review, LEAs must provide evidence in their LEA Career and Technical Perkins V electronic grant application special population students have equity in access to all CTE programs. If the monitoring team finds evidence of inequities, the LEA will include in their corrective action plan steps to address the gaps, with specific goals and a timeline by which the inequities will be addressed. All CTE compliance monitoring will be coordinated through the Standards and Accountability Section.

2. Implementing Career and Technical Education Programs and Programs of Study

a. Describe the career and technical education programs or programs of study that will be supported, developed, or improved at the State level, including descriptions of the programs of study to be developed at the State level and made available for adoption by eligible recipients. (Section 122(d)(4)(A) of Perkins V) Alabama will continue to offer programs in the 16 nationally recognized career clusters. These programs and programs of study are well-established and utilize course sequencing and Alabama Courses of Study to lay out the progression from general awareness through more specific job-skill preparation.

The coursework and experiences comprising each program of study will increase in specificity as students progress. Work-based learning, youth apprenticeships, post-secondary credentials of value, and credit-bearing college dual enrollment can be utilized to create meaningful experiential learning for students and will be the desired capstone activities for each program of study. Dual enrollment is when students enroll in postsecondary coursework while also enrolled in high school and earn college credits while enrolled in separate courses that are not part of their high school curriculum. Embedding portable and stackable credentials in the programs of study will permit students to enjoy multiple entry and exit points and will ensure that students do not lose credit for credentials previously earned if they do not finish a program before reentering the workforce. Developing specific courses and academic alignment will be part of Alabama's Courses of Study development process, which defines a systematic method for maintaining timely and relevant coursework. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) who are eligible recipients will be provided the opportunity to choose programs and programs of study which most closely align with their local workforce needs, student and parent career interests, and local business and industry vision for their students. Under the Perkins V Plan, LEAs will administer a Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) to drive program selection.

1. **b. Describe the process and criteria to be used for approving locally developed programs of study or career pathways (see Text Box 3 for the statutory definition of career pathways under section 3(8) of Perkins V), including how such programs address State workforce development and education needs and the criteria to assess the extent to which the local application under section 132 will—**i. **promote continuous improvement in academic achievement and technical skill attainment;**

Labor market data will continue to drive program decisions within the seven Workforce Development Regions in Alabama. This data will allow stakeholders in the seven regions to evaluate the size, scope, and quality of each program. Credential attainment and academic proficiency will couple with Labor market data to further ensure the quality of the career and technical program.

Each of Alabama's community colleges will have at least one individual who will be responsible for ensuring appropriate educational services are made available to students (including those who are incarcerated) known to have special needs. Programs that lead to high-wage, high-skill, and/or in-demand employment will be made available to all Alabama community college students. The postsecondary programs that support pathway creation will be based on local labor market data that provides a glimpse of occupation needs and industry partnerships. The local market data for postsecondary institutions is based on the seven Workforce Development Regions of Alabama but will be even more localized by a defined around the postsecondary institutions of a sixty-mile radius and an understanding of the commuting patterns of the population residents. Modifications to the programs will be made in various ways in order to fulfil the needs of special population groups by aligning programs of study with local industry need to include articulation between non-credit programs to credit bearing programs of study. In order to provide individual plans for all student populations, postsecondary institutions will partner with local non-profits, community service providers, career one-stop centers, religious

organizations, etc. to ensure mentoring occurs and needs are met for program completion and success.

ii. **expand access to career and technical education for special populations; and**

Alabama is committed to the provisions to expand access to career and technical education for special populations. Professional learning provided by organizations such as the National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity (NAPE) can only enhance efforts that support high-quality CTE programs characterized by academic integration to increase student-readiness, attainment of postsecondary credentials, career advancement and economic stability for all genders, races, socioeconomic backgrounds and levels of ability. The Alabama Department of Education will work with LEAs to provide training on how to properly recruit and to retain students in special populations. Initial training will begin with all LEAs performing an equity gap analysis based on the special populations' data elements. Data revealing gaps, by program, will be supported by identification of root causes and appropriate interventions. Additionally, data will be collected and disaggregated by each special population subgroup to ensure that students have equitable access to high-quality career and technical education programs. Baseline data, captured on the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment will be collected from each LEA in 2020, by each special population subgroup. This data, coupled with the LEAs implementation of appropriate interventions, will be revisited every two years to ensure progress toward closing gaps in participation or performance in particular programs or subgroups. Consistent with Alabama's ESSA plan, this plan will utilize the minimum N-size with regard to special populations aggregate data reporting. The minimum N count of 20 for accountability reporting provides both statistical reliability across accountability measures and protects the privacy of those subgroups that are too small to report without disclosing personally identifiable information. Each LEA that receives Perkins V funding will provide a description of how students in special populations enrolled in schools assisted under Perkins V are currently served by CTE programs using data collections facilitated by the student management system and the local program application.

Support services (tutoring, career coaching, etc.) will be made available to students, so that as their core academic and technical education needs are being met, support is available to address other areas of concern. Additionally, the inclusion of increased work-based learning opportunities, such as apprenticeships and paid internships, for students help to facilitate student persistence.

iii. support the inclusion of employability skills in programs of study and career pathways. (Section 122(d)(4)(B) of Perkins V)

c. **Describe how the eligible agency will—**

i. **make information on approved programs of study and career pathways (including career exploration, work-based learning opportunities, early college high schools, and dual or concurrent enrollment program opportunities) and guidance and advisement resources, available to students (and parents, as appropriate), representatives of secondary and postsecondary education, and special populations, and to the extent practicable, provide that information and those resources in a language students, parents, and educators can understand;**

www.alsde.edu. Additionally, included in a broader CTE marketing plan, will be additional web resources, printed materials, etc. geared toward the following target audiences: students (including special populations), parents, and educators utilizing various media. This will also include resources that support career exploration, work-based learning, and dual enrollment program opportunities. These resources will be made available to English Learners', whose native language may not be English or adapted to meet other needs of the reader.

Each Alabama Community College will provide hard-copy and web-based course catalogs and informational brochures, outlining requirements and points of contact for additional information. Information regarding work-based learning and dual enrollment opportunities will be provided as well. Each community college will have at least one work-based learning component included in each program of study no later than the Fall semester of 2020. This work-based learning component will exist as an internship, pre-apprenticeship, or apprenticeship opportunity. The community college system will also align with the state's longitudinal data base in web format advertising opportunity for enrollment in many of the pathways toward job obtainment. A student or parents of students will have access to this database as it will show career pathways aligned with O*NET occupation codes that lead to careers that are in-demand, high-skill, and/or high-skill, and the educational requirements will be embedded within each program for credential obtainment and program completion from each community college.

Career pathways will be provided for career and technical education students enrolled at Alabama Community College System (ACCS) institutions. The career pathways model employed by ACCS will provide career pathways (that include available industry certifications) for each of the sixteen (16) career clusters: Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources; Architecture & Construction; Arts, A/V Technology & Communication; Business Management & Administration; Education & Training; Finance; Government & Pubic Administration; Health Science; Hospitality & Tourism; Human Services; Information Technology; Law, Public Safety, & Security; Manufacturing; Marketing; Science Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM); and Transportation, Distribution & Logistics. The colleges' career coaches, advising staff, and faculty will work to ensure information regarding career options is disseminated at presentations made to prospective and current students (and their parents, when appropriate), when working with technical advisory councils, at regional workforce council meetings, comprehensive local needs assessment meetings, and on the Alabama Community College System website.

This includes partnerships between secondary and postsecondary institutions as pathways are presented to students of all ages. It is the intent of Alabama's education leadership to engage population groups in a manner that is appropriate for each individual depending on where they are in life. The manner of pathway presentation should hold applicable the level of academic and skill level of each learner and will include pathway progression and credential obtainment that is aligned from an entry level job toward a relative credential obtainment in the highest form possible within each career cluster as well as each occupation. Credential obtainment that leads to a career that is of high-wage, high-skill, and/or in-demand, as well as the work-based learning element that compliments the specific credential, will be the ultimate goal for all learners.

ii. **facilitate collaboration among eligible recipients in the development and coordination of career and technical education programs and programs of study and career pathways that include multiple entry and exit points;**

The development and implementation of programs of study are not accomplished in isolation. They necessitate a partnership between secondary and postsecondary entities. Collaboration among stakeholders at various levels of a program of study is critical to successful career pathways. ALSDE will facilitate collaboration among secondary, postsecondary, business and industry partners, and other stakeholders in a variety of ways, such as conferences presentations, workshops, webinars, and various types of technical assistance. Agencies will evaluate the program of study to ensure that it provides opportunities for students to participate in a CTSO (DECA, FCCLA, FBLA, FFA, HOSA, SkillsUSA, and TSA or in program-related work-based learning experiences. Documentation will be submitted outlining the collaboration processes between the secondary, postsecondary, and business and industry representatives (often from a local advisory board or local workforce development board). ALSDE will

encourage eligible recipients to develop all CTE programs into programs of study, using the state template. ALSDE will ensure that LEAs utilize advisory committee for each program of study, if feasible, or at least one advisory group by cluster or for the entire LEA.

iii. **use State, regional, or local labor market data to determine alignment of eligible recipients' programs of study to the needs of the State, regional, or local economy, including in-demand industry sectors and occupations identified by the State board, and to align career and technical education with such needs, as appropriate;**

The labor market data will be the driving force in determining how schools in different regions instruct and which programs and credentials are sought after by local industry. The Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) will help quantify the data and drive decisions by each Local Education Agency (LEA). The CLNA, the Career and Technical Education (CTE) advisory committee, and regional workforce councils will join in decision making for programs and associated credentials at the local level.

iv. **ensure equal access to approved career and technical education programs of study and activities assisted under this Act for special populations;**

Alabama is committed to ensuring equal access to approved career and technical education programs of study and activities assisted under this Act for special populations. Data revealing gaps by program will be supported by identification of root causes and appropriate interventions. Additionally, data will be collected and disaggregated by each special population subgroup to ensure that students have equitable access to high-quality career and technical education programs. Baseline data, captured on the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment will be collected from each LEA in 2020 by each special population subgroup. This data coupled with the LEAs implementation of appropriate interventions will be revisited every two years to ensure progress toward closing gaps in participation or performance in particular programs or subgroups.

The Alabama Community College System Career and Technical Education staff, in collaboration with other state agencies, will work closely with the community college deans to ensure efforts are made for the recruitment and retention of students known to be in special populations. The focus of these efforts will be closing gaps and improving outcomes for these students.

Based on the context of this requirement, the reference to the local application process under "section 132" appears to be a typographical error in the Perkins V statute. The correct section for local applications in Perkins V is section 134. Therefore, eligible agencies should respond to this item using the provisions in section 134 of Perkins V.

Economic Development will provide funding that allows a large number of the Professional development activities will be made available to increase college staff members' awareness of best practices in addressing the needs of special populations. A local outreach attempt will also be made to those community service agencies that can assist with program success for students of special population groups. The barriers often keeping students from success surround a need for childcare, transportation, or support in mentorship. Reaching out to local agencies to help provide this support is critical to student success, and will be done on a case-by-case basis. It is the intent of the community college system to provide professional development to finance leadership and student services leadership on each campus to ensure eligibility for such

assistance as well as additional funding streams, agency support, and qualifications for students of special population groups occurs.

v. **coordinate with the State board to support the local development of career pathways and articulate processes by which career pathways will be developed by local workforce development boards, as appropriate;**

The Alabama State Department of Education will coordinate with local WIOA Workforce boards to guide LEAs in providing credentials of high value. These credentials, and the competencies which lead to the credentials, will be disseminated by the TAC. Task Force committees consisting of educational content experts will be trained on strategies used to meet the needs of local industry and will assist TACs for creating competency models for each credential obtainment, career lattices indicating progression of occupations within each career cluster, and pathways of progress for student obtainment and credential award.

vi. **support effective and meaningful collaboration between secondary schools, postsecondary institutions, and employers to provide students with experience in, and understanding of, all aspects of an industry, which may include work- based learning such as internships, mentorships, simulated work environments, and other hands-on or inquiry-based learning activities; and**

Using the 2020 WIOA Combined Plan and the Alabama Career Pathways Model, Alabama will work to establish a wage premium for individuals who presently are unable to enter the labor force due to barriers, such as a lack of childcare or transportation or disillusionment regarding the prospects of upward mobility. The career pathway model will provide a feedback loop between employers and employees that will signal to individuals who currently are not betting on work to take a chance on a competency-based career pathway. A currency of credentials of value will also signal progressive wage increases, upward mobility within a firm, and within and between industry sectors. The 2020 WIOA Combined Plan will ensure that Alabama's workforce system is driven by data and by the needs of industry and special populations to serve two customers: employers and jobseekers.

Dual enrollment is a longstanding component of Career and Technical Education for Alabama's high school students. By availing themselves to dual enrollment, students have the opportunity to earn high school and college credit for the same course(s). The Alabama Community College System Office of Workforce and

state's dual enrollment students to receive scholarships when they enroll in targeted technical education programs of study. An annual determination will be made regarding which programs of study are scholarship-eligible. Those programs selected will be deemed as high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand.

The Alabama Community College System also has an articulation agreement with the Alabama State Department of Education that allows high school graduates to receive articulated credit for specific courses taken in high school.

vii. **improve outcomes and reduce performance gaps for CTE concentrators, including those who are members of special populations. (Section 122(d)(4)(C) of Perkins V)**

Upon completion of the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment, if performance gaps for CTE concentrators exist, including members of special populations, the Alabama Department of Education is committed to working alongside local education agencies to deploy meaningful, evidence-based strategies that address minimizing our gaps that exists to close gaps. The Department will continue to focus on professional learning for CTE teachers in the areas of numeracy and literacy to support academic learning.

The Alabama Community College System Career and Technical Education staff will continue to work with college deans and faculty members to address gaps in performance and persistence for all CTE concentrators (with an increased focus on students who are identified as being a part of special population groups). Professional development opportunities, focused on best practices for recognizing the abilities students bring to our programs and building on them, will be provided. Faculty members will be provided insight into how they can assist students (in special populations) in focusing the resilience they demonstrate in other aspects of their lives to academic achievement and persistence.

By providing students career pathways, students will be made aware of the credentials they can earn as they progress through a program of study. Students will be provided a clear understanding of entry and exit points along a career pathway.

d. **Describe how the eligible agency, if it opts to do so, will include the opportunity for secondary school students to participate in dual or concurrent enrollment programs, early college high school, or competency-based education. (Section 122(d)(4)(D) of Perkins V)**

Alabama Secondary CTE students have the opportunity to earn postsecondary credit through the following initiatives:

- Statewide and local articulation agreements which have been developed between secondary schools and postsecondary institutions
- Dual enrollment programs which allow eligible secondary students to earn high

school and college credit for courses taken through an Alabama Community College System (ACCS) institution or through an Alabama four-year public or private college/university.

- Alabama State Board of Education policies allow students to earn credit applicable toward an Alabama high school diploma, college degree, or certificate requirements in pathways which support local, regional, and state occupations which are in in-demand and require advanced technical skills.
- All postsecondary CTE programs of study accommodate dual enrollment credit, where applicable.
- Career and Technical Education Dual Enrollment (CTEDE) Scholarship Funds

  are allocated by the Alabama Legislature. Colleges may maximize the CTEDE scholarship funds by providing textbooks, tool kits, personal protective equipment, and other associated materials and supplies for student checkout, CTEDE scholarship funds may be used to cover costs of academic core course(s) in the eligible CTE program of study that must be taken concurrently with CTE course(s).
- The College Level Examination Program (CLEP) and other college credit advancement programs enable students to earn college credit for introductory-level courses by achieving satisfactory scores on subject-specific tests.

e. **Describe how the eligible agency will involve parents, academic and career and technical education teachers, administrators, faculty, career guidance and academic counselors, local business (including small businesses), labor organizations, and**

representatives of Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, as appropriate, in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of its career and technical education programs. (Section 122(d)(12) of Perkins V)

Alabama will communicate with the Career and Technical Education (CTE) community so all stakeholders begin to view CTE as a relevant educational option. The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) will develop marketing strategies, communication strategies, and recruitment materials that emphasize real world skills and tangible outcomes. Each eligible recipient will evaluate Local Market Data indicators, will involve technical assistance committees, and will ensure each program is not duplicating services. Furthermore, the eligible recipient will consult with local business and industry to ensure ample opportunities exist for student participation in each program in post-secondary and labor market endeavors. Teachers, students, parents, academic and career and technical faculty and administrators, local businesses, labor organizations, and Tribal organizations, as appropriate, will be involved in the planning and development of programs.

Each eligible applicant will submit an application for a new program to ALSDE. Each new program will be reviewed. If approved, the eligible applicant will implement the program. Each program will be evaluated using the Evaluation of Quality of Instructional Programs (EQUIP) annually to ensure it is a quality program with favorable outcomes.

f. **Include a copy of the local application template that the eligible agency will require eligible recipients to submit pursuant to section 134(b) of Perkins V. See Text Box 4 for the statutory requirements for local applications under section 134(b) of Perkins V.**

(Appendix 2—Local Program Application Template)

g. **Include a copy of the comprehensive local needs assessment template and/or guidelines that the eligible agency will require of eligible recipients to meet the requirements of section 134(c) of Perkins V. See Text Box 5 for the requirements for the comprehensive local needs assessment under section 134(c) of Perkins V.**

(Appendix 3—CLNA)

h. **Provide the eligible agency's definition for "size, scope, and quality" that will be used to make funds available to eligible recipients pursuant to section 135(b) of Perkins V.**

Each sub-recipient of Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education (Perkins) funds will be required to implement a minimum of one of the national 16 clusters. The components of each cluster will include a foundation course and other pathway courses identified in the Alabama Courses of Study: Career and Technical Education that end with a credential, certificate, or degree (www.alsde.edu). Courses in the appropriate postsecondary pathway will complete the required components of each cluster. Local education systems will be encouraged to add additional pathways to support additional clusters. The size, scope and quality provisions include the following:

Secondary CTE Program Quality Indicators:

-
    - Criteria for Size:

        - Provide an opportunity for students to become CTE concentrators. A CTE concentrator is defined as a secondary student who has earned two (2) or more credits in a single CTE program, and
        - Offer a minimum number of programs based on the percentage of CTE enrollment. A CTE program must consist of two (2) or more courses (or two (2) credits) in a single secondary CTE program where two (2) course/credit sequences are recognized by the state and/or its local eligible recipients).

Secondary CTE Program Quality Indicators:

-
    - Criteria for Scope:
        - Provide secondary students with opportunities for acceleration (dual enrollment/articulated credit), and
        - Align with business and industry as validated by a local or regional business advisory committee.

Secondary CTE Program Quality Indicators:

-
    - Criteria for Quality:
        - Provide students with the opportunity to earn an industry certification and/or licensure approved by the state, and
        - Provide students with the opportunity to participate in a CTE program that is classified as high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand, and
        - Ensure that academics and academic achievement are an integral component of all Perkins-funded CTE programs.

Postsecondary CTE Program Quality Indicators:

-
    - Criteria for Size:
        - The ACCS institutions will offer a sufficient enough number of courses to provide all students the opportunity to become CTE concentrators.

Postsecondary CTE Program Quality Indicators:

-
    - Criteria for Scope:
        - Each of the Alabama Community College System's institutions will collaborate with local workforce advisory committees to ensure program requirements align with local industry needs and that they provide

students an opportunity to enter into career fields that are high-wage, high-skill, and/or in-demand.

Postsecondary CTE Program Quality Indicators:

-
    - Criteria for Quality:

The Alabama Community College System programs of study will integrate the opportunity for students to earn industry-recognized certifications/credentials. Programs of study are designed to ensure academic and technical proficiencies are achieved.

3. Meeting the Needs of Special Populations

a. **Describe the eligible agency's program strategies for special populations, including a description of how individuals who are members of special populations—**

i. **will be provided with equal access to activities assisted under this Act;**

The Alabama Department of Education requires that all students, have equal access to public education programs and support services. We will comply fully with Federal statutory requirements regarding the requirements outlined in Perkins V that all students have equal opportunity to receive publicly funded services, including students identified as special populations based on the pre-defined categories. Students in these categories will not experience discrimination based on their status and will receive appropriate support to meet or exceed the determined levels of performance, including opportunities for further learning and appropriate accommodations to promote parity in success.

-
    - The Office of Counseling and Guidance is housed within the Alabama Department of Education under the supervision of the Assistant State Superintendent for Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Workforce Development. All students, including students from all special populations, will be provided counseling and career guidance services coordinated through this office. CTE students and those not enrolled in CTE coursework will be exposed to opportunities for participation in CTE programs and to accommodations available which enable their access to those programs.
    - ALSDE will disaggregate participation and performance data for all special populations to identify areas of strength and areas of improvement at the LEA level.
    - LEAs will disaggregate participation and performance data for all special populations to identify areas of strength at the local program level.
- Individuals with disabilities:
    - CTE representatives are team members and will participate in the creation and implementation of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans. Those plans will include necessary accommodations to curriculum and to potential modifications of equipment or other physical facilities to enable student access to CTE programs.

    - In cases when CTE representatives are not participants in the creation of the IEP or Section 504 Plan, a Career Technical Implementation Plan will be developed to address potential barriers to student participation.

- Individuals from economically disadvantaged families, including low-income youth and adults:
    - Local Education Agencies (LEAs) will develop funding mechanisms to reduce or to eliminate student fees associated with participation in CTE programs.
    - Through the braiding of Perkins funds with Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds, students who meet WIOA eligibility requirements may receive assistance with fees or costs associated with participation in CTE programs.
- Individuals preparing for non-traditional fields:
    - ALSDE will provide LEAs with professional development and technical assistance to identify and to eliminate barriers to student participation in preparation for non-traditional fields.
    - LEAs will develop active recruitment and retention strategies for student participation in preparation for non-traditional fields.
- Single parents, including single pregnant women:
    - The 2020 WIOA Combined Plan for Alabama will include Perkins as a component. The combined plan will enable the braiding of Perkins funds with Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds for students who meet WIOA eligibility requirements. Those students may receive assistance with fees or costs associated with participation in CTE programs.
    - LEAs will be provided professional development in the implementation of Title IX protections related to student participation in CTE programs.
- Out-of-workforce individuals:
    - Secondary CTE programs do not support out-of-workforce individuals.
- English learners:
    - To fulfill ESSA requirements (ESEA section 1111(c)(4)(A)(ii)), ALSDE has created long-term goals for English learners which determine increases in the percentage of students making progress in achieving English proficiency that are both ambitious and achievable.
    - Local needs assessment data will incorporate data on the number and percentage of students in need of assistance with English Language Proficiency.
    - When appropriate, LEA's Local Perkins Applications will include activities to assist ELP students with CTE program selection and will coordinate with the LEA's ELP program efforts.
- Homeless individuals described in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C 11434a):
    - The 2020 WIOA Combined Plan for Alabama will include Perkins as a component. That combined plan will enable the braiding of Perkins funds with Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds for students who meet

WIOA eligibility requirements. Those students may receive assistance with fees or costs associated with participation in CTE programs.

  - For non-WIOA eligible homeless students, course fees and costs will be waived.

- Youth who are in, or have aged out of, the foster care system:
  - ALSDE will provide professional development and technical assistance to LEAs regarding effective strategies for inclusion of students in CTE programs who are involved with the foster care system.
  - LEAs will coordinate with county representatives of the Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR) to identify students involved in the foster care system. LEAs and DHR will work to identify needs, develop strategies to address the needs, and provide educational and support services to students.
- Youth with a parent who is a member of the armed services and is on active duty:
  - ALSDE will provide professional development and technical assistance to LEAs regarding effective strategies for inclusion of students in CTE programs with parents on active military duty.

The Alabama Community College System's institutions will ensure all students have equal access to and success in all educational offerings. This will involve the following: outreach opportunities targeted toward special populations; comprehensive, on-going career and academic counseling; job placement services; the availability of accommodations, when needed; work-based learning opportunities; participation in career and technical education student organizations; parental involvement, when appropriate; English language instruction, etc.

Funds will be set aside to serve students enrolled in educational programs in correctional institutions (both youth and adults) and to provide professional development opportunities to the staff members who serve these students.

ii. **will not be discriminated against on the basis of status as a member of a special population;**

No person shall be denied access to secondary or postsecondary career and technical education programming based on his or her designation as a member of a special population. Special population students are to have full access to all career and technical education programs, including cooperative education, apprenticeship, and student organizations. Students will receive high-quality instruction, assessment, guidance and counseling services, and job placement.

ALSDE staff is responsible for the monitoring OCR requirements. Annually, data is collected to ensure that students are not discriminated against on the basis of their status as members of special populations. If target data shows discriminatory patterns, systems are reviewed for OCR violations. On-site monitoring visits will be conducted to determine if there is any discrimination and the extent of that discrimination against students who are members of special populations. Technical assistance will be provided in the areas of nondiscrimination as monitored through OCR. Professional development activities will be conducted annually to provide awareness to all eligible recipients. Eligible recipients will provide assurance of nondiscrimination through the submission of the local application.

In accordance with Federal and State statutes, Alabama Community College System institutions prohibit discrimination against students, including those enrolled in career and technical education programs, on the basis of race, color, religion or belief, sex (including pregnancy),

sexual orientation, or gender identity; national origin, citizenship status; age; disability; veteran status; and genetic information. Professional development on non-discrimination and cultural awareness is offered on a routine basis.

iii. **will be provided with programs designed to enable individuals who are members of special populations to meet or exceed State determined levels of performance described in section 113, and prepare special populations for further learning and for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations;**

All Career and Technical Education students will meet or exceed State determined levels of performance described in section 113. Furthermore, ALSDE will provide training and technical assistance to LEAs in analyzing and interpreting academic data to drive instruction. Data will be utilized to provide additional academic supports to CTE students who are members of special populations.

The Alabama Community College System's Division of Adult Education works collaboratively with ACCS's Career and Technical Education Department to ensure students in special populations are prepared to enter into career and technical education programs of study after completing adult education programs. Some technical programs that lead to careers in high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industries can be completed concurrent with adult education.

iv. **will be provided with appropriate accommodations; and**

- Individuals with disabilities
- Individuals from economically disadvantaged families, including low-income youth and adults
- Individuals preparing for non-traditional fields
- Single parents, including single pregnant women
- Out-of-workforce individuals
- English learners
- Homeless individuals described in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C 11434a)
- Youth who are in, or have aged out of, the foster care system
- Youth with a parent who is a member of the armed services and is on active duty
    - Students with IEPs will be provided accommodations based on the recommendations and requirements in the IEP and Career Tech Implementation Plan.
    - Students who are members of special populations, but do not have an IEP, an ELP, 504 plan, or other mandated plan for accommodations will be offered appropriate accommodations for their individual needs.
        - will be provided instruction and work-based learning opportunities in integrated settings that support competitive, integrated employment. (Section 122(d)(9) of Perkins V)
        - Individuals with disabilities
- Individuals from economically disadvantaged families, including low-income youth and adults

- Individuals preparing for non-traditional fields
- Single parents, including single pregnant women
- Out-of-workforce individuals
- English learners
- Homeless individuals described in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C 11434a)
- Youth who are in, or have aged out of, the foster care system
- Youth with a parent who is a member of the armed services and is on active duty
    - Students with IEPs will be provided accommodations based on the recommendations and requirements in the IEP and Career Tech Implementation Plan.
    - Students who are members of special populations, but do not have an IEP, an ELP, 504 plan, or other mandated plan for accommodations will be offered appropriate accommodations for their individual needs.

4. Preparing Teachers and Faculty

1. **Describe how the eligible agency will support the recruitment and preparation of teachers, including special education teachers, faculty, school principals, administrators, specialized instructional support personnel, and paraprofessionals to provide career and technical education instruction, leadership, and support, including professional development that provides the knowledge and skills needed to work with and improve instruction for special populations. (Section 122(d)(6) of Perkins V)**

The Alabama Department of Education (ALSDE) will provide alternative methods of certification to recruit teachers from business and industry. ALSDE will utilize the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) to implement Teach to Lead as Alabama's New Teacher Institute professional development for teachers who choose to enter the teaching profession via alternate routes. Teach to Lead is divided into four learning institutes in which new teachers are able to learn teaching basics and how to accommodate special populations. In the annual Perkins electronic grant application, each eligible agency will be required to describe a plan to recruit, to retain, and to train personnel. ALSDE will offer support to LEAs through national, state, and regional conferences. Program specific specialists are available to provide technical assistance either at the request of a CTE director or after a Quality Assurance Visit. The Standards and Accountability section of the Career and Technical Section will coordinate technical assistance after Quality Assurance Visits (EQIP) to ensure any findings are addressed. The CTE section will coordinate with the Special Education Services Section to ensure accommodations and modifications are made to make CTE programs accessible to students with special needs. ALSDE will host an annual New Administrator's Institute to support new career and technical education administrators and three meetings to support all career and technical education administrators.

Alabama Community College System faculty will be given the opportunity to attend The Alabama Department of Education's CTE Professional Development Conference. Several sessions are content specific and not only allow our ACCS faculty to be made aware of best practices, they are provided examples of how they can utilize them in their classrooms and labs.

In addition, ACCS career and technical education instructional personnel are given opportunities to attend one- and two-day workshops, where they are able to collaborate on

strategies they employ to best serve students, including those who are identified as being a part of a special population.

ACCS CTE deans and college financial personnel have two opportunities each year to attend sessions related specifically to Perkins requirements.

C. FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

1. **Describe the criteria and process for how the eligible agency will approve eligible recipients for funds under this Act, including how—** a. **each eligible recipient will promote academic achievement;**

Alabama's CTE programs are an integral part of the total education offerings.

-
    - Secondary and postsecondary recipients offer a minimum of one program of study that incorporates and aligns secondary and postsecondary education; includes academic and CTE content in a coordinated, non-duplicating progression of courses including the opportunity for secondary students to acquire postsecondary credits, and leading to an industry-recognized credential or certificate at the secondary and postsecondary level and degrees at the postsecondary and higher education level.
    - Recipients are required to implement the *Alabama Courses of Study: Career and Technical Education.* These COS include content standards representative of all aspects of the industry as determined by the career objective of the student.
    - Academic competencies have been documented in the career and technical education programs through the validation process for embedded credit. Where specific academic content is documented, students may receive core credit for math and science CTE courses, upon LEA board of education approval.
    - Career and technical education academies, apprenticeship programs, and magnet programs are promoted as a delivery system for integrated academic and career and technical education competencies and skills.
    - Local school systems are encouraged to develop diploma endorsements which recognize successful completion of the core academic courses for the regular or advanced academic core courses, and the completion of a sequence of three or more CTE courses.
    - All sub recipients will document participation in statewide articulation activities in the local plan annually.
    - The Alabama Community College System (ACCS), in collaboration with the SDE, will develop and annually review statewide articulation agreements for approval.
    - The ACCS will collect data from postsecondary institutions and report the degree to which colleges implement plans of instruction that contain academic and technical competencies identified through a systematic curriculum development process utilizing faculty and industry representatives as subject-matter experts.
    - A postsecondary performance measure indicating the degree to which colleges implement POIs containing both academic and technical competencies will be included in the College Plan for Career and Technical Education, which also serves as the application for Perkins Basic Grant funds. Current and targeted levels of performance pertaining to the measure will be addressed in the College

Plan. The measure, current and targeted performance levels, and subsequent improvement practices will be evaluated during the approval process. Planning and evaluation in CTE at colleges will be supported with Perkins funds.

- A postsecondary performance measure indicating the percentage of CTE students who maintain a grade point average of 2.0 or higher in general education (academic) coursework will be included in the College Plan. Current and targeted levels of performance pertaining to the measure will be addressed in the College Plan. The measure, current and targeted levels of performance, and subsequent improvement practices will be evaluated during the approval process. Planning and evaluation will be supported with Perkins funds.
- A postsecondary performance measure indicating ECEP and dual enrollment participation and grade point averages in CTE courses will be included in the College Plan and provided to the SDE and LEAs for the purpose of program review and evaluation.
- Colleges must describe in their College Plans for Career and Technical Education intervention strategies used with CTE students experiencing difficulties in academic and technical coursework.
- Instructional strategies are continually revised to place greater emphasis on the integration and reinforcement of academic skills for secondary CTE students.

b. **each eligible recipient will promote skill attainment, including skill attainment that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential; and**

Perkins funds will be used to purchase equipment and other technology needed to train for and assess technical skills attainment.

Perkins funds will be used to provide technical assistance and professional development for CTE teachers to prepare them to instruct students toward technical skill attainment.

Post-Secondary credentials and third-party industry credentials are measured through the Alabama Accountability Model. Performance on these indicators is collected and reported in accordance with Alabama's ESSA plan.

College Plans for Career and Technical Education must address equipment and technology needs identified by the colleges' Strategic Analysis Terms (SAT) and must provide measurable documentation as to how the equipment and technology will be used to support the five-year plan.

A post-secondary performance measure indicating the degree to which CTE faculty

participate in technical skills upgrade activities will be included in the College Plan for career and technical education. The measure, and subsequent improvement practices, will be evaluated during the approval process. Postsecondary Perkins funds will support technical skills upgrades through professional development activities.

c. **each eligible recipient will ensure the local needs assessment under section 134 takes into consideration local economic and education needs, including, where appropriate, in-demand industry sectors and occupations. (Section 122(d)(5) of Perkins V)**

Eligible recipients will utilize locally developed processes for determining the industry needs and prioritizing available funds to best address needs. As part of the statutory requirements for Perkins V, the statewide Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment will guide eligible recipients in identifying needs and justifying expenditures.

2. **Describe how funds received by the eligible agency through the allotment made under section 111 of the Act will be distributed—**

a. **among career and technical education at the secondary level, or career and technical education at the postsecondary and adult level, or both, including how such distribution will most effectively provide students with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace; and**

- Beginning with the first year of the four-year plan (FY2020), the split for the flow-through funds will be based on the unduplicated enrollment at each level as reported in the 2019 Consolidated Annual Report (CAR).
- The secondary formula will use the population data provided by the Census Bureau and the poverty data collected under the ESEA of 1965 to allocate 30 percent of the funds according to the number of individuals ages 5-17 who reside in the district served by the LEA and 70 percent according to the number of individuals ages 5-17 residing in the district and are from families whose incomes are below the poverty level for the previous fiscal year.

18-Jul-19

Alabama Department of Education
Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act
P. L. 109-270
Fiscal Year 2020 Preliminary Allocation - Revision

CFDA# 84.048A — *Revenue Code 3310*

SysID	System	Allocation
001	Autauga County	124,541
002	Baldwin County	341,466
003	Barbour County	39,412
004	Bibb County	52,900
005	Blount County	108,592
006	Bullock County	38,930
007	Butler County	60,835
008	Calhoun County	116,462
009	Chambers County	67,300
010	Cherokee County	56,381
011	Chilton County	106,277
012	Choctaw County	36,650
013	Clarke County	57,494
014	Clay County	30,700
015	Cleburne County	34,165
016	Coffee County	43,809
017	Colbert County	49,887
018	Conecuh County	42,738
019	Coosa County	20,522
020	Covington County	47,360
021	Crenshaw County	37,456
022	Cullman County	133,722
023	Dale County	34,521
024	Dallas County	74,618
025	DeKalb County	169,844
026	Elmore County	137,800
027	Escambia County	94,934
028	Etowah County	129,923
029	Fayette County	37,098
030	Franklin County	57,073
031	Geneva County	62,165
032	Greene County	34,644
033	Hale County	46,696
034	Henry County	41,331
035	Houston County	90,920
036	Jackson County	81,850
037	Jefferson County	450,910
038	Lamar County	34,289
039	Lauderdale County	91,542
040	Lawrence County	77,892
041	Lee County	156,904
042	Limestone County	122,001
043	Lowndes County	35,494
044	Macon County	52,737
045	Madison County	208,533
046	Marengo County	23,902
047	Marion County	59,794
048	Marshall County	148,197
049	Mobile County	1,139,692
050	Monroe County	65,246
051	Montgomery County	673,054
052	Morgan County	93,926
053	Perry County	39,049
054	Pickens County	52,217
055	Pike County	44,082
056	Randolph County	39,944
057	Russell County	75,285
058	Saint Clair County	103,365
059	Shelby County	186,856
060	Sumter County	36,337
061	Talladega County	111,694
062	Tallapoosa County	48,904
063	Tuscaloosa County	225,559
064	Walker County	108,095
065	Washington County	45,162
066	Wilcox County	46,805
067	Winston County	38,054

SysID	System	Allocation
101	Albertville City	86,181
102	Alexander City	48,290
103	Alabaster City	66,906
104	Andalusia City	23,308
105	Anniston City	62,196
106	Arab City	21,108
107	Athens City	47,315
109	Attalla City	16,024
110	Auburn City	70,807
113	Bessemer City	87,456
114	Birmingham City	604,718
115	Boaz City	29,544
116	Brewton City	17,618
121	Chickasaw City	23,274
125	Cullman City	32,129
126	Daleville City	27,163
127	Decatur City	135,191
128	Demopolis City	22,541
130	Dothan City	174,533
131	Elba City	13,423
132	Enterprise City	68,403
133	Eufaula City	61,892
137	Fairfield City	33,121
141	Florence City	71,004
143	Fort Payne City	40,745
144	Gadsden City	114,439
146	Geneva City	21,931
152	Gulf Shores City	22,558
154	Guntersville City	21,714
155	Haleyville City	22,606
156	Hartselle City	23,982
157	Homewood City	30,655
158	Hoover City	109,065
159	Huntsville City	372,161
162	Jacksonville City	20,499
163	Jasper City	27,484
165	Lanett City	21,766
167	Leeds City	20,866
168	Linden City	12,403
169	Madison City	73,932
171	Midfield City	18,796
175	Mountain Brook City	32,589
176	Muscle Shoals City	23,011
177	Pelham City	33,981
178	Oneonta City	12,835
179	Opelika City	80,190
180	Opp City	20,823
181	Oxford City	50,214
182	Ozark City	45,733
183	Pell City	65,466
184	Phenix City	125,046
185	Piedmont City	16,742
186	Pike Road City	8,091
187	Saraland City	28,295
188	Roanoke City	17,958
189	Russellville City	35,542
190	Scottsboro City	29,603
191	Selma City	77,915
192	Sheffield City	25,244
193	Sylacauga City	33,787
194	Talladega City	44,913
195	Tallassee City	19,357
196	Satsuma City	12,813
197	Tarrant City	23,558
198	Thomasville City	15,170
199	Troy City	49,160
200	Tuscaloosa City	179,998
201	Tuscumbia City	17,223
202	Vestavia Hills City	5,438
204	Winfield City	14,255
205	Trussville City	29,013
800	Accel Academy	6,659
801	University Charter School	39,424
802	LEAD Academy	0
803	Legacy Prep	0
	TOTAL LEAs	**11,416,330**
210	Dept of Youth Services	10,644
600	AIDB	18,496.40
	Grand Total	**11,445,470.40**

Approved:

Eric G. Mackey
State Superintendent of Education

Fiscal Year 2020 Preliminary Allocation

- Funds will be allocated to colleges and, if applicable, consortia of colleges based on the number of Pell grant recipients (or in the case of incarcerated students, those who would otherwise be Pell-eligible). Colleges will submit a College Plan for Career and Technical Education, which serves as the application for Perkins V Basic Grant funds.

2019-2020 Perkins Basic Grant Institutional Eligibility Factor Calculations						
College	Pell Factor	BIA Factor	Incar. Factor	I.E. F.	% Total I.E.F.	Allocation
Bevill	936	0	0	936	0.047	$233,174.67
Bishop	1067	0	0	1067	0.053	$265,809.16
Calhoun	1381	0	240	1621	0.081	$403,820.67
Central Ala.	311	0	0	311	0.016	$77,475.77
Chattahoochee	426	0	0	426	0.021	$106,124.37
Coastal Alabama	895	0	0	895	0.045	$222,960.83
Drake	444	0	0	444	0.022	$110,608.50
Enterprise	382	0	0	382	0.019	$95,163.17
Gadsden	1401	0	79	1480	0.074	$368,695.00
Ingram	186	0	215	401	0.020	$99,896.41
Jefferson State	1665	0	0	1665	0.083	$414,781.87
Lawson	1030	0	0	1030	0.051	$256,591.79
LBW	464	0	0	464	0.023	$115,590.86
NE Ala.	654	0	0	654	0.033	$162,923.33
NW Shoals	891	0	0	891	0.045	$221,964.35
Reid	324	0	0	324	0.016	$80,714.31
Shelton	1123	0	0	1123	0.056	$279,759.79
Snead	274	0	0	274	0.014	$68,258.40
Southern Union	594	0	0	594	0.030	$147,976.24
Trenholm	954	0	0	954	0.048	$237,658.80
Wallace-Dothan	1242	0	121	1363	0.068	$339,548.16
Wallace-Hance	2098	0	0	2098	0.105	$522,650.07
Wallace-Selma	610	0	0	610	0.030	$151,962.13

2019-2020 Perkins Basic Grant Institutional Eligibility Factor Calculations						
Total*	**19,352**	**0**	**655**	**20,007**	**1.000**	**$4,984,108.66**
BIA= Bureau of Indian Affairs Incar=Incarcerated IEF - Institutional Elgibility Factor						
* Total allocation = **$4,984,108.66** (Basic Grant Allocation - **$4,902,842.00**; Carryover amount - **$81,266.66**; Reserve - **$544,760.00**.) Note: Total allocation for 2019-2020 - $5,528,868.66						

b. among any consortia that may be formed among secondary schools and eligible institutions, and how funds will be distributed among the members of the consortia, including the rationale for such distribution and how it will most effectively provide students with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace. (Section 122(d)(8) of Perkins V)

A Memorandum of Agreement will be required and will be developed between the members of consortia. The agreement will define the responsibilities of the fiscal agent and the other members of the consortium. The outcomes of the agreement will be outlined out in the annual budget requests from each member of the consortium and will be submitted for approval to ALSDE.

3. For the upcoming program year, provide the specific dollar allocations made available by the eligible agency for career and technical education programs and programs of study under section 131(a)-(e) of the Act and describe how these allocations are distributed to local educational agencies, areas career and technical education schools and educational service agencies within the State. (Section 131(g) of Perkins V)

Based on the current year funds received, a preliminary allocation of $11,445,470.40 was made available to the 142 local school systems and educational service agencies within the state. The secondary area career and technical schools operate as a part of the total school district and do not receive a separate allocation. Funds are allocated according to the formula given in the Act, Section 131(a)(1)(2).

4. **For the upcoming program year, provide the specific dollar allocations made available by the eligible agency for career and technical education programs and programs of study under section 132(a) of the Act and describe how these allocations are distributed to eligible institutions and consortia of eligible institutions within the State.**

Based on the current year funds received, a preliminary allocation of $4,902,842.00 was made available to the postsecondary institutions within the state.

Funds will be allocated to colleges and, if applicable, consortia of colleges based on the number of Pell grant recipients (or in the case of incarcerated students, those who would otherwise be Pell-eligible). Colleges will submit a College Plan for Career and Technical Education, which serves as the application for Perkins Basic Grant funds.

Describe how the eligible agency will adjust the data used to make the allocations to reflect any changes in school district boundaries that may have occurred since the population and/or enrollment data was collected, and include local education agencies without geographical boundaries, such as charter schools and secondary schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Education. (Section 131(a)(3) of Perkins V)

Eligible recipients are given an allocation of funds by the eligible agency according to the legislated formula in Section 13l(a)(l) and (2). When there are changes in school district boundaries, the adjustments are made at the beginning of the new fiscal year. A new school district will receive an allocation based on a pro rata share of the numbers in the formula for the preceding fiscal year for the school district of which it was a part.

1. 5. If the eligible agency will submit an application for a waiver to the secondary allocation formula described in section 131(a)—a. include a proposal for such an alternative formula; and

There is no proposed alternative allocation formula to be used in Alabama.

b. describe how the waiver demonstrates that a proposed alternative formula more effectively targets funds on the basis of poverty (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)) to local educational agencies with the State. (Section 131(b) of Perkins V)

There is no proposed alternative allocation formula to be used in Alabama.

Also indicate if this is a waiver request for which you received approval under the prior Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV).

There is no proposed alternative allocation formula to be used in Alabama.

1. 6. If the eligible agency will submit an application for a waiver to the postsecondary allocation formula described in section 132(a)—a. include a proposal for such an alternative formula; and

There is no proposed alternative allocation formula to be used in Alabama.

b. describe how the formula does not result in a distribution of funds to the eligible institutions or consortia with the State that have the highest numbers of economically disadvantaged individuals and that an alternative formula will result in such a distribution. (Section 132(b) of Perkins V).

There is no proposed alternative allocation formula to be used in Alabama.

Also indicate if this is a waiver request for which you received approval under the prior Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV).

There is no proposed alternative allocation formula to be used in Alabama.

7. Provide the State's fiscal effort per student or aggregate expenditures for the State that will establish the baseline for the Secretary's annual determination on whether the State has maintained its fiscal effort, and indicate whether the baseline is a continuing level or new level.

If the baseline is new, please provide the fiscal effort per student, or aggregate expenditures for the State, for the preceding fiscal year. (Section 211(b)(1)(D) of Perkins V)

STATE MAINTENANCE of EFFORT for PERKINS-NARRATIVE

Program and accounting staff members from the Alabama Department of Education (ALSDE) and Alabama Community College Systems (ACCS), formerly the Alabama Department of Postsecondary Education (DPE), reviewed both State budgets, the Education Trust Fund and the General Fund, to determine if appropriate expenditures from a line item should be included in the maintenance of effort (MOE) calculation. There are no General Fund expenditures included in the MOE calculation. Items included in the calculation are as follows:

	Description
ACCS	Special Populations Training (3B10f)
ACCS	Postsecondary/Tech Colleges - Truck Driving Training (3B10i)
ACCS	Mine Safety Training Program at Bevill State CC (3B10g)
ACCS	Workforce Development (3b10J)
ACCS	Alabama Technology Network - Workforce Training (3b10L)
ACCS	Dual Enrollment
AIDT	Industrial Development & Training Program (3B22a)
AIDT	Industrial Training Program - O & M (3B22b)
AIDT	Workforce Development (3B22c)
ALSDE	Career Tech Initiative (3B11b)
State BOE	Career Tech Operations and Maintenance
ALSDE	State Admin Match Disbursements (SDE)
ALSDE	CTE Leadership from Operations and Maintenance Disbursements
ACCS	Other Career & Technical Education Expenditures from State Funds

Only expenditures occurring during the fiscal year, 10/l/2018-9/30/2019, are included. There are issues with certain Alabama Industrial Development & Training (AIDT) funds that cause us to make an exception to how the amount reported as MOE is calculated. The portion of AIDT funds that do not revert back to the State Treasury at the end of the fiscal year is included in the MOE calculation as the budgeted amount. This is necessary because the amounts expended fluctuate greatly from year to year---enough to cause Alabama to fail to meet the MOE requirement. The expenditures fluctuate this way, because they are affected by the level of

economic development or new industries entering the state. This should not be a problem since all funds allocated will not revert and will eventually be expended on MOE allowable activities.

Alabama's estimated MOE for SFY 2019 (10/1/2018 - 9/30/2019) is $98,576,174, approximately 2M more than SFY 2018. As Alabama has significantly increased CTE allocations for SFY 2020 (10/1/2019 - 9/30/2020), we expect to meet the MOE requirement and are not seeking a 5% reduction to our MOE baseline for SFY 2020.

D. ACCOUNTABILITY FOR RESULTS

1. 8. Identify and include at least one (1) of the following indicators of career and technical education program quality—a. the percentage of CTE concentrators (see Text Box 6 for the statutory definition of a CTE concentrator under section 3(12) of Perkins V) graduating from high school having attained a recognized postsecondary credential;

Alabama will use Option A.

1. b. the percentage of CTE concentrators graduating high school having attained postsecondary credits in relevant career and technical education programs and programs of study earned through a dual or concurrent enrollment program or another credit transfer agreement; and/or (c) the percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having participated in work-based learning. (Section 113(b)(2)(A)(iv)(I) of Perkins V)

Include any other measure(s) of student success in career and technical education that are statewide, valid, and reliable, and comparable across the State. (Section 113(b)(2)(A)(iv)(II) of Perkins V) Please note that inclusion of "other" program quality measure(s) is optional for States.

Alabama will not include any other measures of student success or program quality measure.

Provide the eligible agency's measurement definition with a numerator and denominator for each of the quality indicator(s) the eligible agency selects to use. —

(See Appendix 4—Secondary Accountability Document)

Please see attachment for Alabama's measurement definition with the quality indicator chosen and for numerator denominator definitions.

2. Provide on the form in Section V.B, for each year covered by the State plan beginning in FY 2020, State determined performance levels or each of the secondary and postsecondary core indicators, with the levels of performance being the same for all CTE concentrators in the State. (Section 113(b)(3)(A)(i)(I) of Perkins V.

3. Describe the procedure the eligible agency adopted for determining State determined levels of performance described in section 113 of Perkins V, which at a minimum shall include—a description of the process for public comment under section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V as part of the development of the State determined levels of performance (see Text Box 7 for the statutory requirements for consultation on State determined performance levels under section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V); .—(See Appendix 4--Secondary Accountability Document)

Alabama examined data for each performance indicator to identify trends in the data and to find the average of two years to determine State levels of performance as described in section 113 of Perkins V. Alabama aligned its numerator and denominator to its Every Student Succeeds Act Accountability Workbook Methodology to be consistent in the local education agencies. The levels were then open for public comment with the Perkins V plan and adjusted as discussed in the public comment portion of the plan.

- an explanation for the State determined levels of performance that meet each of the statutory requirements in Text Box 8; and

- a description of how the State determined levels of performance set by the eligible agency align with the levels, goals, and objectives other Federal and State laws (Section 122(d)(10) of Perkins V).

As part of the procedures for determining State determined levels of performance, describe the process that will be used to establish a baseline for those levels.

4. Provide a written response to the comments regarding State determined performance levels received during the public comment period pursuant to section 113(b)(3)(B) of Perkins V. (Section 113(b)(3)(B)(iii) of Perkins V).

As part of the written response, include a description of any the changes made to the State determined performance levels as a result of stakeholder feedback.

See Appendix 5

5. Describe how the eligible agency will address disparities or gaps in performance as described in section 113(b)(3)(C)(ii)(II) of Perkins V in each of the plan years, and if no meaningful progress has been achieved prior to the third program year, a description of the additional actions the eligible agency will take to eliminate these disparities or gaps. (Section 122(d)(11) of Perkins V)

As part of the written response, and pursuant to the Report of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP), the eligible agency could indicate that it will analyze data on the core indicators of performance to identify gaps in performance, explain how they will use evidence-based research to develop a plan to provide support and technical assistance to eligible recipients to address and close such gaps, and how they will implement this plan. The eligible agency is not required to submit a new State plan prior to the third program year in order to address this requirement.

The Alabama Department of Education will analyze data on the core indicators of performance to address disparities or identify gaps in performance in each of the plan years. If no meaningful progress, as defined in Alabama's Perkins V Operational Handbook, has been achieved prior to the third program year, the Local Education Agency will implement research and evidence-based strategies to close identified gaps.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)

A. CONDUCT A PROGRAM DESIGNED TO SERVE ALL POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS IN THE STATE (NOT NECESSARILY IN A UNIFORM MANNER) THAT PROVIDES ASSISTANCE TO NEEDY FAMILIES WITH (OR EXPECTING) CHILDREN AND PROVIDES PARENTS WITH JOB PREPARATION, WORK, AND SUPPORT SERVICES TO ENABLE THEM TO LEAVE THE PROGRAM, SPECIFICALLY CASH ASSISTANCE, AND BECOME SELF-SUFFICIENT (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(I) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

Alabama's renewal plan is effective October 1, 2021. The State will continue to conduct programs designed to serve all political subdivisions in the State (not necessarily in a uniform manner) to provide assistance and/or services to needy families with children under the administration and supervision of the Alabama Department of Human Resources through County Departments of Human Resources located in the 67 counties in Alabama. The program in Alabama is known as the Family Assistance Program. Program operating guidelines which

include all policies, procedures, etc., for the determination of initial and continuing eligibility for each program will be issued to the County Departments of Human Resources from the State Department of Human Resources as needed. Such operating guidelines contained in department program manuals or other correspondence is binding on the County Departments of Human Resources. Provision of assistance and/or services to eligible , needy families is contingent on the availability of program funding.

Activities of these county offices include: accepting and processing applications for assistance; and as appropriate conducting reviews and redeterminations of eligibility, providing child support enforcement services, information and referral services, providing family intervention and preservation services and managing a program of work activities and requirements known as the JOBS Program.

Family Assistance Program components: 1. Basic Assistance to Needy Families A. Temporary Cash Assistance (limited to 5 years); B. Work Program (includes services to current and former recipients of cash assistance) 2. TANF Emergency Assistance 3. TANF (Direct) Child Welfare 4. Special Projects

Financial criteria are provided for each program component in Attachment E in section (k) and section (m) as appropriate.

General program descriptions for the components of the Family Assistance Program are as follows:

1. Basic Assistance to Needy Families: A. Cash Assistance: Financial assistance to meet basic needs is available to a family with a dependent child under age 18 or under age 19 if s/he is a full-time student in a secondary school or in the equivalent level of vocational or technical training and whose income does not exceed established agency standards and who are otherwise eligible. Non-parent adult caretaker relatives are excluded from the Family Assistance unit.

B. Work Program: (See Section (b)) Non-assistance expenditures for current and former recipients of cash assistance as well as certain needy applicants of cash assistance so as to maintain children in their own homes and end the dependency of needy parents by promoting work. Services include information and referral, case management short-term non-recurrent benefits as discussed in 45CFR 260.31, day care, transportation and other work and training services.

2. TANF Emergency Assistance (Formerly AFDC-EA as provided by 45 CFR 233.120 with provision date of August 21, 1996): Assistance and services to or on behalf of a needy child under the age of 21 when it has been determined an emergency or crisis situation exists. Under this component an emergency exists when a child (a) is being or has been removed from his/her home and placed into publicly funded care or supervision as authorized by department staff or designee, or (b) is at risk of such removal as determined by department staff or designee.

Assistance includes paying for shelter, foster care, or emergency living expenses to alleviate the emergency or crisis situation. Services include information and referral, case planning and case management, counseling and support activities to normalize family functioning, and health care and health maintenance activities. Assistance and services are provided to the extent they are determined necessary and appropriate by department staff. Assistance is authorized during one period of 30 consecutive days in any 12 consecutive months. All authorized services/assistance are delivered in the twelve month time period between the authorized date and twelve months later. Methods of delivery of assistance and services includes vendor/contract payments to the provider of services and staff services. Staff service costs are determined according to the department's approved cost allocation plan

Assistance is available to or on behalf of a needy child 1) who is under the age of 21 and to any other member of the household in which he is living provided that such child is (or, within 6 months prior to the month in which such assistance is requested, has been) living with any of the relatives specified in section 406 (a)(1) of the Act and further clarified in 45 CFR 233.90(c)(1)(v) in a place of residence maintained by one or more of such relatives as his or her own home; (2) who has been removed from his/her home or is at risk of such removal and (3) whose emergency did not arise from his/her refusal or refusal of such relative with whom s/he lives without good cause to accept employment or training for employment.

3. TANF Direct Child Welfare: Non-assistance expenditures for payment of specific services for department child welfare cases such as counseling, case management, peer support, childcare, information and referral, transitional services and non-recurrent, short-term benefits as discussed in 45 CFR 260.31. An individual is certified if that individual meets either of the following: 1) a child resides in his/her own home; 2) a child is in out-of-home placement and has a permanency goal to remain at home, return home, or live permanently with relatives.

4. Special Projects: A. Eligible Families: Non-assistance expenditures for services including information and referral to needy parents/families such as short-term non-recurrent benefits as discussed in 45 CFR 260.31, day care, subsidized employment, transportation and work and training services, statewide food distribution network activities and pro-family activities expected to prevent and reduce the incidence of out of wedlock births as well as encourage the formation and maintenance of healthy two parent families including after school activities for teens, fatherhood and healthy marriage initiatives, mentoring and literacy programs and domestic violence/drug abuse/prevention/education programs. Additional non-financial criteria, if any, are dependent on the project plan.

After-School Care Program — Through a collaboration funded through a specific legislative appropriation with the Alabama Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs, project based learning activities are provided for the purpose of preventing out of wedlock teen pregnancy. Program projects include: Character, Health and Life Skills; Education and Career Development; and Health and Physical Education Programming.

B. Pro-Family Activities for Other Than Eligible Families: Non-assistance in the form of non-federal cash and in kind qualified expenditures by third parties for individuals and families pursuant to 45 CFR 263.2(a)(4)(ii). Program specifics including non-financial eligibility criteria, if any, are contained in written agreements/contracts between the Department of Human Resources and the third party and in project plans as applicable.

These benefits and services are provided without regard to financial need or family composition.

B. REQUIRE A PARENT OR CARETAKER RECEIVING ASSISTANCE TO ENGAGE IN WORK (DEFINED BY THE STATE) ONCE THE STATE DETERMINES THE PARENT OR CARETAKER IS READY TO ENGAGE IN WORK, OR ONCE HE OR SHE HAS RECEIVED 24 MONTHS OF ASSISTANCE, WHICHEVER IS EARLIER, CONSISTENT WITH THE CHILD CARE EXCEPTION AT 407(E)(2) (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(II) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

1. Requirements and Activities

The State will operate a welfare work program in compliance with Section 407 of Title IV-A of the Social Security Act and consistent with Alabama's approved Work Verification Plan. The program is known as the JOBS Program. All parents/stepparents, including teen parents, who are receiving assistance, are referred to the JOBS Unit for assessment in regard to their skills, prior work experience and employability. The assessment process includes screening for disability and language assistance needs. An Individual JOBS Participation (IJP) and Family Responsibility Plan (FRP) will be developed for these individuals. Individuals determined to be ready to engage in work will be immediately placed in work or work-related activities for up to

40 hours per week. After receipt of assistance for 24 months, all individuals not already participating in such activities will be required to engage in work activities, as defined in state policy.

NONCOMPLIANCE WITH PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS Work Program-The parent(s) and/or stepparent(s) of a dependent child(ren) receiving assistance are required to participate in work activities designed to result in gainful employment unless the parent(s)/stepparent(s) is deferred or has good cause for not participating as specified in department program manuals. See Attachments B and C below. The penalties for failure to comply are as follows: Applicants: Upon overt refusal of the grantee relative or other member(s) of the assistance unit required to participate in JOBS activities, the application will be denied and entitlement to benefits for the month of application through the month of application disposition is lost even if reapplication is made in the month of the original application disposition. Recipients who have received for less than 24 months: For the first three months of non-compliance (consecutive or not), the grant amount is reduced by 50% of the payment standard for the assistance unit size. For a month of non-compliance in excess of three months, the assistance unit is disqualified for a one-month period for the first disqualification. For a month of non-compliance following the first disqualification, the assistance unit is immediately disqualified for a six-month period. For a month of non-compliance following the second and subsequent disqualifications, the assistance unit is immediately disqualified for a twelve-month period. Recipients who have received for 24 months or more: The assistance unit is immediately disqualified for a one-month period for the first instance of non-compliance; a six-month period for the second instance of non-compliance and a twelve-month period for the third and subsequent instances. Recipients who voluntarily terminate employment or refuse employment without good cause (regardless of the number of months of receipt): The assistance unit is immediately permanently disqualified. Attachment B WORK PARTICIPATION DEFERRAL CRITERIA and SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES DELAY CRITERIA A. Deferral Criteria -Individuals may be temporarily deferred from the participation requirements of the JOBS Program if the individual: 1. Is a person in the home whose presence is required on a substantially continuous basis due to the illness or incapacity, determined on the basis of medical evidence, of a related individual and no other appropriate individual is available to provide the needed care. 2. Has an illness or injury which is serious enough to temporarily prevent employment or training with the goal of employment. This includes pregnancy when it is determined by medical evidence that working or participation in training would be detrimental to the woman or the unborn child. 3. Is incapacitated with a physical or mental impairment which prevents the individual from engaging in employment or other work activity as determined by medical evidence from an authorized source (physicians, the Department of Rehabilitative Services or other acceptable documents). 4. Has been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty as defined in department program manuals to the extent participation in program work requirements is precluded. 5. Is participating in drug, alcohol or mental health counseling to the extent participation in program work requirements is precluded. 6. Is a single custodial parent caring for a child under the age of six (6) and appropriate childcare is not available or is inaccessible to the client. 7. Is a single custodial parent (age 18 or older) of a child age 6 months or younger. 8. Is age 60 or older. 9. Has no regular transportation of any kind available. 10. Has a personal barrier of such significance to preclude participation in a work activity or employment and is participating in other JOBS activities to overcome the barrier. 11. Is a parent in a two-parent family who has to provide childcare for a child while the other parent works or participates in a JOBS activity because appropriate childcare is not otherwise available, accessible and/or affordable. (Attachment B cont'd.) B. Special Circumstances Delay Criteria Participation for clients who are required to participate and do not meet deferral criteria may be delayed if no appropriate component/employment is available. Attachment C GOOD CAUSE FOR NONCOMPLIANCE WITH JOBS ACTIVITIES Good cause for failure or refusal to participate in JOBS activities or to accept employment includes the following: 1. Illness of individual or illness of a household member or family member which requires the presence of the individual. 2. Childcare problems 3.

Transportation problems 4. Personal or family crisis 5. Domestic Violence issues 6. Rare/Unusual Circumstances 7. Non-receipt of correspondence 8. Administrative error.

2. Displacement Provisions

Pursuant to 45 CFR 261.70, no adult in a work activity as described in 45 CFR 261.30 will be employed or assigned to an employment when any other individual is on layoff from the same or an equivalent job in the company, or if the employer has terminated the employment of any regular employee or otherwise caused an involuntary reduction of the workforce in order to fill the vacancy so created with a recipient of Family Assistance. Aggrieved individuals may file a written complaint with the Family Assistance Division, State Department of Human Resources. All complaints are investigated. Complainants are advised of findings in writing. Corrective action is taken by the Department as appropriate.

C. ENSURE THAT PARENTS AND CARETAKERS RECEIVING ASSISTANCE ENGAGE IN WORK IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 407 (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(III) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT). CONSISTENT WITH THE REQUIRED STRATEGIC ELEMENTS DISCUSSED IN SECTION II (A)(2) HEREIN, PROVIDE A SPECIFIC ANALYSIS OF HOW THE STATE'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ARE ADDRESSING EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES FOR PARENTS OR CARETAKERS RECEIVING ASSISTANCE

To ensure engagement, the State conducts monitoring as described in Alabama's approved Work Verification Plan. That monitoring includes case record reviews beginning at the local level and continuing to the State level for re-review. Negative findings require correction action. Findings in these reviews are a component of the performance evaluation of Directors, County Departments of Human Resources. Additionally, each County Office is required to develop and submit a County Management Plan related to activities of the JOBS Program. That plan requires an analysis of work participation data and activities as well as a corrective action plan if needed. These plans are reviewed and monitored by State Office Field Supervisors.

A FRP is developed jointly by the FA grantee relative and the JOBS case manager. It outlines the responsibilities of the FA grantee in regard to the participation of all required family members and includes a copy of the IJP for each required family member. The IJP outlining work activities, supportive services and other family needs is developed jointly by the recipient and the JOBS case manager. Support services such as childcare, transportation, and work/participation expenses will be made available as needed to enable recipients to participate in work or work-related activities. Other services include information and referrals for domestic violence and substance abuse issues. The individual will receive reimbursement or payment of agreed upon expenses directly related to participation in such activities. Each recipient will be informed of the work requirements, what constitutes noncompliance, and the sanctions for non-compliance. If a recipient refuses or fails to cooperate with work requirements as set forth in his/her IJP, the family's benefits will be reduced or terminated as set forth in state policy unless good cause for the non-compliance, as defined in state policy, is established. No sanction for failure to work or participate in work-related activities will be imposed on any single custodial parent caring for a child under age 6 if the individual proves that s/he has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed childcare.

Each non-deferred recipient will be placed in a work-related activity consistent with his/her IJP. Work activities may include: Subsidized/Unsubsidized employment

On the job training

Job Search

Job Readiness Activities

Community Employment Placement (work experience)

Community Service Employment

Vocational education activities

Job skills training

Satisfactory attendance in high school or a course of study leading to a GED

Education directly related to employment

For the duration of the recipient's involvement in work activities, the JOBS case manager will monitor component participation and provide assistance to participants with any problems or barriers.

Individuals who agree to treatment programs for drug, alcohol, or mental health reasons may be temporarily deferred from a work activity when the person is making a serious attempt to recover. Domestic violence victims will be deferred from a work activity when they are at risk of endangerment.

Definitions

a. Unsubsidized Employment: This is paid employment for either wages or salary where no part of the pay is subsidized by TANF or any other public programs.

b. Work Experience: In Alabama this activity is called Community Employment or CEMP. CEMP is a work activity, performed in return for welfare that provides an individual with an opportunity to acquire the general skills, training, knowledge, and work habits necessary to obtain employment. Placements are designed to help prepare the client to obtain unsubsidized employment by allowing him/her to develop a current work history and establish references for future employment seeking efforts as well as develop and improve marketable skills. Placements will be in both non-profit and for-profit businesses. Placement in for-profit businesses will have shorter time frames (maximum of three months) than placements in non-profit businesses (maximum of six months).

c. On-the-Job-Training: In this component a public or private employer hires the TANF client full-time where part of the wages are subsidized, usually by a governmental entity such as Department of Labor. While employed in the OJT position, the client engages in productive work while receiving training in knowledge and skills essential for adequate job performance. The client is compensated at a rate comparable to that of other employees performing the same or similar jobs, but at no less than minimum wage.

d. Job Search and Job Readiness:

1. Job Search is assigned in increments lasting no more than two weeks. The client is expected to complete a number of serious contacts with potential employers and must also register with the Employment Service. The daily number of required contacts is determined by the case manager based on the client's specific circumstances and the geographic area. The case manager will randomly contact employers turned in as job contacts to verify that an application was submitted and/or an interview was conducted.

2. Job Readiness is an intensive, short-term component, consisting of formal classroom training designed to prepare the client for successfully seeking and maintaining employment. Activities focus on pre-employment preparation and are aimed at helping the client overcome barriers that might preclude employment. Typical activities include application completion, interview skills, ways to locate job openings, general workplace expectations, and the behaviors and attitudes necessary to compete successfully in the labor market. This activity also includes substance abuse, mental health and rehabilitation counseling for clients who are otherwise employable.

e. Vocational Educational Training: This is organized educational programs that are directly related to the preparation of individuals for employment in current or emerging occupations requiring training including a baccalaureate or advanced degree. These courses should provide individuals with technical skills and academic knowledge needed for success in current or emerging employment sectors. It also includes any formal instruction in a skill or trade traditionally referred to as job skills training, determined by the JOBS staff to be other than purely academic in nature, that prepares the client for a vocation. For example, technical programs designed to prepare a client for a specific occupation, including nursing, plumbing, electrical, auto mechanics, welding and barbering. The training is limited to education that leads to useful employment in a state recognized occupation. Training is available to clients through WIA, vocational/technical schools and some colleges and universities. Training includes courses for any state licenses, certificates, and/or degrees.

f. Job Skills Training Directly Related to Employment: This is training or education for job skills required by an employer to provide an individual with the ability to obtain employment or to advance or adapt to the changing demands of the workplace. It includes training or education required as a prerequisite for employment or to advance or adapt to changing demands of current employment. Such training and education will be provided through educational and training organizations. This activity also includes all activities described above as vocational education and any four-year bachelor's or advanced degree programs at any State certified college or university.

g. Education Directly Related to Employment for Individuals with No High School Diploma or Certificate of High School Equivalency: This is education related to a specific occupation, job, or job offer. It includes basic education and ESL, and where required as a prerequisite for employment, education leading to a GED or high school equivalency diploma in any educational program approved by the Alabama Department of Education.

h. Satisfactory School Attendance for Individuals with No High School Diploma or Certificate of High School Equivalency: Individuals in this activity must be attending an educational facility with the goal of achieving a high school diploma or certificate of high school equivalency. In addition, the student must be considered a "student in good standing". The student must have regular attendance and the activity must be considered feasible for the student.

i. Subsidized Public or Private Sector Employment: This is paid employment funded with TANF or other public dollars in the public or private sector. In all cases, the employer is reimbursed by DHR or other public programs for the gross wages paid by the employer to the employee. In addition, subsidized public and private sector employment in Alabama may be provided through college work study programs that meet the guidelines.

j. Community Service Employment: This is publicly and/or state funded, wage-paying jobs designed to provide employment for individuals and to address unmet community needs. See i. above.

D. TAKE SUCH REASONABLE STEPS AS THE STATE DEEMS NECESSARY TO RESTRICT THE USE AND DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION ABOUT INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES RECEIVING ASSISTANCE UNDER THE PROGRAM ATTRIBUTABLE TO FUNDS PROVIDED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(IV) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

Pursuant to Code of Alabama Title 38, Section 38-2-6 information/case records of program participants is considered confidential and shall not be subject to public use or inspection. The release and disclosure of information about individuals and families receiving assistance through the Family Assistance Program is limited in scope by the purpose/program for which it is released/disclosed. Such release/disclosure is only permissible as follows:

— in connection with programs operated under Title I — Aid to the Aged; Title IV-A — Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC); Title IV-A — Block grants to States for Temporary

Assistance for Needy Families; Title IV-B — Child Welfare Services; Title IV-D — Child Support and Establishment of Paternity; Title IV-E — Foster Care (FCMP) and Adoption Assistance; Title X — Aid to the Blind; Title XIV — Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled; Title XVI — Aid to the Aged, Blind and Disabled; Title XVI — Supplemental Security Income (SSI); Title XIX — Medicaid; or Title XX — Block Grants.

— in connection with services provided by other entities integral to and consistent with the administration of public assistance pursuant to state laws under written agreements with the Department of Human Resources.

— in connection with the administration of other federal or federally assisted programs providing assistance in cash, in-kind, or services, directly to individuals on the basis of need.

— at the request of state, local or federal law enforcement authorities searching for fugitive felons or individuals violating a condition of probation or parole imposed under federal or state law (current address only).

— in connection with a public audit.

— in connection with the investigation of problems related to misuse of funds issued by the Department of Human Resources.

— at the request of the client under certain limited conditions as specified in department program manuals.

— in connection with the investigation of program fraud under certain conditions as specified in department program manuals.

— at the request of grand juries.

E. ESTABLISH GOALS AND TAKE ACTION TO PREVENT AND REDUCE OUT-OF-WEDLOCK PREGNANCIES, WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON TEENAGE PREGNANCIES (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(V) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

The Department of Human Resources partners with the Children's Trust Fund of Alabama to competitively award grants to community and faith-based organizations for fatherhood programs across the state. These programs offer a myriad of services to all non-custodial parents, including parenting classes, with the overarching goal to strengthen families, to enhance child support collection and to address the multi-faceted needs of children growing up without the involvement of one or both parents in their lives.

The Department of Human Resources partners with the Alabama Department of Public Health which serves all women of childbearing age and the Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy (ACPTP) for pregnancy prevention efforts. The mission of the ACPTP is "Leading Alabama in embracing evidence informed sexual health education as critical to healthy youth development. Five key areas that guide the work of ACPTP are Knowledge, Resources, Skills, Policy and Partnerships. Information about those guiding principles and other information about the work of the Campaign can be found on the ACPTP website at www.acptp.org.

Our goal specifically targeting teen pregnancy is to maintain out of wedlock teen births to at least 5% below the national average as published by the National Center for Health Statistics. In regard to the overall issue of out of wedlock pregnancy prevention, as part of the JOBS Program client assessment the case manager provides discussion and information about the impact of additional children as it pertains to the goals of personal responsibility, parenting and family support. Through these discussions it is our goal to provide individuals with sufficient information and assistance to move families from welfare to work without additional pregnancies during receipt of assistance and until such time as the family is stable. These

activities in conjunction with our fatherhood and healthy marriage initiatives provide the foundation for success in this area.

F. CONDUCT A PROGRAM DESIGNED TO REACH STATE AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS, THE EDUCATION SYSTEM, AND RELEVANT COUNSELING SERVICES, THAT PROVIDES EDUCATION AND TRAINING ON THE PROBLEM OF STATUTORY RAPE SO THAT TEENAGE PREGNANCY PREVENTION PROGRAMS MAY BE EXPANDED TO INCLUDE MEN (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(VI) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

STATE LAWS-General

Code of Alabama at Section 13A-6-61 states in part that a person commits the crime of rape in the first degree which is a Class A felony if " He or she, being 16 years or older, engages in sexual intercourse with a member of the opposite sex who is less than 12 years old." Punishment for a conviction for this felony is life, or not more than 99 years or less than 10 years.

Code of Alabama at Section 13A-6-62 states in part a person commits the crime of rape in the second degree which is a Class B felony if " being 16 years old or older, he or she engages in sexual intercourse with a member of the opposite sex less than16 and more than 12 years old; provided the actor is at least two years older than the member of the opposite sex." Punishment for a conviction for this felony is 2-20 years.

ERIN'S LAW

Alabama passed Erin's Law in 2015. That law (and amendments) requires all K-12 public schools and Pre-K when available, establish a child sexual abuse prevention instructional program. The Alabama Department of Human Resources is a member of the Governor's Task Force on Child Sexual Abuse Prevention as well as an active participant in the provision of training for mandatory reporters for this important legislation and activity. Further the Governor issued an Executive Order authorizing county Children's Policy Councils to work in conjunction with local Child Advocacy Centers to develop a child sexual abuse prevention plan. As part of that plan through work with local school systems, development and presentation of an orientation for all middle school and high school students regarding peer to peer sexual abuse crimes was to be provided at the beginning of each school year.

The Department of Human Resources developed pamphlets containing information regarding the legal definitions and consequences of statutory rape. Two pamphlets were developed one targeted at educating males and the other to educate the parents about the consequences of a daughter under the age of 16 involved in a sexual relationship. The development of these pamphlets included review by staff of the Alabama Attorney General's Office, Criminal Division, the Alabama Department of Education and internal review by various Divisions within the Department of Human Resources. We partner with the Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention to fund Fatherhood Programs across the state. These pamphlets are distributed as part of the educational activities of these programs which are specifically targeted at non-custodial males. TANF funded Fatherhood programs number 22 throughout the state. Further, these materials are used in the educational activities of the Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. In addition to being displayed in County Office waiting areas, these pamphlets are available to other interested entities in Alabama including law enforcement officials/agencies, schools, and contracted agencies. Work to possibly partner with the Alabama Department of Corrections and the Alabama Department of Youth Services for use of the pamphlets in the educational programs, if appropriate, will take place during this plan period. Staff of the Department of Human Resources distributes the pamphlets, as appropriate, to individuals applying for or receiving Family Assistance and in other program areas such as Child Support Enforcement and Family Services as deemed necessary.

TANF workers are required to report cases of suspected abuse or neglect to the appropriate service staff. This activity specifically includes the circumstances of girls under the age of 16 having sex with males who are at least 16 years old and at least two years older than the female.

G. IMPLEMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AS NECESSARY TO PREVENT ACCESS TO ASSISTANCE PROVIDED UNDER THE STATE PROGRAM FUNDED UNDER THIS PART THROUGH ANY ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSACTION IN AN AUTOMATED TELLER MACHINE OR POINT-OF-SALE DEVICE LOCATED IN A PLACE DESCRIBED IN SECTION 408(A)(12), INCLUDING A PLAN TO ENSURE THAT RECIPIENTS OF THE ASSISTANCE HAVE ADEQUATE ACCESS TO THEIR CASH ASSISTANCE (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(VII) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

Statement of Policy: Use of an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card to withdraw FA benefits or process a payment for merchandise or a service from an automated teller machine (ATM) or point of sale (POS) device physically located in liquor, wine or beer stores, casinos or other gambling establishments, strip clubs, tattoo or body piercing facilities or facilities providing psychic services is prohibited. Such use constitutes an unauthorized EBT transaction. Use of any portion of the FA benefits whether in cash or an EBT transaction to purchase alcoholic beverages, tobacco products or lottery tickets is also prohibited. Purchase of any of these items is referred to as unauthorized FA expenditures.

Definitions:

Unauthorized EBT Transaction: Use of an EBT card to withdraw FA benefits or process a payment for the purchase of merchandise/goods or services from an ATM or POS device physically located in a liquor, wine or beer store, gambling establishment, strip club, tattoo or body piercing facility or a facility providing psychic services.

Liquor, wine or beer store: Any retail establishment selling exclusively or primarily alcoholic beverages.

Gambling establishment: A retail establishment offering casino, gambling or gaming activities as the primary purpose of the establishment.

Strip Club: Any retail establishment providing adult-oriented entertainment in which performers disrobe or perform in an unclothed state for entertainment.

Tattoo or body piercing facility: Any retail establishment selling exclusively or primarily tattoo or body piercing services.

Psychic services facility: Any retail establishment selling exclusively or primarily psychic services.

Unauthorized FA expenditures: Use of any portion of the benefits whether in cash or an EBT transaction for the purchase of alcoholic beverages, tobacco products or lottery tickets.

Alcoholic beverages: Any alcoholic, spirituous, vinous, fermented, or other alcoholic beverage or combination of liquors and mixed liquor, a part of which is spirituous, vinous, fermented, or otherwise alcoholic, and all drinkable liquids, preparations or mixtures intended for beverage purposes, which contain one-half of one percent or more alcohol by volume, and shall include liquor, wine and beer.

Tobacco products: Any product that contains tobacco such as cigars, cigarettes, pipe and chewing tobacco and associated paraphernalia.

Lottery ticket: Any ticket purchased for a game of chance operated by a state government such as instant lotteries, general lotteries and lotto.

Practices: Educate clients; investigate reported violations; automate prevention actions; impose penalties on FA recipients and provide benefit access.

Client Education - Clients are educated about the spending restrictions as follows: mandatory discussion of the prohibition by the eligibility worker with all new applicants; public information materials which state the prohibition to include program summarized eligibility rules, client EBT brochures, automated client notices of case action, the program applicant/recipient affirmation and agreement statement which requires client certification of understanding and agreement to adhere to the prohibition in writing. The prohibition language is posted on the Department website and the EBT client portal. Further recipient grantee relatives must acknowledge in writing understanding of the rule as part of the Family Responsibility Plan (FRP) under the JOBS Program as discussed in section I above.

Automated Prevention Actions - Alabama's EBT vendor blocks ATMs in the specified prohibited locales. The vendor also blocks prohibited transactions using merchant category codes.

Financial Penalties - (1) For the first instance of non-compliance, the assistance unit will be disqualified from receiving benefits for a one-month period. (2) For the second instance of non-compliance, the assistance unit will be disqualified from receiving benefits for a three-month period. (3) For the third instance of non-compliance, the assistance unit may continue to receive benefits if otherwise eligible, but the grantee relative is permanently disqualified from receiving benefits as a grantee relative, and, if included in the assistance unit is permanently disqualified to be a member of the assistance unit. Payment to the assistance unit will be made to another relative living in the home or other protective payee pursuant to Department operating guidelines. The disqualified grantee relative may continue to receive benefits for other eligible assistance unit members for a temporary period while appointment of another grantee relative is being processed. (4) In addition to penalties in (1) - (3) above, the recipient must reimburse the Department as follows: For unauthorized EBT transactions, the amount withdrawn and/or used; for unauthorized FA expenditures, the amount of the purchase. Reimbursement in the full amount must be made before the assistance unit can again receive benefits following a period of disqualification as described in (1) and (2) above or before another relative living in the home or a protective payee can be approved to receive as described in (3) above.

Benefit Access — Recipients can access FA benefits at any ATM or POS device at any location with such a device other than the prohibited locations. EBT cards are not accepted in state owned liquor stores known as Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) stores. To ameliorate an identified situation of unauthorized EBT transactions, the client will be referred to the Client Help Desk provided by our Contractor who is required to provide Customer Service, toll free via a 1-800 number for benefit access information as well as other account information. As part of the delivery of Customer Service, our Contractor is required to provide information 24/7 about POS/ATM site locations where benefits can be accessed. The Contractor must provide general information to clients regarding stores and ATMs. In order to do this the Contractor maintains a database and tracks retailers providing cash back and ATMs that accept the Alabama EBT cards. The Contractor must ensure that no cash client travel any further than 15 miles to any cash access location (either retailer or ATM). Further, if the Contractor is informed of the fact that there is no location within 15 miles or less to provide cash services they will make an effort with assistance from the Department to look into the businesses that are in the area and see if a location is willing to provide the service. If there are no businesses that can or will do so, then the Contractor would inform the Department of why and provide the closest business that will. According to information from the Department EBT Office, to date there has not been an instance where the "15 miles or less" rule could not be met.

Information about benefit access, lost and stolen cards, customer service, pin numbers, etc. is explained to clients during the application interview and is provided in the EBT client information brochure provided to the client by the vendor and on the EBT client website. The website can be accessed using www.ConnectEBT.com or www.DHR.Alabama.gov/Family Assistance/More Information/EBT Account Information. From the home page of the referenced

website on the right-hand side select Alabama and submit. Information on a number of topics can be found by clicking on the question containing the topic of interest.

H. ENSURE THAT RECIPIENTS OF ASSISTANCE PROVIDED UNDER THE STATE PROGRAM FUNDED UNDER THIS PART HAVE THE ABILITY TO USE OR WITHDRAW ASSISTANCE WITH MINIMAL FEES OR CHARGES, INCLUDING AN OPPORTUNITY TO ACCESS ASSISTANCE WITH NO FEE OR CHARGES, AND ARE PROVIDED INFORMATION ON APPLICABLE FEES AND SURCHARGES THAT APPLY TO ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSACTIONS INVOLVING THE ASSISTANCE, AND THAT SUCH INFORMATION IS MADE PUBLICLY AVAILABLE (SECTION 402(A)(1)(A)(VIII) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

The first two cash ATM withdrawals in a month are free. Any subsequent ATM withdrawals in the same month incur a fifty cents ($.50) fee. Recipients can receive cash back when using their EBT cards for purchases and incur no transaction fee. Information regarding fees is provided in the EBT client information brochure provided to the client by the vendor and on the EBT client website which can be accessed through the two websites listed at the end of Section g.

I. INDICATE WHETHER IT INTENDS TO TREAT FAMILIES MOVING FROM ANOTHER STATE DIFFERENTLY FROM OTHER FAMILIES UNDER THE PROGRAM, AND IF SO HOW (SECTION 402(A)(1)(B)(I) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

Families moving into the State from another State will be treated the same as other families under the program. Therefore, the policies and procedures of the Family Assistance Program applicable in a county will be applied uniformly to all residents of the State (County) whether current or new.

J. INDICATE WHETHER IT INTENDS TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO NON-CITIZENS, AND IF SO INCLUDE AN OVERVIEW OF THE ASSISTANCE (SECTION 402(A)(1)(B)(II) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

Citizens and qualified non-citizens are eligible to the extent permitted under federal law, Title IV of Public Law 104-193, as amended. Recipients must be citizens, qualified aliens who entered the United States before August 22, 1996, qualified aliens who entered the United States on or after August 22, 1996 who are excepted from the 5-year bar or aliens who entered the United States on or after August 22, 1996 and have been in “qualified alien” status for at least 5 years. Victims of severe forms of trafficking are eligible for federally-funded TANF benefits to the same extent as refugees. Aliens who (or whose child or parent) have been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty in the U.S. are eligible under certain circumstances consistent with Federal law as specified in program operating manuals.

K. SET FORTH OBJECTIVE CRITERIA FOR THE DELIVERY OF BENEFITS AND THE DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY AND FOR FAIR AND EQUITABLE TREATMENT, INCLUDING AN EXPLANATION OF HOW IT WILL PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECIPIENTS WHO HAVE BEEN ADVERSELY AFFECTED TO BE HEARD IN A STATE ADMINISTRATIVE OR APPEAL PROCESS (SECTION 402(A)(1)(B)(III) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)

Delivery of benefits is dependent on the component program of the FA Program and includes delivery by Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT), by vendor payment, cash payments or provision of services.

Eligibility rules of the Department of Human Resources will be uniformly applied in all cases in a county. The determination of need and amount of assistance for all applicants and recipients will be made on an objective and equitable basis and all types of income and potential income will be taken into consideration in the same way except where otherwise specifically authorized by State or Federal law or the Administrative Code of the Department of Human Resources or as stated in program operating guidelines issued by the State Department of Human Resources, Family Assistance Division. The State will adhere to prohibitions and requirements of Section

408 of Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act. Pursuant to subparagraph (B) of Section 408(a)(10) Good cause exceptions to subparagraph (A) of Section 408(a)(10) include absence due to medical reasons, school attendance, visits, conducting business, participating in Job Corps or vocational training.

1. Financial Responsibility for Program Benefits

For assistance subject to time limits, financial responsibility for needy children includes parents and stepparents in the home and alleged fathers living in the home with their child and the child's mother. Income of all members of the assistance unit will be considered in determining eligibility of the assistance unit for benefits and amount of payment.

Income of parents and stepparents ineligible due to alien status, disqualification for fraud or spending restrictions violations, exclusion as a parole violator, or for a conviction of a felony or for fraudulently misrepresenting residence will also be used to determine eligibility if appropriate and applicable according to department operating manuals or other instructions. Earned income from new employment may be disregarded for the first twelve months wages are received if timely and accurately reported and the individual is otherwise eligible for the disregard pursuant to Family Assistance Program guidelines.

2. Summarized Eligibility Rules

In order to be eligible families must:

— meet component specific conditions including the following if applicable

— be U.S. citizens (or meet alienage requirements in Title IV of P.L. 104-193 and/or be a legal immigrant residing in the U.S. prior to August 22, 1996).

— be residents of Alabama.

— be in need by agency financial standards. See Attachment E.

— cooperate in self-sufficiency requirements including work and child support enforcement activities unless deferred from work requirements or unless good cause exists not to cooperate with child support if applicable.

— provide or apply for a SSN for each member of the assistance unit

— not be on strike (applicable to cash component only)

— complete applicant job search

— cooperate with drug screening activities

3. Medical Services

Section 408(a)(6) of the Social Security Act prohibits the use of federal funds to provide medical services and states that the term "medical services" does not include pre-pregnancy family planning services. Pursuant to the preamble to the final rule dated April 12, 1999, page 17841, the purpose of this section is to provide guidance as to what is not considered a medical service for purposes of administration of the TANF Program.

The following activities/services that are consistent with TANF purposes 1 and 2 and related to employment and/or work participation activities for cash assistance recipients or required as a condition of eligibility for cash assistance are not considered medical services:

— pre-employment physical examination by a health professional that does not include treatment.

— payment to a health professional for completion of Department forms. (Used for eligibility determinations related to time limits which constitutes an administrative cost and for work activities).

— payment to a health professional or entity for administration of a pre-employment drug test or TB test or for administration of a drug test as a condition of eligibility for cash assistance.

— assessment, testing or other determinations of modification by a health professional needed for reasonable accommodation related to a participant's incapacity/disability. Excludes treatment.

— dental services needed to eliminate a barrier to participation or employment. The service may not be of a surgical or other medical nature as confirmed by the service provider. Examples of such services include dental hygiene, veneers, bonding, whitening, preventive care x-rays, etc.

The Family Assistance Program will provide cash assistance pursuant to 45 CFR 260.31 on a time limited basis (time limit is 5 years) consistent with provisions in section 408, Part A, Title IV of the Social Security Act (and supportive services to enable families to become self-sufficient) to eligible families. In order to receive past 60 months the grantee or spouse of the grantee must have a circumstance/situation which creates a barrier to self sufficiency known as a hardship and s/he must be cooperating with child support and complying with JOBS as appropriate. See Attachment F below.

Attachment F

CRITERIA FOR EXCEPTION TO TIME LIMITS

In order to receive past 60 months the grantee or spouse of the grantee must have a circumstance/situation which creates a barrier to self sufficiency known as a hardship and s/he must be cooperating with Child Support and complying with JOBS as appropriate. To be eligible both criteria in A & B must be met and continue to be met in each month after 60.

A. Hardships

The grantee or spouse of the grantee must meet one of the following circumstances and must not be employed. If a hardship is established but the individual becomes employed or employable (as determined by the JOBS worker) eligibility is lost.

A hardship may exist when the grantee or spouse of the grantee:

1. Is a person whose presence is required on a substantially continuous basis due to the illness or incapacity of the spouse, child, mother-in-law, father-in-law or of an individual to whom the relationship of the caregiver is within certain degrees of relationship and no other person is available to provide the needed care.

2. Has an illness or injury which has lasted or is expected to last at least 30 days and which is serious enough to temporarily prevent employment (or training with the hope of employment) when determined on the basis of medical evidence from the attending physician/clinic. This includes pregnancy when it has been determined by medical evidence that working or participation in training would be detrimental to the woman or the unborn child.

3. Is incapacitated with a physical or mental impairment determined by a physician or a licensed or certified psychologist which prevents or substantially reduces the individual's ability to work.

4. Is fleeing current domestic violence or abuse because s/he recently has been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty as verified by certain documentary evidence specified in program manuals.

5. Is participating in drug, alcohol or mental health counseling as verified through the sources of the counseling to the extent participation in program work requirements is precluded.

6. Is age 60 or older.

7. Has a personal barrier of such significance as to preclude training and/or employment and is engaged in an activity to overcome the barrier.

8. Lives in a Food Assistance ABAWD waiver county and has not been disqualified due to noncompliance with JOBS since December, 1996.

B. Program Compliance Criteria

The grantee and/or the spouse of the grantee must cooperate with Child Support and comply with JOBS in each month past 60. Failure to meet this criteria results in (1) permanent loss of program eligibility for the grantee and spouse of the grantee regardless of family circumstances and (2) recovery of all benefits received past month 60.

CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM

Individuals receiving assistance are required to cooperate in child support enforcement activities unless good cause as defined in department program manuals exists not to do so. See Attachment D below. The penalties for failure to cooperate are as follows:

Applicants:

Upon overt refusal of the grantee relative or other member(s) of the assistance unit required to cooperate with child support enforcement, the application will be denied and entitlement to benefits for the month of application through the month of application disposition is lost even if reapplication is made in the month of the original application disposition.

Recipients:

For the first three months of non-cooperation (consecutive or not) the grant amount is reduced by 50% of the payment standard for the assistance unit size. For months of non-cooperation in excess of three months, the assistance unit is disqualified for a one-month period for the first disqualification. For a month of non-cooperation following the first disqualification, the assistance unit is immediately disqualified for a six-month period. For a month of non-cooperation following the second and subsequent disqualifications, the assistance unit is immediately disqualified for a twelve-month period. Attachment D

GOOD CAUSE FOR NONCOOPERATION IN CHILD SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

An applicant/recipient for assistance under the Family Assistance Program must cooperate with the agency in child support enforcement activities unless it is determined that cooperation in such activities is not in the child's best interest. Circumstances under which cooperation may not be in the child's best interest include:

1. Physical or emotional harm of a serious nature is reasonably expected to occur to the child or to the parent or relative with whom the child is living.

2. The child was conceived as a result of incest or forcible rape.

3. Legal proceedings for adoption of the child are pending before a court of competent jurisdiction.

4. The applicant/recipient is currently being assisted by a public or licensed private social agency to resolve the issue of whether to keep the child or relinquish for adoption and the discussions have not gone on for more than three months.

DRUG SCREENING

Certain individuals applying for and/or receiving assistance must cooperate in activities needed to determine if reasonable suspicion exists that the individual uses or is under the influence of a drug and by taking a drug screening if reasonable suspicions exists. This provision is applicable to individuals applying for cash assistance on or after October 1, 2015 and to individuals awarded as a result of such application. The penalties for failure/refusal to cooperate are as follows:

Applicants:

Failure/refusal of an applicant to cooperate results in denial of the application for the assistance unit and loss of benefits for that application period, i.e., month of application through the month of disposition of the application. Failure/refusal of an applicant being added back to an open case results in denial of the application for the individual for that application period and case closure.

Recipients:

Failure/refusal of a recipient to cooperate results in case closure.

The penalties for a positive screening result without a valid prescription for the identified drug are as follows:

- For the first positive drug screening, a warning shall be issued that subsequent positive tests will result in loss of benefits and that other random drug screenings will be required.

- For the second positive drug screening, the adult will be ineligible for benefits for one year.

- For the third positive drug screening, the adult will be permanently ineligible to receive assistance and payment to the otherwise eligible assistance unit will be made to another relative living in the home or other protective payee pursuant to Department operating guidelines. The ineligible grantee relative may continue to receive benefits for other eligible assistance unit members for a temporary period while appointment of another grantee relative/protective payee is being processed.

Client Opportunity for Review of Action Taken

Procedures for client review of case action (or inaction) taken to deny, reduce, or terminate benefits with which the client is dissatisfied provide for three options for review as follows:

(1) a conference with the County Department of Human Resources. This action must be requested by the client or his representative orally or in writing within 60 days following the specific action (or inaction) with which the client is dissatisfied. This action provides the client an opportunity to discuss the action directly with agency staff and to present additional information to indicate the action may be incorrect. Corrective action is taken if the findings so indicate.

(2) a state office review of the case record conducted by a staff member of the Family Assistance Division, State Department of Human Resources. This action must be requested by the client or his representative in writing directed either to the County Department of Human Resources or the State Department of Human Resources within 60 days following the specific action (or inaction) with which the client is dissatisfied. The client and/or his representative are notified of the outcome of this review in writing. Corrective action is taken if the findings so indicate.

(3) a formal hearing conducted by the State Department of Human Resources, Family Assistance Division, Hearing Officer either in person or by telephone. This action must be requested by the client or his representative in writing directed to the County Department of Human Resources or the State Department of Human Resources within 60 days following the action (or inaction)

with which the client is dissatisfied. The client and/or his representative are notified of the outcome of the hearing in writing. Corrective action is taken if the findings so indicate.

Applicants and recipients are notified in writing of all action (award, denial, increase, reduction, termination, etc.) taken in their case. Information about the review opportunities discussed above as well as instructions regarding how to request and where to send the request is provided to clients as general information on all automated system notices generated and mailed to clients at award, termination or change in circumstances. If a system notice is not sufficient to explain case action a manually prepared case action form is completed and mailed which also contains the general information in regard to a review of case action described above. The summarized eligibility requirements pamphlet for the Family Assistance Program contains similar language and is required to be given and explained to all applicants and as needed to recipients during the interview process. This pamphlet is also posted on DHR's website on the Family Assistance Program page. Rules of review for special projects may vary dependent on the project and would be included in informational materials as appropriate.

Applications will be acted on in a timely manner. Department rules provide that not more than 30 days shall elapse between the date of application and the date the first benefits are made available or the notice of denial is mailed. The number of applications that exceed such standard is kept to a minimum. The standard of promptness is monitored and reported to County Directors of Human Resources monthly.

PAYMENT ACCURACY AND PROGRAM INTEGRITY

The program is supported by an automated system known as the Family Assistance Certification, Employment and Training System (FACETS) operational in all counties of the State. An Income and Eligibility Verification System (IEVS) as required by Section 1137 of the Social Security Act for persons receiving assistance is operational in all counties of the State.

Methods are in place to ensure payment accuracy to eligible families which includes mandatory case record reviews by county office supervisory staff with a re-review of a sample of those records by state office field supervisors. Identified deficiencies require corrective action. State statistics about payment accuracy are published to the Directors, County Departments of Human Resources monthly. Payment accuracy is a component of County Director evaluations. The state is subject to Federal and State Audits.

Program operating guidelines contain provisions to strengthen and maintain program integrity from fraud prevention actions to recovery of erroneously paid benefits. Benefit recovery activities are supported through the Comprehensive Claims System (CCS) which interfaces with the program certification system, FACETS. As part of our Fraud Control Program individuals found guilty of committing an intentional program violation by a court of competent jurisdiction in Alabama will be disqualified from participation in the cash assistance component of the Family Assistance Program as follows: for a period of 6 months upon the first occasion of any such offense; or a period of 12 months upon the second occasion of any such offense and permanently upon the third or subsequent occasion of such offense. This disqualification penalty relates to an applicant or recipient of FA who is found on the basis of a plea of guilty or nolo contendere or otherwise to have intentionally made a false or misleading statement or misrepresented , concealed or withheld facts or committed any act intended to mislead , misrepresent, conceal or withhold facts or profound falsity for the purpose of establishing or maintaining eligibility or increasing the amount of the grant. This penalty is in addition to our adherence to the statutory prohibitions and requirements of Title IV-A, Social Security Act, Section 408 as stated earlier in this section.

CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE

The Family Assistance Program, like all programs and services of the Department of Human Resources, is administered in full compliance with Title VI of the Federal Civil Rights Act of

1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and all other Federal and State civil rights laws.

Language assistance so as to ensure meaningful access to all Department programs, services and benefits is provided to individuals needing such services consistent with the Department's Language Assistance Plan first issued on August 24, 2005 and revised January 2012 as well as the Family Assistance Division Language Plan issued effective October 1, 2021.

Reasonable accommodations are provided to enable full use of existing programs and services to those individuals who tell us (or for whom we determine) they have a physical, mental or learning disability that limits a major life activity. Client case action notices provide information about the availability of reasonable accommodations. The Family Assistance Division issued an ADA and Reasonable Accommodations Plan to county staff effective February 1, 2021. In addition to the above-referenced plans, Departmental program operating manuals for the Family Assistance Program contain guidelines for county staff about reasonable accommodations as well as information about language assistance.

SCREENING AND IDENTIFICATION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Procedures are in place through the statewide Special Assessment, Intervention and Liaison Project (SAIL) for eligibility workers to routinely screen and identify domestic violence for individuals applying for or receiving cash assistance. JOBS case managers include questions on domestic violence as part of the JOBS assessment as well. For those identified as victims of domestic violence, referrals are made to the Alabama Coalition Against Domestic Violence for a variety of services including development of a safety plan, information and referral, supportive services, counseling and case management, etc. Certain program rules are waived for those individuals identified as in imminent danger and include child support enforcement activities, time limits and work participation requirements (although the client may volunteer to participate).

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Pursuant to Title IV-A, Section 402, Alabama's TANF State Plan is published and maintained on the Department of Human Resources website. Written comments on this plan were solicited and a period of 45 days was provided for such comments. Further Alabama law at Section 41, Chapter 22 Administrative Procedure, provides for the promulgation of program rules on requirements to receive assistance. Two of the stated purposes of that Act are to increase public access to governmental information as well as to increase public participation in the formulation of administrative rules. The law requires publication of the referenced program rules for public comment in the Alabama Administrative Monthly for a period of 35 to 90 days. This rule affords all interested parties reasonable opportunity to submit data, or arguments, orally or in writing. The publication of the plan on the website and the proposed program rules process provide for input from other state agencies, public and private organizations, the general public and other pertinent entities during development and implementation.

FINANCIAL CRITERIA - Attachment E

1. Cash Assistance

A. Monthly Maximum Payment Standards

STANDARDS FOR FAMILY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Assistance Unit Size Payment Standard

1 $165

2 $190

3 $215

4 $245

5 $275

6 $305

7 $335

8 $365

9 $395

10 $425

11 $455

12 $485

13 $515

14 $545

15 $575

16 $605

B. Resource Standards

Not applicable effective October 1, 2009.

C. Work Program Supportive Services (Former Recipients and Needy Applicants)

Family's gross income is less than 200% of the HHS federal poverty guidelines by family size.

Attachment E cont'd.

2. TANF Emergency Assistance (Formerly EA)

Annual family income is lower than two times the state's estimated median income level for a family of three,i.e $57,376 (1990).

3. TANF Direct Child Welfare Assistance

Child's or family's gross income is equal to or less than 200% of the HHS poverty guidelines by family size.

4. Special Projects

Eligible Families: Child's, individual's (including pregnant women), or family's gross income can be up to 300% of the HHS poverty guidelines by family size. Additionally, the family's receipt of other means tested benefits/services is sufficient to convey categorical financial eligibility as well as receipt of benefits/services from an entity (organization, state agency, etc.) or program whose client population is largely low income.

L. INDICATE WHETHER THE STATE INTENDS TO ASSIST INDIVIDUALS TO TRAIN FOR, SEEK, AND MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT (SECTION 402(A)(1)(B)(V) OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT)—

1. PROVIDING DIRECT CARE IN A LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY (AS SUCH TERMS ARE DEFINED UNDER SECTION 1397J OF THIS TITLE); OR

2. IN OTHER OCCUPATIONS RELATED TO ELDER CARE, HIGH-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS, OR OCCUPATIONS EXPECTED TO EXPERIENCE LABOR SHORTAGES AS, DETERMINED

APPROPRIATE BY THE STATE FOR WHICH THE STATE IDENTIFIES AN UNMET NEED FOR SERVICE PERSONNEL, AND, IF SO, SHALL INCLUDE AN OVERVIEW OF SUCH ASSISTANCE.

The State does not intend to fund a special initiative for training/employment of individuals providing direct care in a long-term facility or in other occupations providing eldercare. However, on a case-by-case basis TANF cash assistance recipients can receive assistance/services while pursuing training/employment to provide such eldercare as part of their IJP and FRP as discussed in section (c) above as well as certain TANF eligibles as part of our Career Pathways Initiative in partnership with the Alabama Community College System, Adult Education Program. Assistance/services in this regard include payment for short term skills based training to obtain classification/credentials as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), supplies, uniforms, equipment, etc. as well as services/training leading to a work ready credential in an occupation that is in high demand.

M. PROVIDE FOR ALL MOE-FUNDED SERVICES THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION: THE NAME OF THE PROGRAM BENEFIT OR SERVICE, AND THE FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA THAT FAMILIES MUST MEET IN ORDER TO RECEIVE THAT BENEFIT OR SERVICE. IN ADDITION, FOR TANF MOE-FUNDED SERVICES (CO-MINGLED OR SEGREGATED MOE) DESCRIBE THE PROGRAM BENEFIT PROVIDED TO ELIGIBLE FAMILIES (SSP SERVICES DO NOT HAVE TO INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION BUT THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ENCOURAGES IT) (§263.2(B)(3) & §263.2(C) PREAMBLE PAGES 17826-7)

MOE funded services are included in all of the components of the program described in Section (a) with the exception of Cash Assistance listed in Section (a)1. A. and includes the associated administrative and/or system activities as follows:

Work Program (Section (a)1. B.): Supportive services to include child care, transportation, other work and training services as well as non-recurrent short term benefits. Financial criteria to receive these benefits is to be an FA recipient or FA eligible former recipient whose family income is less than 200% of the federal poverty level by family size.

Certain child welfare services as described in TANF Emergency Assistance (Section (a) 2) and TANF (Direct) Child Welfare (Section(a) 3.):Benefits include payment for shelter, foster care, emergency living expenses, information and referral, case planning/management, counseling and other support services and health maintenance activities, family intervention services, transitional services and non recurrent short term benefits. Financial criteria to receive benefits under Section (a) 2. is annual family income lower than two times the state's estimated median income level for a family of three, i.e. $57,376 (1990) and for the latter the income of the child or family's gross income must be equal to or less than 200% of the federal poverty level by family size.

Special Projects: 1. Eligible Families: Non-assistance expenditures for services including information and referral to needy parents/families such as short-term non-recurrent benefits as discussed in 45 CFR 260.31, day care, subsidized employment, transportation and work and training services, statewide food distribution network activities and pro-family activities expected to prevent and reduce the incidence of out of wedlock births as well as encourage the formation and maintenance of healthy two parent families including after school activities for teens, fatherhood and healthy marriage initiatives, mentoring and literacy programs and domestic violence/drug abuse/prevention/education programs. See Attachment E. in section (k) for financial criteria for these projects. Additional non-financial criteria, if any, are dependent on the project plan.

Projects: Food Distribution Program provides emergency food to needy families with children whose income is less than 185% of the federal poverty level by family size.

Pre-K Programs provide early childhood education and promote literacy, and school attendance. Eligible families have income less than 300% of the federal poverty level by family size.

Strengthening Families through Family Formation and Reducing Neglect/Abuse provides school associated/after school programs as well as strengthening families through parent education and support services. Eligible families have income less than 300% of the federal poverty level by family size.

2. Pro-Family Activities for Other Than Eligible Families: Non-assistance in the form of non-federal cash and in kind qualified expenditures by third parties for individuals and families pursuant to 45 CFR 263.2(a) (4) (ii). Program specifics including non-financial eligibility criteria, if any, are contained in written agreements/contracts between the Department of Human Resources and the third party and in project plans as applicable. These benefits and services are provided without regard to financial need or family composition.

TANF CERTIFICATIONS

The State Plan must include	Include
1. Operate a child support enforcement program under the State Plan approved under part D. (section 402(a)(2) of the Social Security Act);	Yes
2. Operate a foster care and adoption assistance program under the State Plan approved under part E, and that the State will take such actions as are necessary to ensure that children receiving assistance under such part are eligible for medical assistance under the State Plan under title XIX. (section 402(a)(3) of the Social Security Act);	Yes
3. Specify which State agency or agencies will administer and supervise the program referred to in paragraph (1) for the fiscal year, which shall include assurances that local governments and privatesector organizations (section 402(a)(4) of the Social SecurityAct)—	
3. (A) have been consulted regarding the plan and design of welfare services in the State so that services are provided in a manner appropriate to local populations; and	Yes
3. (B) have had at least 45 days to submit comments on the plan and the design of such services;	Yes
4. Provide each member of an Indian tribe, who is domiciled in the State and is not eligible for assistance under a tribal family assistance plan approved under section 412, with equitable access to assistance under the State program funded under this part attributable to funds provided by the Federal Government. (section 402(a)(5) of the Social Security Act);	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
5. Establish and enforce standards and procedures to ensure against program fraud and abuse,including standards and procedures concerning nepotism, conflicts of interest among individuals responsible for the administration and supervision of the State program, kickbacks, and the use of political patronage. (section 402(a)(6) of the Social Security Act);	Yes
6. (optional) Establish and Enforcing standards and procedures to (section 402(a)(7) of the Social Security Act).—	
6.i. screen and identify individuals receiving assistance under this part with a history of domestic violence while maintaining the confidentiality of such individuals;	Yes
6.ii. refer such individuals to counseling and supportive services; and	Yes
6.iii. waive, pursuant to a determination of good cause, other program requirements such as time limits (for so long as necessary) for individuals receiving assistance, residency requirements, child support cooperation requirements, and family cap provisions, in cases where compliance with such requirements would make it more difficult for individuals receiving assistance under this part to escape domestic violence or unfairly penalize such individuals who are or have been victimized by such violence, or individuals who are at risk of further domestic violence.	Yes

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)))

A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS [27]

1. THE NATURE OF THE E&T COMPONENTS THE STATE AGENCY PLANS TO OFFER AND THE REASONS FOR SUCH COMPONENTS, INCLUDING COST INFORMATION. THE METHODOLOGY FOR STATE AGENCY REIMBURSEMENT FOR EDUCATION COMPONENTS MUST BE SPECIFICALLY ADDRESSED. IF A STATE AGENCY PLANS TO OFFER SUPERVISED JOB SEARCH IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH (E)(2)(I) OF THIS SECTION, THE STATE AGENCY MUST ALSO INCLUDE IN THE E&T PLAN A SUMMARY OF THE STATE GUIDELINES IMPLEMENTING SUPERVISED JOB SEARCH. THIS SUMMARY OF THE STATE GUIDELINES, AT A MINIMUM, MUST DESCRIBE: THE CRITERIA USED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO APPROVE LOCATIONS FOR SUPERVISED JOB SEARCH, AN EXPLANATION OF WHY THOSE CRITERIA WERE CHOSEN, AND HOW THE SUPERVISED JOB SEARCH COMPONENT MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS TO DIRECTLY SUPERVISE THE ACTIVITIES OF PARTICIPANTS AND TRACK THE TIMING AND ACTIVITIES OF PARTICIPANTS;

1.

Supervised Job Search (SJS)	Answer the question in the space below
Summary of the State guidelines implementing supervised job search. This summary of the State guidelines, at a minimum, must describe: The criteria used by the State agency to approve locations for supervised job search, an explanation of why those criteria were chosen, and how the supervised job search component meets the requirements to directly supervise the activities of participants and track the timing and activities of participants.	The Supervised Job Search (SJS) component is focused on helping participants secure employment. This can include a variety of activities, such as help completing applications, creating/updating resumes, providing job referrals, and any other activities that support a participant to become employed. Participants may complete job search activities with guidance from a case manager, with one-on-one assistance, or in a group setting. SJS can only be performed by a state-approved provider, which are currently limited to: 1. County DHR A-RESET 2. Intermediary partner 3. Sub-contracted partner For intermediaries and sub-contracted partners, the state ensures that locations are appropriate through reviewing the statement of work. Supervised job search may be completed in person or virtually.
Direct link. Explain how the State agency will ensure that supervised job search activities will have a direct link to increasing the employment opportunities of individuals engaged in the activity (i.e. how the State agency will screen to ensure individuals referred to SJS have the skills to be successful in SJS and how the SJS program is tailored to employment opportunities in the community).	In the screening process, DHR A-RESET case managers evaluate whether a participant is capable and willing to work. Any participant who does not have the necessary skills can be referred to a basic skills program. SJS is provided by either DHR A-RESET case managers or community-based agencies, who are embedded in the community and maintain awareness of the local job market and in-demand employment sectors. They develop strong relationships with local employers to create direct connections to employment opportunities and understand workforce needs. Participants are contacted within the first 30 days to follow up on their job search and to determine if they are truly work ready. If not, participants are then placed in an appropriate component.
Target Population. Identify the population that will be targeted. Include special populations such as ABAWDs, Returning Citizens, Homeless, Older Disconnected	All A-RESET participants complete a thorough employability assessment. Those participants who are deemed work ready are eligible to participate in SJS.

Supervised Job Search (SJS)	Answer the question in the space below
Youth, etc.	
What skills, knowledge, or experience is necessary for participation in the component? For example, literacy or numeracy levels, recent labor market attachment, computer literacy etc.)	Both the individual's work readiness and their interest in pursuing immediate employment are criterion for SJS. Work readiness may either be assessed through the employability assessment, direct demonstration to a case manager, or attestation. Examples of key work readiness skills include, but are not limited to: • Verbal, non-verbal, and written communication skills • Planning skills • Interpersonal skills • Self-management skills • Ability to follow directions • Relationship management and building skills • Critical thinking • Ability to locate information • Reading for information skills • Applied mathematics • Problem solving skills • Thought articulation • Effective work habits (punctuality, working productively with others, attendance) • Personal accountability skills • Other soft skills that support employment

Supervised Job Search (SJS)	Answer the question in the space below
	Interest in pursuing immediate employment is assessed using the A-RESET consent form, where the participant acknowledges that they are in the labor market.
Geographic Area. Where will the component be available (statewide, regional, counties, localities not covered by ABAWD waivers, areas covered by American Job Centers, etc.)	SJS will be available in all A-RESET counties, including: Calhoun, Dallas, Elmore, Jefferson, Lee, Lowndes, Madison, Mobile, Montgomery, Tuscaloosa, and Wilcox. SAFE additionally serves: Autauga, Chambers, Clay, Coffee, Coosa, Dale, Elmore, Escambia, Henry, Houston, Marshall, Morgan, Perry, Russell, Talladega, and Walker.
E&T Providers. Identify all entities that will provide the service.	Family Counseling Center, M&E Consulting, SAFE, The Bridge Center, Inc., The Dannon Project, UWAL, Workshops, Inc.
Projected Annual Participation. Project the number of unduplicated individuals.	2,636
Estimated Annual Component Costs. Project only administrative costs.	$985,846

Outcome Measure - The number and percentage of participants who obtain employment after participating in SJS during the report year.

Job Retention (JR)	Answer the question in the space below
Description of the component. Provide a summary of the activities and services. Include a description of how the State will ensure services are provided for no less 30 days and no more than 90 days.	Job Retention (JR) services will be offered to participants that have gained employment after participating in any A-RESET component. All A-RESET programs will offer services for a minimum of 30 days up to a maximum of 90 days.
Target Population. Identify the population that will be targeted. Include special populations such as ABAWDs, Returning Citizens, Homeless, Older Disconnected Youth, etc.	The target population for JR are those participants who were enrolled in A-RESET, participated in a component, and obtained employment.
Criteria for Participation. What skills, knowledge, or experience is necessary for participation in the component? For example, literacy or numeracy levels, recent labor market attachment, computer literacy	Any participant who obtained a job through participation in another A-RESET component is eligible for job retention if the services are available.

Job Retention (JR)	Answer the question in the space below
etc.)	
Geographic Area. Where will the component be available (statewide, regional, counties, localities not covered by ABAWD waivers, area covered by the American Job Centers, etc.).	JR will be available in all A-RESET counties, including: Calhoun, Dallas, Elmore, Jefferson, Lee, Lowndes, Madison, Mobile, Montgomery, Tuscaloosa, Wilcox, Autauga, Baldwin, Barbour, Butler, Chambers, Clarke, Coffee, Colbert, Conecuh, Cullman, Dale, DeKalb, Escambia, Etowah, Fayette, Houston, Jackson, Marengo, Marion, Marshall, Monroe, Morgan, Perry, Pike, Randolph, Russell, St. Clair, Shelby, Talladega, Tallapoosa, Walker
E&T Providers. Identify all entities that will provide the service.	SAFE, The Bridge Center, Inc., The Dannon Project, UWAL, Workshops, Daniel Payne, Family Counseling Center, GSR, M&E
Projected Annual Participation. Project the number of unduplicated individuals.	2,787
Estimated Annual Component Costs. Project only administrative costs.	$1,237,064

Outcome Measure - The number and percentage of participants that have wages after participating in JR during the reporting year.

Self-Employment Training (SET)	Answer the question in the space below
Description of the component. Provide a summary of the activities and services.	Entrepreneurship training to adults leaving prison. The program assists participants to start micro businesses to supplement their income.
Target Population. Identify the population that will be targeted. Include special populations such as ABAWDs, Returning Citizens, Homeless, Older Disconnected Youth, etc.	The population for SET includes only those individuals who are returning from incarceration. As with all A-RESET participants, these individuals will complete a thorough employability assessment to assess work readiness.
Criteria for Participation. What skills, knowledge, or experience is necessary for participation in the component? For example, literacy or numeracy levels, recent labor market attachment, computer literacy etc.)	Both the individual's work readiness and their interest in pursuing immediate employment are criterion for SET. Work readiness may either be assessed through the employability assessment, direct

Self-Employment Training (SET)	Answer the question in the space below
	demonstration to a case manager, or attestation. Examples of key work readiness skills include, but are not limited to: • Verbal, non-verbal, and written communication skills • Planning skills • Interpersonal skills • Self-management skills • Ability to follow directions • Relationship management and building skills • Critical thinking • Ability to locate information • Reading for information skills • Applied mathematics • Problem solving skills • Thought articulation • Effective work habits (punctuality, working productively with others, attendance) • Personal accountability skills • Other soft skills that support employment Interest in pursuing immediate employment is assessed using the A-RESET consent form, where the participant acknowledges that they are in the labor market.
Geographic Area. Where will the component be available (statewide, regional, counties, localities not covered by ABAWD waivers, area covered by the American Job Centers, etc.).	Calhoun, Clarke, Dallas, Jefferson, Montgomery, Tuscaloosa, and Wilcox counties

Self-Employment Training (SET)	Answer the question in the space below
E&T Providers. Identify all entities that will provide the service.	Dannon Project
Projected Annual Participation. Project the number of unduplicated individuals.	12
Estimated Annual Component Costs. Project only administrative costs.	$5,463

2.

Basic/Foundational Skills Instruction (includes High School Equivalency Programs) (EPB)	Answer the question in the space below
Description of the component. Provide a summary of the activities and services	
Target Population. Identify the population that will be targeted. Include special populations such as ABAWDs, Returning Citizens, Homeless, Older Disconnected Youth, etc.	All A-RESET participants complete a thorough employability assessment. Any A-RESET participant who expresses a desire to obtain their GED or need GED preparation assistance are testing are deemed eligible for participation.
Criteria for Participation. What skills, knowledge, or experience is necessary for participation in the component? For example, literacy or numeracy levels, recent labor market attachment, computer literacy etc.)	Criteria for assessing participation include: • Participant is not currently enrolled in high school • Participant does not currently have a high school diploma or GED • Participant is within the age limits for the programs available in the county Additionally, the participant must have the appropriate education level, as assessed on the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE). Education levels vary based on program. TABE testing is completed by the program, not by DHR staff. In general, participants must have anywhere from a sixth to twelfth grade education.
Geographic Area. Where will the component be available (statewide, regional, counties, localities not covered by ABAWD waivers, areas covered by the American Job Centers,	Basic/Foundational Skills Instruction will be available in all A-RESET counties, including: Calhoun, Dallas, Elmore, Jefferson, Lee,

Basic/Foundational Skills Instruction (includes High School Equivalency Programs) (EPB)	**Answer the question in the space below**
etc.).	Lowndes, Madison, Mobile, Montgomery, Tuscaloosa, Wilcox, Autauga, Baldwin, Barbour, Butler, Chambers, Clarke, Coffee, Colbert, Conecuh, Cullman, Dale, DeKalb, Escambia, Etowah, Fayette, Houston, Jackson, Marengo, Marion, Marshall, Monroe, Morgan, Perry, Pike, Randolph, Russell, St. Clair, Shelby, Talladega, Tallapoosa, Walker
E&T Providers. Identify all entities that will provide the service.	Daniel Payne, SAFE, The Bridge Center, Inc., The Dannon Project, UWAL, ACCS
Projected Annual Participation. Project the number of unduplicated individuals.	2,183
Estimated Annual Component Costs. Project only administrative costs.	$1,715,081
. Federal E&T funds used for activities within the education component must not supplant non-Federal funds for existing educational services and activities. For any education activities, provide evidence that costs attributed to the E&T program are not supplanting funds used for other existing education programs.	DHR confirmed with the Adult Education Director that Basic Literacy is not part of K-12 in AL and there is no entitlement to services. Therefore, SNAP E&T funds are not supplanting any state or local funds, as there is no state or federal obligation to pay for these services.
Cost Parity. If any of the educational services or activities are available to persons other than E&T participants, provide evidence that the costs charged to E&T do not exceed the costs charged for non-E&T participants (e.g. comparable tuition).	A-RESET is charged at a per-participant rate, which is based on the actual costs of participation in the previous year and for all students.

Outcome Measure - The number and percentage of participants in EPB who receive a GED or high school equivalency (HSE) during the reporting year.

Career/Technical Education Programs or other Vocational Training (EPC)	**Answer the question in the space below**
Description of the component. Provide a summary of the activities and services	Alabama also offers vocational education in a variety of in-demand employment areas such as construction trades, pharmacy tech, and computer science/coding, etc..
Identify the population that will be targeted. Include special populations such as ABAWDs, Returning Citizens, Homeless, Older Disconnected Youth, etc.	All A-RESET participants complete a thorough employability assessment. Those participants who are deemed work ready are eligible to participate in EPC.

Career/Technical Education Programs or other Vocational Training (EPC)	Answer the question in the space below
Criteria for Participation. What skills, knowledge, or experience is necessary for participation in the component? For example, literacy or numeracy levels, recent labor market attachment, computer literacy etc.)	Both the individual's work readiness and the academic skills are criterion for EPC. This may include interest and background in the available EPC programs. Generally, participants should have a high school diploma or GED prior to participation. Work readiness may either be assessed through the employability assessment, direct demonstration to a case manager, or attestation. Examples of key work readiness skills include, but are not limited to: • Verbal, non-verbal, and written communication skills • Planning skills • Interpersonal skills • Self-management skills • Ability to follow directions • Relationship management and building skills • Critical thinking • Ability to locate information • Reading for information skills • Applied mathematics • Problem solving skills • Thought articulation • Effective work habits (punctuality, working productively with others, attendance) • Personal accountability skills • Other soft skills that support employment
Geographic Area. Where will the component	Career/Technical Education Programs and

Career/Technical Education Programs or other Vocational Training (EPC)	Answer the question in the space below
be available (statewide, regional, counties, localities not covered by ABAWD waivers, area covered by the American Job Centers, etc.).	Vocational Training will be available in all A-RESET counties, including: Calhoun, Dallas, Elmore, Jefferson, Lee, Lowndes, Madison, Mobile, Montgomery, Tuscaloosa, Wilcox, Autauga, Baldwin, Barbour, Butler, Chambers, Clarke, Coffee, Colbert, Conecuh, Cullman, Dale, DeKalb, Escambia, Etowah, Fayette, Houston, Jackson, Marengo, Marion, Marshall, Monroe, Morgan, Perry, Pike, Randolph, Russell, St. Clair, Shelby, Talladega, Tallapoosa, Walker
E&T Providers. Identify all entities that will provide the service.	A Cut Above the Rest, AIDT, GSR, SAFE, The Bridge Center, Inc., The Dannon Project, Workshops, ACCS, UWAL
Projected Annual Participation. Project the number of unduplicated individuals.	1,526
Estimated Annual Component Costs. Project only administrative costs.	$1,973,075
. Federal E&T funds used for activities within the education component must not supplant non-Federal funds for existing educational services and activities. For any education activities, provide evidence that costs attributed to the E&T program are not supplanting funds used for other existing education programs.	DHR confirmed with the Adult Education Director that none of the current funding for these programs is a result of a state entitlement. Therefore, SNAP E&T funds are not supplanting any state or local funds, as there is no state or federal obligation to pay for these services.
Cost Parity. If any of the educational services or activities are available to persons other than E&T participants, provide evidence that the costs charged to E&T do not exceed the costs charged for non-E&T participants (e.g. comparable tuition).	A-RESET is charged at a per-participant rate, which is based on the actual costs of participation in the previous year and for all students. The cost may be either tuition or program costs; however, the costs charged for A-RESET participants is always the same as non-A-RESET program participants.

Outcome Measure - The number and percentage of participants that participate in EPC and obtain a recognized credential and/or employment during the reporting period.

English Language Acquisition (EPEL)	Answer the question in the space below
Description of the component. Provide a summary of the activities and services.	English as a Second Language (ESL) offers classes for those learning how to read and write in English, as well as speaking and listening. ESL also assists with passing the United States Citizenship test and aids in job skills training.
Target Population. Identify the population that will be targeted for participation in the	All A-RESET participants complete a thorough employability assessment. Those participants

English Language Acquisition (EPEL)	Answer the question in the space below
component. Include special populations such as ABAWDs, Returning Citizens, Homeless, Older Disconnected Youth, etc.	whose primary language is not English, who request EPEL services, or who can demonstrate or attest that EPEL is a barrier to employment are deemed eligible for participation.
Criteria for Participation. What skills, knowledge, or experience is necessary for participation in the component? For example, literacy or numeracy levels, recent labor market attachment, computer literacy etc.)	Both the participants primary language and their need to improve their English skills in order to attach to employment are necessary criterion for this component. These are both gathered through the comprehensive employment assessment. Participants must meet the eligibility criteria for the program, which include age and education. Some of the age and education requirements include that an individual must be 16 or older, not enrolled in high school and have limited English speaking skills.
Geographic Area. Where will the component be available (statewide, regional, counties, localities not covered by ABAWD waivers, areas covered by the American Job Centers, etc.).	ESL will be available in all A-RESET counties, including: Calhoun, Dallas, Elmore, Jefferson, Lee, Lowndes, Madison, Mobile, Montgomery, Tuscaloosa, Wilcox, Autauga, Baldwin, Barbour, Butler, Chambers, Clarke, Coffee, Colbert, Conecuh, Cullman, Dale, DeKalb, Escambia, Etowah, Fayette, Houston, Jackson, Marengo, Marion, Marshall, Monroe, Morgan, Perry, Pike, Randolph, Russell, St. Clair, Shelby, Talladega, Tallapoosa, Walker
E&T Providers. Identify all entities that will provide the service.	Daniel Payne, SAFE, The Bridge Center, 48490 The Dannon Project, ACCS, UWAL
Projected Annual Participation. Project the number of unduplicated individuals.	25
Estimated Annual Component Costs. Project only administrative costs.	$19,813.75
. Federal E&T funds used for activities within the education component must not supplant non-Federal funds for existing educational services and activities. For any education activities, provide evidence that costs attributed to the E&T program are not supplanting funds used for other existing education programs.	DHR confirmed with the Adult Education Director that none of the current funding for English Acquisition is a result of a federal or state entitlement. Therefore, SNAP E&T funds are not supplanting any state or federal funds, as there is no state or federal obligation to pay for these services.
Cost Parity. If any of the educational services or activities are available to persons other than E&T participants, provide evidence that the costs charged to E&T do not exceed the costs	A-RESET is charged at a per-participant rate, which is based on the actual costs of participation in the previous year and for all students. The cost may be either tuition or

English Language Acquisition (EPEL)	Answer the question in the space below
charged for non-E&T participants (e.g. comparable tuition).	program costs; however, the costs charged for A-RESET participants is always the same as non-A-RESET program participants.

Work Readiness Training (EPWRT)	Answer the question in the space below
Description of the component. Provide a summary of the activities and services.	The Work readiness training component is focused on providing soft skills and other basic training that supports a participant to become ready for work. Training topics may include things like general skills building, developing good work habits, and other topics that help enhance a participant's basic foundational ability to find and keep a job.
Target Population. Identify the population that will be targeted for participation in the component. Include special populations such as ABAWDs, Returning Citizens, Homeless, Older Disconnected Youth, etc.	All A-RESET participants complete a thorough employability assessment. Those participants who are deemed work ready and who need additional help building their basic foundational skills to increase their ability to find and keep a job are deemed eligible.
Criteria for Participation. What skills, knowledge, or experience is necessary for participation in the component? For example, literacy or numeracy levels, recent labor market attachment, computer literacy etc.)	Both the individual's work readiness and their interest in pursuing immediate employment are criterion for WRT. Work readiness may either be assessed through the employability assessment, direct demonstration to a case manager, or attestation. Examples of key work readiness skills include, but are not limited to: • Verbal, non-verbal, and written communication skills • Planning skills • Interpersonal skills • Self-management skills

Work Readiness Training (EPWRT)	Answer the question in the space below
	• Ability to follow directions • Relationship management and building skills • Critical thinking • Ability to locate information • Reading for information skills • Applied mathematics • Problem solving skills • Thought articulation • Effective work habits (punctuality, working productively with others, attendance) • Personal accountability skills • Other soft skills that support employment Interest in pursuing immediate employment is assessed using the A-RESET consent form, where the participant acknowledges that they are in the labor market.
Geographic Area. Where will the component be available (statewide, regional, counties, localities not covered by ABAWD waivers, areas covered by the American Job Centers, etc.).	Work Readiness Training will be available in all A-RESET counties, including: Calhoun, Dallas, Elmore, Jefferson, Lee, Lowndes, Madison, Mobile, Montgomery, Tuscaloosa, Wilcox, Autauga, Baldwin, Barbour, Butler, Chambers, Clarke, Coffee, Colbert, Conecuh, Cullman, Dale, DeKalb, Escambia, Etowah, Fayette, Houston, Jackson, Marengo, Marion, Marshall, Monroe, Morgan, Perry, Pike, Randolph, Russell, St. Clair, Shelby, Talladega, Tallapoosa, Walker
E&T Providers. Identify all entities that will provide the service.	AIDT, Daniel Payne, GSR, SAFE, The Bridge Center, Inc., The Dannon Project, Workshops, ACCS, UWAL
Projected Annual Participation. Project the number of unduplicated individuals.	4,403
Estimated Annual Component Costs. Project only administrative costs.	$2,407,254
. Federal E&T funds used for activities	DHR confirmed with the Adult Education Director

Work Readiness Training (EPWRT)	Answer the question in the space below
within the education component must not supplant non-Federal funds for existing educational services and activities. For any education activities, provide evidence that costs attributed to the E&T program are not supplanting funds used for other existing education programs.	that Work Readiness Training is not part of a program that has an entitlement to services. Therefore, SNAP E&T funds are not supplanting any state or local funds, as there is no state or federal obligation to pay for these services.
Cost Parity. If any of the educational services or activities are available to persons other than E&T participants, provide evidence that the costs charged to E&T do not exceed the costs charged for non-E&T participants (e.g. comparable tuition).	A-RESET is charged at a per-participant rate, which is based on the actual costs of participation in the previous year and for all students.

Outcome Measure - The number and percentage of EPWRT participants that become employed during the reporting period.

3.

Work experience is divided into two subcomponents per 7 CFR 273.7(e)(2)(iv): Work activity (WA) and Work-based learning (WBL). WBL activities like internships, apprenticeships, and on-the-job training, among others, may provide wages subsidized by the E&T program. In order to capture information about WBL activities that may be subsidized or unsubsidized by E&T, there are two sets of tables below for each kind of WBL activity – one table for activities not subsidized by E&T (e.g. Work-based learning – Internships) and another for activities subsidized by E&T (e.g. Work-based learning – Internships - Subsidized by E&T). Note that subsidized means programs where E&T funding is used to subsidize wages of participants. Subsidized in this context does not mean programs where participants receive a subsidized wage from another source.

On-the-Job-Training (WBLOTJ)	Answer the question in the space below
Description of the component. Provide a summary of the activities and services.	On-the-job training programs are those which provide job training from employers at a location that has been approved by the Department of Commerce. These may be with an employer or registered apprenticeship program. Typically, a participant will receive a wage while participating in the hands-on training. These programs are limited to the time required for a participant to become proficient in the occupation being trained, which should not exceed 6 months. The program may include job search, if the search is less than 50% of the total program time. Some of the employers include but is not limited to, UAB Hospital, Grandview Hospital, St. Vincent's Ascension Hospital, Brookwood Baptist Hospital, Woody's Chiropractic, Kamtek, Mercedes Benz and 13 of their affiliates, Amazon Warehouse, CVS Warehouse, Walmart Warehouse and BJCTA (Max) – CDL. The goal of OJT is to place participants with employers aligned with selected occupational

On-the-Job-Training (WBLOTJ)	Answer the question in the space below
	training and certifications to increase their skills and knowledge. This prepares a participant to gain permanent unsubsidized employment in that same career industry/cluster. OJT is operated in accordance with WIOA regulations.
Target Population. Identify the population that will be targeted. Include special populations such as ABAWDs, Returning Citizens, Homeless, Older Disconnected Youth, etc.	All A-RESET participants complete a thorough employability assessment. Those participants who are deemed work ready are eligible to participate in WBLOTJ.
Criteria for Participation. What skills, knowledge, or experience is necessary for participation in the component? For example, literacy or numeracy levels, recent labor market attachment, computer literacy etc.)	Both the individual's work readiness and the academic skills are criterion for EPC. This may include interest and background in the available EPC programs. Work readiness may either be assessed through the employability assessment, direct demonstration to a case manager, or attestation. Examples of key work readiness skills include, but are not limited to: • Verbal, non-verbal, and written communication skills • Planning skills • Interpersonal skills • Self-management skills • Ability to follow directions • Relationship management and building skills • Critical thinking • Ability to locate information • Reading for information skills • Applied mathematics • Problem solving skills

On-the-Job-Training (WBLOTJ)	Answer the question in the space below
	• Thought articulation • Effective work habits (punctuality, working productively with others, attendance) • Personal accountability skills • Other soft skills that support employment
Geographic Area. Where will the component be available (statewide, regional, counties, localities not covered by ABAWD waivers, areas covered by the American Job Centers, etc.).	On-The-Job Training will be available in all A-RESET counties, including: Calhoun, Dallas, Elmore, Jefferson, Lee, Lowndes, Madison, Mobile, Montgomery, Tuscaloosa, Wilcox, Autauga, Baldwin, Barbour, Butler, Chambers, Clarke, Coffee, Colbert, Conecuh, Cullman, Dale, DeKalb, Escambia, Etowah, Fayette, Houston, Jackson, Marengo, Marion, Marshall, Monroe, Morgan, Perry, Pike, Randolph, Russell, St. Clair, Shelby, Talladega, Tallapoosa, Walker
E&T Providers. Identify all entities that will provide the service.	SAFE, The Dannon Project, UWAL
Projected Annual Participation. Project the number of unduplicated individuals.	852
Estimated Annual Component Costs. Project only administrative costs.	$374,755

Outcome Measure - The number and percentage of WBLOTJ participants that become employed during the reporting period.

Work-based learning - Other (WBLO): State agency must provide description	Answer the question in the space below
Description of the component. Provide a summary of the activities and services.	DHR offers the Work-Based Learning (other) component through work based learning opportunity with Hope Inspired Ministries (HIM), who subcontracts under UWAL and SAFE. The goal of this service is to provide participants with the necessary skills to secure permanent unsubsidized employment and to maintain such employment. HIM offers a more than 300 hour training curriculum that trains participants in the areas of life and employment skills, soft skills, character building, financial management, and wellness training. Upon completion of six weeks of classroom instruction, students' skills and abilities are assessed and the student is then matched with a local business where they put their new training

Work-based learning - Other (WBLO): State agency must provide description	Answer the question in the space below
	to use during a 120-hour, unpaid internship. During this internship, participants are provided guidance from the employer and expected to perform as any other employee. Some of the employers for this service include Mercedes Benz, KBB Electrical, Shelby Construction, Chappy's Deli, ASK Telemarketing, Adams Technology, Price Rubber, Alorica, Lowndes County Board of Education, STS Transportation, and Whitfield Foods. In many cases, the local business may permanently hire the student upon internship completion based on job performance. If permanent placement is not made with that employer, HIM continues to work with that participant to secure employment. HIM also provides ongoing aftercare and case management services for participants to help them maintain employment or find better job opportunities. SAFE offers volunteer opportunities to certain participants whose work readiness skills are significantly limited. Additionally, volunteer opportunities may be provided to participants to help them maintain their eligibility until they find employment or are enrolled in another countable component. Volunteering is only allowed when the opportunity will equip the participant for a future job or career.
Target Population. Identify the population that will be targeted. Include special populations such as ABAWDs, Returning Citizens, Homeless, Older Disconnected Youth, etc.	All A-RESET participants complete a thorough employability assessment. Those participants who are identified as having low skills, poor education, and chronically unemployed are deemed eligible for this component. These individuals must also demonstrate work readiness.
Criteria for Participation. What skills, knowledge, or experience is necessary for participation in the component? For example, literacy or numeracy levels, recent labor market attachment, computer literacy etc.)	Both the individual's work readiness and chronic unemployment are criterion for work-based learning other. Work readiness may either be assessed through the employability assessment, direct

Work-based learning - Other (WBLO): State agency must provide description	Answer the question in the space below
	demonstration to a case manager, or attestation. Examples of key work readiness skills include, but are not limited to: • Verbal, non-verbal, and written communication skills • Planning skills • Interpersonal skills • Self-management skills • Ability to follow directions • Relationship management and building skills • Critical thinking • Ability to locate information • Reading for information skills • Applied mathematics • Problem solving skills • Thought articulation • Effective work habits (punctuality, working productively with others, attendance) • Personal accountability skills • Other soft skills that support employment Some participants may have a desire to work but have no, or limited, work readiness skills. In this case, these participants may be more suitable for volunteering. Work readiness will still be assessed based on the above criteria and will be used as the determining factor for if the participant may be eligible for hire.
Geographic Area. Where will the component be available (statewide,	Work-based learning will be available in the following A-RESET counties: Jefferson, Lowndes,

Work-based learning - Other (WBLO): State agency must provide description	**Answer the question in the space below**
regional, counties, localities not covered by ABAWD waivers, areas covered by the American Job Centers, etc.).	Montgomery
E&T Providers. Identify all entities that will provide the service.	HIM (UWAL), SAFE
Projected Annual Participation. Project the number of unduplicated individuals.	289
Estimated Annual Component Costs. Project only administrative costs.	$729,626

Outcome Measure - The number and percentage of WBLO participants that become employed during the reporting period.

2. A DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES AND MODELS, HOW PARTICIPANTS WILL BE REFERRED TO CASE MANAGEMENT, HOW THE PARTICIPANT'S CASE WILL BE MANAGED, WHO WILL PROVIDE CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES, AND HOW THE SERVICE PROVIDERS WILL COORDINATE WITH E&T PROVIDERS, THE STATE AGENCY, AND OTHER COMMUNITY RESOURCES, AS APPROPRIATE. THE STATE PLAN SHOULD ALSO DISCUSS HOW THE STATE AGENCY WILL ENSURE E&T PARTICIPANTS ARE PROVIDED WITH TARGETED CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES THROUGH AN EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS;

1. What types of case management services will the State agency provide? *Check all that apply.*

☒Comprehensive intake assessments

☒Individualized Service Plans

☒Progress monitoring

☒Coordination with service providers

☒ Reassessment

☐Other. Please briefly describe: Click or tap here to enter text.

2. Describe how participants will be referred to case management services and how participants' cases will be managed.

Case management is not a separate service which needs a referral. Participants are referred to a DHR A-RESET case manager for the assessment and they are then either kept for case management or their case management will be included with their participation through an A-RESET partner. All participant cases are monitored by the partners and/or DHR A-RESET staff. Participants are screened through submission of their IEP assessment and signed consent form. Once the IEP and assessment have been completed, either DHR A-RESET staff or an A-RESET partner conducts follow-up with each client. Follow-ups can be either weekly, bi-weekly, or at least monthly, depending on the need of each individual client. The management of cases are detailed by what component is being provided, the number of participants, hours of participation per component, addressing barriers and goals for each participant, successful completion of a component, and how the program has benefited the participant. Records of case management are kept through hard copies and/or digitally.

3. What entity (or entities) will be responsible for providing case management services?

As case management is a regular activity, contracted partners as well as A-RESET DHR case managers are responsible for providing case management. It is also their responsibility to make necessary adjustments to the participants case as deemed necessary.

4. Describe how the case manager will coordinate with E&T providers and other community resources.

The A-RESET portal is a case management system designed to track a participants' activity(s) along the way. The information is also tracked on a manual tracking form. The information tracked includes the provider, the components in which the participant is participating, the hours the participant has spent working in each component and the dates participation started and ended. The form is submitted to DHR A-RESET case managers as received from each partner to track participants data. Cases notes are kept in the A-RESET portal for pertinent information regarding the case.

5. Describe how E&T participants will receive targeted case management services through an efficient administrative process.

DHR has developed processes to efficiently provide case management services to all A-RESET participants. When a FOOD ASSISTANCE participant expresses interest in A-RESET, they are referred to DHR A-RESET case manager. If the participant is receiving services through a DHR program, such as supervised job search, that DHR A-RESET case manager will continue to provide services through the entirety of the time in the component. If the participant will be working with a third-party provider, either referred directly by DHR or in a reverse referral, the A-RESET partner will provide targeted case management. DHR has developed an efficient administrative process which minimizes handoffs, reduces the number of agencies a participant has to work with, and centralizes services with one agency as much as possible.

3. AN OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR WITH AN ESTIMATE OF THE COST OF OPERATION FOR EACH FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR COVERED BY THE COMBINED PLAN. ANY STATE AGENCY THAT REQUESTS 50 PERCENT FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENT FOR STATE AGENCY E&T ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS, OTHER THAN FOR PARTICIPANT REIMBURSEMENTS, MUST INCLUDE IN ITS PLAN, OR AMENDMENTS TO ITS PLAN, AN ITEMIZED LIST OF ALL ACTIVITIES AND COSTS FOR WHICH THOSE FEDERAL FUNDS WILL BE CLAIMED, INCLUDING THE COSTS FOR CASE MANAGEMENT AND CASEWORK TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION FROM ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY THROUGH WORK. COSTS IN EXCESS OF THE FEDERAL GRANT WILL BE ALLOWED ONLY WITH THE PRIOR APPROVAL OF FNS AND MUST BE ADEQUATELY DOCUMENTED TO ASSURE THAT THEY ARE NECESSARY, REASONABLE AND PROPERLY ALLOCATED. A STATE MUST SUBMIT A PLAN AMENDMENT TO REQUEST BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS AT LEAST 30 DAYS PRIOR TO PLANNED IMPLEMENTATION;

Expense Category	Non-Federal Share	Federal Share	Total
I. Direct Program and Admin Costs			
Salary/Wages (State agency only)	$ 838,013.00	$ 2,196,256.45	$ 3,034,269.45
Fringe Benefits - provide approved fringe benefit rate percentage in line 8 below. Or provide total fringe benefits in line 9 if			

Expense Category	Non-Federal Share	Federal Share	Total
multiple rates are used by the State agency			
	$ -	$ -	$ -
Fringe Benefits -	$ 384,188.13	$ 805,963.68	$ 1,190,152.00
Non-capital equipment		$ -	$ -
Materials	$ 2,362.00	$ 23,362.00	$ 25,724.00
Travel	$ 1,837.00	$ 21,157.00	$ 22,994.00
Building Space	$ -		$ -
Equipment and other capital expenditures	$ -	$ -	$ -
Subtotal - State agency costs only	$ 1,226,400.13	$ 3,046,739.13	$ 4,273,139.26
Contractual Costs: *Is prepopulating from Contract-Partnerships Table, must not include Participant reimbursements.*	$ 5,419,942.37	$ 5,869,092.37	$ 11,289,034.74
County Administered Program Admin Cost, if applicable: *Is prepopulating from County Admin Budget.*	$ -	$ -	$ -
Total Direct Program and Admin Costs	$ 6,646,342.50	$ 8,915,831.50	$ 15,562,174.00
II. Indirect Costs: ***Indirect costs are only calculated on the subtotal of State agency costs only.***			
Indirect Costs - provide approved indirect cost rate percentage in line 23 below.			
19.02%	$ 233,282.00	$ 579,541.00	$ 812,823.00
III. In-kind contribution			
State in-kind contribution	$ -	$ -	$ -

Expense Category	Non-Federal Share	Federal Share	Total
Total Administrative Costs	$ 6,879,624.50	$ 9,495,372.50	$ 16,374,997.00
IV. Participant Reimbursements			
Dependent Care (including costs from contracts/partners and county administered programs)	$ -	$ -	$ -
Transportation & Other costs (including costs from contracts/partners and county administered programs)	$ 593,734.00	$ 593,734.00	$ 1,187,468.00
State Agency Cost for Dependent Care	$ -		$ -
Total Participant Reimbursements	$ 593,734.00	$ 593,734.00	$ 1,187,468.00
V. Total Costs	$ 7,473,358.50	$ 10,089,106.50	$ 17,562,465.00

4. THE CATEGORIES AND TYPES OF INDIVIDUALS THE STATE AGENCY INTENDS TO EXEMPT FROM E&T PARTICIPATION, THE ESTIMATED PERCENTAGE OF WORK REGISTRANTS THE STATE AGENCY PLANS TO EXEMPT, AND THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH THE STATE AGENCY PLANS TO REEVALUATE THE VALIDITY OF ITS EXEMPTIONS;

FOOD ASSISTANCE E&T Projected Participation

A) Anticipated number of work registrants in the State during the Federal FY. This is an unduplicated count. Take into consideration the expected number of work registrants in the State on October 1st as well as the number of new work registrants expected throughout the Federal Fiscal Year.	263,674
B) List State exemptions from E&T and the number of work registrants expected to be exempted under each category. A State operating a voluntary program would show that all work registrants are exempt. Alternatively, a State may exempt only certain populations from FOOD ASSISTANCE E&T participation, such as individuals experiencing homelessness.	*0*

A) Anticipated number of work registrants in the State during the Federal FY. This is an unduplicated count. Take into consideration the expected number of work registrants in the State on October 1st as well as the number of new work registrants expected throughout the Federal Fiscal Year.	263,674
C) Total estimated number of work registrants exempt from mandatory E&T (sum of State exemptions in B above).	*263,674*
D) Percent of all work registrants exempt from E&T (line C /line A * 100).	*100%*
E) Anticipated number of ABAWDs in the State during the FY.	*43,665*
F) Anticipated number of ABAWDs in waived areas of the State.	*0*
G) Anticipated number of ABAWDs to be exempted under the State's ABAWD discretionary exemption allowance.	*0*
H) Number of potential at–risk ABAWDs expected in the State during the FY (line E – (lines F +G)).	*43,665*

Mandatory, Voluntary, and ABAWD Projected Participation

	0
B) How many total voluntary participants do you expect to serve in E&T during the FY?	3192
C) How many ABAWDs do you expect to serve in E&T during the FY?	428

5. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POPULATION THE STATE AGENCY INTENDS TO PLACE IN E&T;

1.

State agencies have the flexibility to implement policy options in order to adapt and meet the unique needs of State populations. Check which options the State agency will implement.

1. The State agency operates the following type of E&T program:

☐Mandatory per 7 CFR 273.7(e).

☒Voluntary per 7 CFR 273.7(e)(5)(i).

☐Combination of mandatory and voluntary.

2. The State agency serves the following populations (*check all that apply*):

☐Applicants per 7 CFR 273.7(e)(2).

☒Exempt members of zero benefit households that volunteer for SNAP E&T per 7 CFR 273.10(e)(2)(iii)(B)(*7*).

☒Categorically eligible households per 7 CFR 273.2(j).

3. Does the State agency enable ABAWDs to regain SNAP eligibility through E&T and verify that the ABAWD will meet the work requirement within 30 days subsequent to application per 7 CFR 273.24(d)(1)(iv)?

☒Yes

☐No

6. THE ESTIMATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS THE STATE AGENCY EXPECTS TO PLACE IN E&T;

3,192

7. THE GEOGRAPHIC AREAS COVERED AND NOT COVERED BY THE E&T PLAN AND WHY, AND THE TYPE AND LOCATION OF SERVICES TO BE OFFERED;

The State has designated 42 counties for the E&T program. RFPs are released to solicit vendors to provide services in those 42 counties. Based on the proposals submitted, vendors are selected to serve as E&T partners and provide services for participants. The 42 E&T counties are: Autauga, Baldwin, Barbour, Butler, Calhoun, Clarke, Chambers, Coffee, Colbert, Conecuh, Cullman, Dale, Dallas, DeKalb, Elmore, Escambia, Etowah, Fayette, Houston, Jackson, Jefferson, Lee, Lowndes, Madison, Marengo, Marion, Marshall, Mobile, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Perry, Pike, Randolph, Russell, Saint Clair, Shelby, Talladega, Tallapoosa, Tuscaloosa, Walker and Wilcox. The majority of the E&T counties have access to a Department of Labor Career Center site and a local community college which provides services such as vocational training, Adult Education, ESL and information on employment throughout the State. We also have providers located in some of the counties that provide vocational training, Adult Education services such as GED and ESL classes, Career Pathways through the Community College Adult Education program, supervised job search, job retention services, On-the-Job Training, work readiness training and work based learning opportunities.

8. THE METHOD THE STATE AGENCY USES TO COUNT ALL WORK REGISTRANTS AS OF THE FIRST DAY OF THE NEW FISCAL YEAR;

1. **Describe the process the State agency uses to count all work registrants in the State as of the first day of the new fiscal year (October 1).**

As of October 1st of a Fiscal Year (FY) there is a "begin month" count of work registrants based on work registration coding. As new work registrants are added throughout the month the system is set to capture an "added month" count. These two, the "begin and add month" counts are added to give total end month count. This count is processed each month throughout the fiscal year.

2. **Describe measures taken to prevent duplicate counting.**

The count of work registrants in Alabama was taken based on a computer system (ERD) that includes work registration coding of all FOOD ASSISTANCE participants based on their social

security number. The ERD Work Registration Report gives a new and cumulative count of all FOOD ASSISTANCE participants who are tracked based on their social security numbers, which ensures an unduplicated count.

9. THE METHOD THE STATE AGENCY USES TO REPORT WORK REGISTRANT INFORMATION ON THE QUARTERLY FORM FNS–583;

All providers are required to collect and submit data on participants which includes services received, time spent in each activity and participation dates. DHR staff currently inputs this information into an E&T system that houses data and creates reports as needed. This is used in conjunction with the State ERD PSFSB385-D report used to complete the FNS-583 report quarterly.

10. THE METHOD THE STATE AGENCY USES TO PREVENT WORK REGISTRANTS FROM BEING COUNTED TWICE WITHIN A FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR. IF THE STATE AGENCY UNIVERSALLY WORK REGISTERS ALL SNAP APPLICANTS, THIS METHOD MUST SPECIFY HOW THE STATE AGENCY EXCLUDES THOSE EXEMPT FROM WORK REGISTRATION UNDER 7 C.F.R. §273.7(B)(1). IF THE STATE AGENCY WORK REGISTERS NONEXEMPT PARTICIPANTS WHENEVER A NEW APPLICATION IS SUBMITTED, THIS METHOD MUST ALSO SPECIFY HOW THE STATE AGENCY EXCLUDES THOSE PARTICIPANTS WHO MAY HAVE ALREADY BEEN REGISTERED WITHIN THE PAST 12 MONTHS AS SPECIFIED UNDER 7 C.F.R. §273.7(A)(1)(I);

1. **Describe the process the State agency uses to count all work registrants in the State as of the first day of the new fiscal year (October 1).**

As of October 1st of a Fiscal Year (FY) there is a "begin month" count of work registrants based on work registration coding. As new work registrants are added throughout the month the system is set to capture an "added month" count. These two, the "begin and add month" counts are added to give total end month count. This count is processed each month throughout the fiscal year.

2. **Describe measures taken to prevent duplicate counting.**

The count of work registrants in Alabama was taken based on a computer system (ERD) that includes work registration coding of all FOOD ASSISTANCE participants based on their social security number. The ERD Work Registration Report gives a new and cumulative count of all FOOD ASSISTANCE participants who are tracked based on their social security numbers, which ensures an unduplicated count.

11. THE ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITS RESPONSIBLE FOR CERTIFICATION AND THE UNITS OPERATING THE E&T COMPONENTS, INCLUDING UNITS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM, IF AVAILABLE. FNS IS SPECIFICALLY CONCERNED THAT THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION BE EFFICIENT AND THAT NONCOMPLIANCE BY THE PARTICIPANT BE REPORTED TO THE CERTIFICATION UNIT WITHIN 10 WORKING DAYS AFTER THE NONCOMPLIANCE OCCURS;

Food Assistance eligibility staff have been provided training and information on A-RESET. Each A-RESET county office also has access to A-RESET handouts to provide food assistance clients. These handouts provides information on services available through the program. The State maintains a system that houses eligibility and E&T information. Staff from both units have access to these files to ensure that participation in the E&T program is communicated, especially for those individuals that are ABAWDs. Since this is a voluntary program, there are no sanctions imposed on those that choose not to participate. However, individuals may be disqualified based on policy pertaining to general work requirements. This is outlined below.

1. What period before application does the State agency use to determine voluntary quit and/or reduction in work effort without good cause per 7 CFR 273.7(j)(1):

☒30 day

☐60 days

☐Other: Click or tap here to enter text.

2. For the first occurrence of non-compliance per 7 CFR 273.7(f)(2)(i), the individual will be disqualified until the later of:

☐Date the individual complies, as determined by the State agency

☒1 month

☐Up to 3 months

3. For the second occurrence of non-compliance per 7 CFR 273.7(f)(2)(ii), the individual will be disqualified until the later of:

☐Date the individual complies, as determined by the State agency

☒3 months

☐Up to 6 months

4. For the third or subsequent occurrence per 7 CFR 273.7(f)(2)(iii), the individual will be disqualified until the later of:

☐Date the individual complies, as determined by the State agency

☒6 months

☐A date determined by the State agency

☐Permanently

5. The State agency will disqualify the:

☒ Ineligible individual only

☐Entire household (if head of household is an ineligible individual) per 7 CFR 273.7(f)(5)(i)

12. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE STATE AGENCY AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS IT PLANS TO COORDINATE WITH FOR THE PROVISION OF SERVICES, INCLUDING ORGANIZATIONS IN THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM, IF AVAILABLE. COPIES OF CONTRACTS MUST BE AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION; THE STATE AGENCY MUST DOCUMENT HOW IT CONSULTED WITH THE STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD. IF THE STATE AGENCY CONSULTED WITH PRIVATE EMPLOYERS OR EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS IN LIEU OF THE STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD, IT MUST DOCUMENT THIS CONSULTATION AND EXPLAIN THE DETERMINATION THAT DOING SO WAS MORE EFFECTIVE OR EFFICIENT. THE STATE AGENCY MUST INCLUDE IN ITS E&T STATE PLAN A DESCRIPTION OF ANY OUTCOMES FROM THE CONSULTATION WITH THE STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD OR PRIVATE EMPLOYERS OR EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS. THE STATE AGENCY MUST ALSO ADDRESS IN THE E&T STATE PLAN THE EXTENT TO WHICH E&T ACTIVITIES WILL BE CARRIED OUT IN COORDINATION WITH THE ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE I OF WIOA;

Consultation: Describe how the State agency consulted with the State workforce development board or private employers or employer organizations in designing its SNAP E&T program. This description should include with whom the State agency consulted and the outcomes of the consultation. If the State agency consulted with private employers or employer organizations in lieu of the State workforce development board, it must document this consultation and explain the determination that doing so was more effective or efficient.

DHR meets regularly with the State Workforce Development Board during their quarterly meetings to discuss the design of the A-RESET program and how it fits within the overall workforce system. Feedback from the Board has informed how DHR coordinates with local Career Centers and WIOA funded programs. The last quarterly meeting was held on June 16, 2021. As a result of that and previous meetings, discussions continue on how DHR can use the Alabama Terminal on Linking and Analyzing Statistics (ATLAS) on Career Pathways, a workforce development database that integrates education and workforce and will provide the data needed to identify in-demand careers and credentials, to access WIOA programs and the larger workforce systems.

A-RESET continues to work with ACCS and the Alabama Career Centers, which provide access to many of the training programs that are pivotal in providing the credentials included in ATLAS. As this collaboration with the Workforce Board continues, A-RESET will continue to look for and encourage agencies and community partners to provide the vital skills promoted by the State Workforce Board to guarantee A-RESET is moving in the right direction.

Coordination with title I of WIOA: Describe the extent to which the State agency is carrying out SNAP E&T programs in coordination with title I programs under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

The A-RESET program strives to connect participants with any available resource that will help them to meet the employment and training goals. WIOA Title I programs can greatly enhance the services provided by A-RESET. As a part of the screening process, A-RESET case managers evaluate participants' needs and identify appropriate resources. Participants who are eligible for Title I programs and in need of WIOA services are referred to their local Career Center. As needed, A-RESET case managers will work with Career Center staff to coordinate services. To make the referral process easier, Alabama is in the process of gaining access to AlabamaWorks!, which will allow A-RESET staff to make direct electronic referrals.

In order to successfully coordinate with Title I programs under WIOA, A-RESET staff need to have a good understanding of available WIOA programs and services. Working towards the Governor's Success Plus plan to hire 500,000 credentialed workers by 2025, A-RESET staff have taken part in the AlabamaWorks! Capstone modules. These modules were developed by the Alabama workforce system to ensure that those involved in workforce development are equipped to share information about the various workforce programs throughout the State. Assessments are administered and upon receiving a passing score, the Alabama Talent Developer Credential is given with a certification. This initiative involves multiple State agencies including the Alabama Workforce, Department of Education, Vocational & Rehabilitation Services, Department of Human Resources (FOOD ASSISTANCE, TANF, JOBS, SNAP E&T), Alabama Career Center System, and WIOA Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Workers Program, to name a few. These courses educate individuals on the various state workforce programs and how they all work together to meet our goal of 500,000 by 2025. Included in this initiative is the DAVID Tool and the P-20W Council.

13. THE AVAILABILITY, IF APPROPRIATE, OF E&T PROGRAMS FOR INDIANS LIVING ON RESERVATIONS AFTER THE STATE AGENCY HAS CONSULTED IN GOOD FAITH WITH APPROPRIATE TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS;

1. *Did the State agency consult with ITOs in the State?*

☒Yes, ITOs in the State were consulted. *(Complete the rest of this section.)*

☐Not applicable because there are no ITOs located in the State. *(Skip the rest of this section.)*

2. Name the ITOs consulted.

The Poarch Band of Creek Indians

3. **Outcomes:** Describe the outcomes of the consultation. Provide specific examples of how the State agency incorporated feedback from ITOs into the design of the E&T program (e.g., unique supportive service, new component, in-demand occupation).

14. IF A CONCILIATION PROCESS IS PLANNED, THE PROCEDURES THAT WILL BE USED WHEN AN INDIVIDUAL FAILS TO COMPLY WITH AN E&T PROGRAM REQUIREMENT. INCLUDE THE LENGTH OF THE CONCILIATION PERIOD; AND

In accordance with 7 CFR 273.7(c)(3), State agencies have the option to offer a conciliation period to noncompliant E&T participants. The conciliation period provides mandatory E&T participants with an opportunity to comply before the State agency sends a notice of adverse action. The conciliation process is not a substitute for the determination of good cause when a client fails to comply.

1. Does the State agency offer a conciliation process?

☐Yes. (*Complete the remainder of this section*.)

☒No (*Skip to the next section.)*

15. THE PAYMENT RATES FOR CHILD CARE ESTABLISHED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROVISIONS OF 45 CFR 98.43, AND BASED ON LOCAL MARKET RATE SURVEYS.

The State will make referrals to the State childcare resource program, Family Guidance, for childcare services. We will also refer them to other available resources for childcare throughout the State, including the Boys & Girls Club.

16. THE COMBINED (FEDERAL/STATE) STATE AGENCY REIMBURSEMENT RATE FOR TRANSPORTATION COSTS AND OTHER EXPENSES REASONABLY NECESSARY AND DIRECTLY RELATED TO PARTICIPATION INCURRED BY E&T PARTICIPANTS. IF THE STATE AGENCY PROPOSES TO PROVIDE DIFFERENT REIMBURSEMENT AMOUNTS TO ACCOUNT FOR VARYING LEVELS OF EXPENSES, FOR INSTANCE FOR GREATER OR LESSER COSTS OF TRANSPORTATION IN DIFFERENT AREAS OF THE STATE, IT MUST INCLUDE THEM HERE.

Participant reimbursements are as follows to the extent that funding is available:

Allowable Participant Reimbursements	**Participant Reimbursement Caps (optional)**	**Who provides the participant reimbursement?**	**Method of disbursement**
Transportation & clothing	$100 monthly	State	In advance & estimated amount
Transportation, if needs exceed	No cap	Partner	Provider either reimburses or pays in advance the actual amount.
Clothing, if needs exceed	No cap	Partner	Provider either reimburses or pays in advance the actual amount.
Tools	No cap	Partner	Provider either reimburses or pays in advance the actual amount.
Certifications, test fees, license fees	No cap	Partner	Provider either reimburses or pays in advance the actual amount.

17. INFORMATION ABOUT EXPENSES THE STATE AGENCY PROPOSES TO REIMBURSE. FNS MUST BE AFFORDED THE OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW AND COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED REIMBURSEMENTS BEFORE THEY ARE IMPLEMENTED.

There will not be a cap placed on the following reimbursements as long as they are reasonable and necessary and funding is available:

- Clothing
- Equipment needed for training/employment
- Drug testing required for employment
- Shoes
- Union dues necessary for employment
- Medical test required for employment
- Licensing and bonding fees for work placement
- Background check/finger printing required for employment
- Other reimbursements may be considered if they are reasonable and necessary for employment/training and are allowable E&T costs

In addition to DHR's allowances, third-party partners will be encouraged to provide for transportation and other participant expenses that are necessary or are an integral part of the E&T service (e.g., welding masks).

18. FOR EACH COMPONENT THAT IS EXPECTED TO INCLUDE 100 OR MORE PARTICIPANTS, REPORTING MEASURES THAT THE STATE WILL COLLECT AND INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL REPORT IN PARAGRAPH (C)(17) OF THIS SECTION. SUCH MEASURES MAY INCLUDE:

A. THE PERCENTAGE AND NUMBER OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS WHO RECEIVED E&T SERVICES AND ARE IN UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT SUBSEQUENT TO THE RECEIPT OF THOSE SERVICES;

On the Job Training	The number and percentage of participants that participate in on-the-job training and the number of participants that become employed during the reporting period.	Numerator will include the number of on-the-job training participants that become employed during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022. Denominator will include the total number of on-the-job training participants during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022.
Work Based Learning (Other)	The number and percentage of participants that participate in Work-Based Learning and the number that become employed during the reporting period.	Numerator will include the number of work-based learning (other) participants that become employed during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022. Denominator will include the total number of work-based learning (other) participants during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022.
Work Readiness Training	The number and percentage of work readiness training participants that become employed during the reporting period.	Numerator will include the number of work readiness training participants that obtain employment during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022. Denominator will include the number total of participants in work readiness training during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022.

Supervised Job Search	The number and percentage of participants who obtain employment after participating in supervised job search during the reporting period.	Numerator will include the number of participants that have wages after participating in supervised job search during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022. Denominator will include the total number of participants that participated in supervised job search during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022.

B. THE PERCENTAGE AND NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS WHO OBTAIN A RECOGNIZED CREDENTIAL, A REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP, OR A REGULAR SECONDARY SCHOOL DIPLOMA (OR ITS RECOGNIZED EQUIVALENT), WHILE PARTICIPATING IN, OR WITHIN 1 YEAR AFTER RECEIVING E&T SERVICES;

Career/Technical Vocational Training	The number and percentage of participants that participate in vocational training and obtain a recognized credential and/or employment during the reporting period.	Numerator will include the number of vocational training participants that obtain a recognized credential and/or employment during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022. Denominator will include the total number of vocational training participants during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022.

Adult/Basic Foundational Skills Education	The number and percentage of participants in adult/basic Education who receive a GED or high school equivalency (HSE) during the reporting period.	Numerator will include the number of participants in adult/basic education that obtained a HSE or GED during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022. Denominator will include the total number of adult/basic education participants during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022.

C. THE PERCENTAGE AND NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS WHO ARE IN AN EDUCATION OR TRAINING PROGRAM THAT IS INTENDED TO LEAD TO A RECOGNIZED CREDENTIAL, A

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP AN ON-THE-JOB TRAINING PROGRAM, A REGULAR SECONDARY SCHOOL DIPLOMA (OR ITS RECOGNIZED EQUIVALENT), OR UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT;

Vocational Training	The number and percentage of participants that participate in vocational training and obtain a recognized credential and/or employment during the reporting period.	Numerator will include the number of vocational training participants that obtain a recognized credential and/or employment during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022. Denominator will include the total number of vocational training participants during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022.
On the Job Training	The number and percentage of participants that participate in on-the-job training and the number of participants that become employed during the reporting period.	Numerator will include the number of on-the-job training participants that become employed during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022. Denominator will include the total number of on-the-job training participants during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022.
Work Based Learning (Other)	The number and percentage of participants that participate in Work-Based Learning and the number that become employed during the reporting period.	Numerator will include the number of work-based learning (other) participants that become employed during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022. Denominator will include the total number of work-based learning (other) participants during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022.

D. MEASURES DEVELOPED TO ASSESS THE SKILLS ACQUISITION OF E&T PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS THAT REFLECT THE GOALS OF THE SPECIFIC COMPONENTS INCLUDING THE PERCENTAGE AND NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS WHO ARE MEETING PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS OR ARE GAINING SKILLS LIKELY TO LEAD TO EMPLOYMENT; AND

Work Readiness Training	The number and percentage of work readiness training participants that become employed during the reporting	Numerator will include the number of work readiness training participants that obtain employment during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022.

	period.	Denominator will include the number total of participants in work readiness training during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022.

Supervised Job Search	The number and percentage of participants who obtain employment after participating in supervised job search during the reporting period.	Numerator will include the number of participants that have wages after participating in supervised job search during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022. Denominator will include the total number of participants that participated in supervised job search during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022.

E. OTHER INDICATORS APPROVED BY FNS IN THE E&T STATE PLAN.

Job Retention	The number and percentage of participants that have wages after participating in job retention in during the reporting period.	Numerator will include the number of job retention participants who complete their job retention program (between 30 to 90 days, depending on the program) with wages during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022. Denominator will include the total number of participants who have completed their job retention program during the period of 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022.

B. ABLE-BODIED ADULTS WITHOUT DEPENDENTS (ABAWD) [28]

1. ITS PLEDGE TO OFFER A QUALIFYING ACTIVITY TO ALL AT-RISK ABAWD APPLICANTS AND RECIPIENTS;

I. Is the State agency pledging to offer qualifying activities to all at-risk ABAWDs?	N/A
II. Information about the size & needs of ABAWD population	N/A

I. Is the State agency pledging to offer qualifying activities to all at-risk ABAWDs?	N/A
III. The counties/areas where pledge services will be offered	N/A
IV. Estimated cost to fulfill pledge	N/A
V. Description of State agency capacity to serve at-risk ABAWDs	N/A
VI. Management controls in place to meet pledge requirements	N/A
VII. Description of education, training and workfare components State agency will offer to meet ABAWD work requirements	N/A

2. ESTIMATED COSTS OF FULFILLING ITS PLEDGE;

Does not apply to Alabama

3. A DESCRIPTION OF MANAGEMENT CONTROLS IN PLACE TO MEET PLEDGE REQUIREMENTS;

Does not apply to Alabama

4. A DISCUSSION OF ITS CAPACITY AND ABILITY TO SERVE AT-RISK ABAWDS;

Does not apply to Alabama

5. INFORMATION ABOUT THE SIZE AND SPECIAL NEEDS OF ITS ABAWD POPULATION; AND

Does not apply to Alabama

6. INFORMATION ABOUT THE EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND WORKFARE COMPONENTS IT WILL OFFER TO MEET THE ABAWD WORK REQUIREMENT

Does not apply to Alabama

JOBS FOR VETERANS' STATE GRANTS

A. HOW THE STATE INTENDS TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING AND JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES TO VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE PERSONS UNDER THE JVSG;

How Alabama intends to promote the hiring and retention of eligible Veterans and other eligible persons:

1. Alabama will continue with plans under the Accelerate Alabama initiative that will include the services provided by Alabama Career Centers affiliated with the American Job Center network to include Veterans and Eligible Persons with resources and emphasis for technical training and higher education.

2. Increase business services outreach to Federal defense contractors and subcontractors, such as Austal Ltd. of Mobile for work on the Navy's Littoral Combat Ship; Northrop Grumman of Huntsville for research and development services in support of integrated missile defense; Boeing Corporation for work on Army helicopters; L-3 Coleman Aerospace of Huntsville from the Missile Defense Agency.

3. Expand the WIOA OJT and AIDT training and job opportunities listing on the Alabama's automated data system to increase priority referral of Veterans and Eligible Persons to jobs and job training.

4. Increase employer outreach in the automotive and aviation manufacturing sectors which employ many Recently Separated Veterans and pay the highest average wages of manufacturing industry in Alabama – nearly $75,000.00.

5. Encourage more Veterans to enroll in the State's workforce job-driven training, in trade, manufacturing, and shipbuilding apprenticeship programs offered through the Alabama Industrial Development Training (AIDT) to increase the entered employment rate of Recently Separated Veterans and long-term unemployed, older Veterans.

6. Expand innovative partnerships such as the initiative of the Alabama Career Center in Mobile, American Job Center affiliate that is training Veterans in the welding training and certification program under a joint-venture by AIDT with the ship building industry. Historically, Veterans who complete training are placed in well-paying and stable jobs.

Employment Service Case Management by DVOP Specialists

Standard DVOP case management practices will include:

1. Assisting Veteran-clients in development of job objectives and a resume.

2. Identifying significant barriers to employment.

3. Referring or assisting Veteran-clients to appropriate supportive services.

4. Determining a Veteran-client's economic need.

5. Identifying training or educational goals.

6. Documenting contact with employers on behalf of individual clients.

7. Maintaining current contact information.

8. Documenting job referrals.

DVOP specialists will use the state automated data system case management feature to load cases into "My Cases" portfolio. Case management review of the caseload for every DVOP specialist under the state automated data system "My Cases" feature will be conducted by Employment Service Managers on a monthly basis to ensure adherence to required practices and privacy concerns. Employment Service Managers will also review the "My Cases" portfolio of their DVOP specialists to identify effective performances (best practices and success stories) and shortcomings in services needing correction. DVOPs will use reports provided from the state automated data system to outreach and contact Recently Separated Veterans, ages 18 to

24, and Veterans receiving ex-service member Unemployment Benefits (UCX) for the purpose of offering job placement or job training services. Veterans responding to this outreach will be provided assessment services to determine their readiness to apply for employment opportunities in there are of choice with their current skills. Assessment will include evaluating the additional skills needed for employment with employers having those jobs. This approach provides Veterans with customer choice as to specific occupations for which to begin training. Veterans are also acquainted with the AJC resources that are available to pursue job-driven training in emerging industries, such as fast-growing jobs in Green industries.

Measuring Performance Outcomes

For comparison of performance to negotiated outcomes, state Individual Service Coordinators (ISC) will use automated reports prepared from the state automated system and the ETA-9173 reports from the U.S. Department of Labor. Additionally, AJC Managers will submit a Manager Quarterly Report on Services to Veterans in the format approved by the U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Service. AJC Managers will also provide an assessment as to whether individualized services provided by DVOP specialists assigned to them are being correctly documented and effective.

Planned Deployment of Grant-Funded Staff

All LVER, DVOP and Consolidated positions are state merit system employees. LVERs, DVOPs and Consolidated positions will be assigned to Alabama Career Centers in the AJC network to ensure maximum effectiveness and complete integration of grant activities and services on behalf of Veterans. As described in Title 38 U.S.C. Chapter 41, LVERs and DVOPs have distinctly different roles and responsibilities in support of Priority of Service to Veterans and Eligible Persons in service delivery programs carried out by the AJCs.

The activities and functions of LVERs and DVOPs funded under the grant will be carried out in strict adherence to the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended; the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act, as amended; and Title 38 U.S.C., Chapters 41 and 42, as amended by the Jobs for Veterans Act (Public Law 107-288), and will be subject to the provisions of the grant and supplementary operating requirements that may be promulgated through Veterans Program Letters (VPLs), and related guidance from Veterans Employment and Training Service. All LVER and DVOP specialists as required by the Jobs for Veterans Act, as amended, will attend training at the National Veterans Training Institute (NVTI) within 18 months of their hire date. Applications for NVTI mandated training will be submitted by the AJC Manager to the State Director, Veterans Employment and Training Service (DVET), or designated NVTI coordinator, within one month of hire date. LVER and DVOP assignments are made in consultation with the DVET.

DVOPs are to be located in proximity to community organizations and other entities serving Veterans with significant barriers to employment, and where DVOP outreach is effective at locating Veterans with SBEs and other Eligible Persons in need of individualized services and case management, as prescribed in current Veteran Program Letters, such as locations within the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs that provide medical and benefits services, other U.S. Department of Labor grant recipients offering services to homeless Veterans and Veterans who have been justice involved, with an emphasis on extending outreach to Veterans and Eligible Persons who are educationally and economically disadvantaged. DVOPs assigned to work for Managers of Alabama Career Centers in the AJC network will accept only Veteran-clients referred by Career Center Representatives and determined to have an SBE, as per the definition.

B. THE DUTIES ASSIGNED TO DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF BY THE STATE; SPECIFICALLY IMPLEMENTING DVOP AND LVER DUTIES OR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS OUTLINED IN 38 U.S.C. § 4103A AND 4104. THESE DUTIES MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH CURRENT GUIDANCE;

DVOP duties will be assigned in accordance with 38 U.S.C. Subsection 4103A, as amended by the Jobs for Veterans Act (Public Law 107-288). DVOPs are Employment Service (ES) staff, with principle duties to carry out individualized services to meet the employment needs of eligible Veterans, and the following priority in the provision of services:

(a) Special disabled Veterans (b) Other disabled Veterans. (c) Other eligible Veterans determined as priority, considering applicable rates of unemployment and the employment emphasis for covered Veterans under federal contracts. DVOPs service only Veterans with SBEs as defined by current Veteran Program Letters and USDOL guidance. Veterans using self-service to register on the internet-based Alabama Job Link will be Identified from reports prepared for AJC Managers to determine if the Veterans may have an SBE and could benefit from DVOP follow-up and individualized services.

Alabama DVOP Role and Responsibilities Listed by Task and Activities:

Individualized Services

1. DVOPs will facilitate individualized services under a strategy of case management to Veterans with special employment and training needs due to an SBE, as defined by current Veteran Program Letters and USDOL guidance. These services may include any combination of services listed below, but at a minimum, a comprehensive assessment of employability and a written individualized employment plan are required in a program of case management. All services are to be documented including assessments, career supportive services, referrals to job training, and referral of "Job Ready" clients to Career Center Business Service Representatives (BSRs) or LVERs.

2. DVOPs prioritize services to Veterans with SBEs who are economically or educationally disadvantaged; Veterans enrolled as clients of Vocational Rehabilitation administered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans who are homeless; and other Veterans identified as need individualized assistance and case management as determined by the Assistant Secretary for Veterans Employment and Training Services.

3. DVOPs provide case management to Veterans with significant obstacles and challenges to employment.

Outreach

DVOPs will conduct outreach activities or provide services at alternative service locations to locate candidates who could benefit from individualized services and market these services to potential client in programs and places such as Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E), Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project (HVRP), and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) hospitals and Vet Centers, with an emphasis on meeting the needs of those who are unable to obtain employment through core services.

Referral to Training

DVOPs will work with homeless shelters, civic and community agencies, WIOA partners in the AJC network, vocational rehabilitation agencies, the AIDT program, and other training providers to locate Veterans in need of individualized employment services. Veterans having SBEs will be referred to DVOPs for individualized services. DVOPs could also be assigned to orientation sessions hosted by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) to assist potential VR&E clients to make good choices in their Chapter 31 occupational and career training.

LVER Staff

LVER duties will be assigned in accordance with 38 U.S.C. Subsection 4104, as amended by the Jobs for Veterans Act (Public Law 107-288), the Special Grant provisions of the JVSG, current

Veteran Program Letters and USDOL guidance to exclusively benefit Veterans and other Eligible Persons by promoting the advantages of hiring Veterans to employers, employer associations, and business groups, as well as those duties that facilitate employment, training, and placement services furnished to Veterans through the Career Centers within the AJC network of providers. In Alabama, LVERs are assigned as team members in Business Service Units to:

(a) advocate for all eligible Veterans and Eligible Persons served by the AJC with business, Industry, and other community-based organizations by participating in appropriate outreach activities such as job and career fairs, conducting job search workshops with employers, employer summits, coordinating with unions, apprenticeship programs, and business organizations to promote and secure employment and training programs; and (b) facilitate employment, training, and placement services furnished to Veterans through the labor exchange services offered under the Wagner-Peyser Act and the Jobs for Veterans Act, as amended (Ref. 20 CFR part 1010).

The purpose of conducting outreach to employers in the area is to develop relationships, jobs, training, or training opportunities for Veterans and other Eligible Persons. The purpose of conducting seminars and establishing self-directed job search work groups is to ensure a greater number of eligible Veterans and other Eligible Persons have the skills needed to find employment.

Alabama LVER Roles and Responsibilities Listed by Tasks and Activities:

Expanding the Capacity of the Workforce Development System to Assist Veterans

1. LVERs will assist and facilitate in expanding the capacity of other Career Center partners in the AJCs in providing assistance and training to Veterans and Eligible Persons by taking actions to ensure Veterans are provided easier access to the full range of labor exchange services needed to meet their employment and training needs.

2. LVERs will work with other Workforce Development providers to develop their capacity to recognize and respond to these needs. Responsibilities may include the following activities: (a) train other staff and service delivery system partners to enhance their knowledge of Veterans' employment and training issues; (b) promote the participation of Veterans inn employment and training; (c) refer Veterans to training and educational opportunities with Career Center (One-Stop) partners as well as other community providers.

3. LVERs provide technical assistance to community-based organizations for employment and training services to Veterans with SBEs.

Advocate for Veterans with Employers and Educational and Training Providers, Unions, Apprenticeship Programs, and the Business Community to Promote Employment and Training Opportunities for Veterans

AJCs will promote job-driven apprenticeship training to Veterans under the initiatives offered through unions, apprenticeship in the trades, as well as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) OJT employment and training programs.

1. LVERs will maintain current information on employment and training opportunities.

2. LVERs will plan and participate in job fairs and employer summits to promote Veterans.

3. LVERs will develop and promote apprenticeship and OJT positions for Veterans with SBEs.

Outreach to Employers on Behalf of Veterans

1. LVERs as team members of the Business Service Units will develop employer relations contact plans for Career Centers in the AJC network. They will also assist to identify federal contractors, and recruit jobs for all Veterans from local employers.

2. LVERs will establish, maintain, or facilitate regular contact with employers to develop employment and training openings for all Veterans.

3. LVERs will monitor job listings by federal contractors and encourage the referral of qualified Veterans who may not have been referred to those jobs by the automated notification/referral system.

Monitor, Evaluate, and Advise Management on Services and Training to Veterans

LVERs are administratively responsible to Managers of Employment Services provided by Career Centers within the AJC network, and will assist the Managers in developing quarterly reports regarding compliance with law and regulations in respect to special services and Priority of Service (POS) for eligible Veterans and other Eligible Persons. Consistent with Title 38 U.S.C. and applicable VPLs, quarterly reports will be forwarded by Career Center Managers, through the line of administrative authority, to the Director of Veterans Employment and Training (DVET) regarding compliance with federal law and regulations with respect to special services and POS for eligible Veterans and other Eligible Persons in the provision of employment services and training, as per 20 CFR part 1010. LVERs will analyze recorded performance data made available to them through the AJC Veterans reports for the Career Center/AJC to which assigned to determine accomplishments or shortcomings towards meeting the state's LVER performance measures for outcomes.

In order to expand the quality of services provided under Title 38 U.S.C., Chapters 41 and 42 to Alabama Veterans in rural areas of the state, 3 JVSG funded positions have become Consolidated LVER/DVOP specialists. LVER duties will be assigned (on a half-time basis) in accordance with 38 U.S.C. Subsection 4104, as amended by the Jobs for Veterans Act(Public Law 107-288), the Special Grant provisions of the JVSG, current Veteran Program Letters and USDOL guidance to exclusively benefit Veterans and other Eligible Persons by promoting the advantages of hiring Veterans to employers, employer associations, and business groups, as well as those duties that facilitate employment, training, and placement services furnished to Veterans through the Career Centers within the AJC network of providers. DVOP duties will be assigned (on a half-time basis) in accordance with 38 U.S.C. Subsection 4103A, as amended by the Jobs for Veterans Act (Public Law 107-288). In the DVOP role, the duties are to carry out individualized services to meet the employment needs of eligible Veterans, and the following priority in the provision of services:

(a) Special disabled Veterans (b) Other disabled Veterans. (c) Other eligible Veterans determined as priority, considering applicable rates of unemployment and the employment emphasis for covered Veterans under federal contracts. DVOPs service only Veterans with SBEs as defined by current Veteran Program Letters and USDOL guidance.

ISC Staff

Alabama has 2 Individualized Service Coordinators (ISC) who assist and provide guidance as necessary to Area Managers, Career Center Managers, LVERs, DVOPs, and Career Center Specialists so that procedures or methods are implemented per Federal, State, and Departmental guidelines in a timely and sufficient manner. They also assist in planning and participating in state workforce development training conferences and workshops with topics regarding priority services to Veterans and marketing Veterans to employers.

Monitor and Guide Services to Veterans

1. The ISCs will ensure understanding of and compliance with laws and regulations with respect to special services and Priority of Service (POS) for eligible Veterans and other Eligible Persons.

2. The ISCs will observe and monitor LVERs, DVOPs, and Career Center team members to identify workflow issues and make necessary suggestions for adjustments to Career Center Managers, Area Managers, and Employment Service Supervisors to ensure the primary goals of the Chapter 31 VA Vocational Rehabilitation are met.

3. Monitor LVERs, DVOPs, and Career Center team member's performance, in a timely manner, so that expectations and accurate feedback are provided to the Career Center Managers concerned, to result in acceptable performance outcomes.

4. Encourage and facilitate cooperation among all agencies and programs providing services and assistance to Veterans to promote maximum awareness and availability of benefits among Veterans, particularly Veterans who may need such services or assistance in gaining employment or job training.

C. THE MANNER IN WHICH DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF ARE INTEGRATED INTO THE STATE'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM OR AMERICAN JOB CENTER;

Program Integration and Leverage Resources

The partnership agreements among all service providers located within the Alabama Career Center in the statewide AJC network and other strategic outstation activities have been Established or modified to include common focus on services to Veterans. LVER and DVOP services and program activities will be under the auspices of the Employment Service Division of the Alabama Department of Labor, the JVSG grantee and operator of the statewide network of American Job Centers, and a primary partner will all agencies in the Alabama Workforce Development system that includes all approved training providers in the Alabama Career Center system.

LVERs and DVOPs work directly for Employment Service Managers and are tasked to assist Managers in the evaluation as to the degree of utilization of all services and training by Veterans. LVERs will assist in providing training on Priority of Service (POS) to partners in the statewide network. LVERs will be assigned activities to increase public awareness that eligible Veterans and other Eligible Persons have POS, as defined under 20 CFR part 1010, and will assist Managers in the training of POS requirements to all Career Center partners within the AJC network.

All Career Center staff will assist federal agencies to recruit Veterans, particularly disabled Veterans and Veterans described by the Veterans Employment Service for special emphasis under Title 38 U.S.C. Chapter 42 and the grant provisions, and 20 CFR part 1010 (Priority Service for Covered Persons; and special recruitment initiatives of Veterans by individual federal agencies). As provided for under Title 10 U.S.C., the Alabama Career Center system in the AJC network will provide assistance to military service members and eligible spouses in transition to civilian jobs and careers through the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) at several military facilities in Alabama, and will provide individualized services to Veterans participating in vocational rehabilitation, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (US DVA), as provided under Title 38 U.S.C., Chapter 31. Alabama assigned the State Individualized Service Coordinators to work directly with Employment Coordinators at the US DVA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Service to coordinate the referral of "Job Ready" Veterans enrolled in vocational rehabilitation service under Chapter 31 of Title 38 U.S.C. to the AJC for assistance in gaining suitable employment consistent with their vocational rehabilitation plans. Policy for the delivery of Priority of Service (POS) by the State, Local

Workforce Investment Boards, and the Alabama Career Centers in the AJC network include the following new or existing measures:

1. The first point of contact for Veterans and Eligible Persons seeking services from Alabama's Career Center System in the AJC network is a Wagner-Peyser grant funded representative. Those who access self-services through the internet will complete a universal application that includes features and questions designed to assist staff members in identifying them for POS and training at any point of entry into the Workforce Development system. Additionally, AJC locations will use signage, graphics, and displays to create awareness of the policy that requires Priority of Service for eligible Veterans and eligible spouses.

2. The Governor of Alabama established the Alabama Workforce Council and appointed state leaders in business, industry, education, and government to improve collaboration between educators and employers so that job seekers can identify and participate in job-driven training that fits the skills sets needed for jobs available in business and industry. The grantee is a member of the council, which will be helpful in connecting military skill sets to corresponding job-driven occupational training.

Partnerships and Alliances with Supportive Services

The State of Alabama has made a commitment to provide the best possible services to our nation's military service members, Veterans and their families (SMVF) by establishing the signed by the Governor on 10 December 2013, and the Commission's mission was expanded by Executive Order 712 signed by Governor Kay Ivey on 8 November 2017. The Commission is comprised of the following state agencies: Department of Veterans Affairs; Department of Mental Health; Alabama National Guard; Department of Labor; Serve Alabama; Office of the Attorney General; Department of Education; Department of Corrections; Department of Economic and Community Affairs; Department of Post-Secondary Education; Commission on Higher Education; Department of Rehabilitation Services; Department of Public Health; Medicaid Agency; Law Enforcement Agency; Department of Human Resources; Department of Transportation; and Office of the Chief Justice. The Executive Order requires the AlaVetNet Commission to study and evaluate all services in the state and direct at improving the well-being of SMVF in the areas of education, employment, health, homelessness, and legal assistance. The Commission also includes family services. The six committees functioning under its authority developed a Long Range Plan of Recommendations to assist SMVF in the areas of Behavioral Health, Education, Employment, Homelessness, Legal Assistance, and Family Services. The statewide AJC network is an integral partner in the coordination of all state resources and services to assist SMVF, which to the extent possible, is to be based on using best practices combined with innovation.

Integration of VA VR&E Programs

The VR&E Partnership is fully integrated into the statewide automated network as a required component of the LVER-DVOP grant . DVOP representatives will case manage all active VR&E clients referred from VR&E Counselors, in addition to Veterans with other SBEs. DVOP specialists' primary role with VR&E clients is to assist VR&E Counselors and Veteran-clients to develop career objectives and an effective employment plan. Other Employment Service case management services to be documented include assessment of vocational or training needs, and economic considerations. Employment barriers with regard to the job search are to be described with the detail needed for carrying out successful job referrals or job development with potential employers. Services, job referrals, and contact with specific employers on behalf of clients are to be documented using the automated data system case management screens. VR&E clients will have a services screen entry that identifies the client as "Job Ready", as determined by VA VR&E.

Integration with other VETS Initiatives and Programs

Alabama will continue to conduct training sessions with LVERs, DVOPs, and AJC Managers on development of initiatives that will promote the hiring of returning and transitioning Alabama National Guard members, Reservists, and other Veterans such as participants in Transition Assistance Program (TAP) workshops. The priority group in this effort are returning Alabama National Guard members and Reservists, particularly those on medical hold and awaiting medical discharge. Alabama has a partnership with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Division (VA VR&E) to ensure military personnel at Warrior Transition Units are afforded services offered by VETS through the state's JVSG. TAP is conducted by the VETS contractor at the U.S. Army installations at Fort Rucker and Redstone Arsenal.

Integration into Statewide AJC Training

LVERs and DVOPs funded under the JVSG will participate in many outreach, training, and supportive service opportunities that will require continuous professional development of their skills and knowledge of resources that may be available to assist Veterans. For that purpose, Alabama will budget an annual allocation to conduct all Alabama Veterans' Training Conferences. The training agendas will be developed in consultation with the Alabama DVET and may include professional training provided by the National Veterans' Training Institute (NVTI), in accordance with current Veteran Program Letter and USDOL guidance, or an annual professional training conference to improve LVER-DVOP skills/knowledge, and to foster effective working relationships with Workforce Development partners and agencies in the AJC network. Appropriate NVTI off-site course(s) of instruction and the development of agendas for quarterly Alabama Veterans' Training Conferences will be in consultation with the DVET to ensure all NVTI training and conference agendas will be in keeping with our mission. Requests for NVTI off-site training will be submitted per current Veterans Program Letter (VPL).

D. THE INCENTIVE AWARD PROGRAM IMPLEMENTED USING THE 1% GRANT ALLOCATION SET ASIDE FOR THIS PURPOSE, AS APPLICABLE;

1. Purpose:

1. The intent of the Alabama Veterans Performance Incentive Award Program is to encourage the improvement and modernization of employment, training, and job placement services for veterans, and recognize eligible employees for excellence in providing such services, or for having made demonstrative improvements in the service delivery system for veterans.

2. The Alabama Veterans Performance Incentive Awards Program is designed to recognize service providers for providing extraordinary and commendable services to veterans, and to promote improvement of service delivery to veterans.

2. <u>Eligibility for the Alabama Veterans Performance Incentive Awards</u>:

1. Eligible recipients for individual incentive awards are Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists, Local Veterans' Employment Representative(LVER) staff, and any other individual who provides employment and training services to veterans under the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, to include labor exchange staff funded by the Wagner-Peyser Act or staff of One-Stop partner agencies, as prescribed in Title 38 U.S.C., Section 4112, as amended by P.L. 109-461. States are not restricted from awarding individuals who collectively serve a specific function or work in an area where their performance warrants recognition under a State's incentive

awards program. Volunteers, Veterans' Administration Work Studies, and Federal employees are not eligible recipients.

2. P. L. 109-461 expands the recipient eligibility for performance incentive awards to include Career Centers. Offices that are eligible to be incentive award recipients include any service delivery point that provides exemplary public employment and training services to veterans, One-Stop Career Centers operated by State Workforce Agencies or offices that contract with State, Regional or Local Workforce Investment Boards, and other Agencies identified in Section 121(b)(1)(B) of the WIOA that provide services to veterans. Incentive awards may be used by recipient offices for any purpose.

3. Awards to offices should be reserved for instances where most, if not all, employees in an office contribute in some way to improving employment or training services offered and provided to veterans.

4. Consideration for the Alabama Veterans Performance Incentive Awards requires that nominations meet the eligibility requirements as defined by the law and current USDOL guidance . In accordance with current USDOL guidance, it is the expressed intent of Congress that eligibility and selection criteria provide states the maximum flexibility needed to recognize employees whose individual efforts merit recognition with a performance incentive award.

5. Individuals nominated for the Alabama Veterans Performance Incentive Awards must have achieved a "Meets Standards" rating or above on their most recent performance appraisal occurring during the program year for which the award is being given.

6. Any person who has received a disciplinary write up during the program year for which the award is being given, is ineligible to participate in that year's incentive awards program.

7. Each nominee's eligibility for the Alabama Veterans Performance Incentive Awards must be certified by the Manager of the Alabama Career Center in which the nominee(s) provided services.

8. For unit or office submissions for the Alabama Veterans Performance Incentive Awards, each person covered by the nomination must meet the individual eligibility requirements named in 2(e), (f) and (g).

9. The Manager of the Alabama Career Center in which the nominee(s) provided services must also certify as to the factualness of submitted nominations.

3. Selection of Award Recipients: The Alabama Veterans Performance Incentive Awards program selection process is as follows:

1. Announcement of the Alabama Veterans Performance Incentive Awards Program by the Director of ES Division by July 1 of each year, ensuring wide dissemination of the program objectives and selection process among partners and stakeholders in the Alabama workforce development system.

2. Close of all nominations by July 30 of each year.

3. Not later than July 31 of each year, the ES Veterans Services Program Coordinator, or other state administrator assigned by the Secretary of Labor, Alabama Department of Labor will certify that nominations submitted for consideration are eligible for Performance Incentive Awards, using the Alabama Performance Incentive Award Program Eligibility Certification form, as approved by the Secretary of Labor, Alabama Department of Labor. Nominations certified as eligible will be assigned base scores,

using the Alabama Performance Incentive Award Program State Administrator Scoring Worksheet. The base scoring will assign scores based on the "weight" of the activities or services being scored, relative to the degree of emphasis in the grant provisions. Only nominations that are certified as eligible will be assigned base scores and forwarded to the Performance Incentive Awards Selection Committee. In order to further bolster fairness in the awards program selection process, the ES Veterans Services Program Coordinator, or other state administrator assigned by the Secretary of Labor, Alabama Department of Labor, will cover the nominee's name and/or identifying information on the forms, and assign a numerical or alphabetical identification code to the nominations prior to forwarding to the Performance Incentive Awards Selection Committee.

4. Not later than August 15 of each year, a Veterans Performance Incentive Awards Selection Committee will convene to score the certified eligible nominations, using the Alabama Performance Incentive Awards Program Selection Committee Scoring Worksheet. The selection committee will be at least five (5) members of workforce development peers and other workforce development experts approved by the Secretary of Labor, Alabama Department of Labor. The selection committee members will score all eligible nominations. Only nominations scored above a cut-off score set by the Secretary of Labor, Alabama Department of Labor will be forwarded to the Alabama Veterans Performance Incentive Awards Selection Board.

5. Not later than August 31 of each year, the Secretary of Labor, Alabama Department of Labor will convene a Veterans Performance Incentive Awards Selection Board with at least five state-level administrators, representing partners and stakeholders in the Alabama workforce development system. Using the approved criteria of the Alabama Veterans Performance Incentive Awards program, the Veterans Performance Incentive Awards Selection Board will select nominations for individual awards and recommend monetary amounts for each award to the Secretary of Labor, Alabama Department of Labor.

6. Not later than September 15 of each year, the Secretary of Labor, Alabama Department of Labor, approves the actual cash disbursements from the grant funds to individuals selected for Alabama Veterans Performance Incentive Awards.

(4) Nomination and/or Evaluation Criteria:

1. Selection of Veterans Performance Incentive Award recipients may involve evaluation of both objective and subjective data. Nominees must demonstrate outstanding efforts at providing employment, training, job placement, and other employment-related services to United States veterans or separating military personnel. Services to veterans representing categories of concern, or veterans with especially significant barriers to employment will be afforded extra weight in the selection criteria.

2. The nominations may include a combination of performance data, team building, motivation, program improvement, and feedback from job seeking and business customers.

3. Consideration for nomination may include any combination of the following:

1. Development of a program, for which the impact may not be directly measurable but is verifiable (e.g., a resume

skills building program).

2. Exemplary case management assistance to veterans, as evidenced by case notes, and/or have been referenced on a to Veterans during the program year for which the award is being given.

3. Exceptional performance beyond job requirements, or well above performance goals.

4. Planning, developing, or implementing improvements in effectiveness or efficiency of services or delivery of services, training, job placement, career or vocational assistance, to veterans.

5. Outstanding personal contribution to the state's Veterans Performance Standards as measured by the PIRL reports, or similar statistics, such as SAMS, during the program year for which the award is being given.

6. Effective outreach and public relations in the local community on behalf of veterans (e.g. work within the chamber of commerce, employer organizations such as human resource groups, job fair planning, etc.). The outreach activities and public relations events cited in the award nomination must have been referenced on a Quarterly Manager's Report on Services to Veterans during the program year for which the award is being given.

7. Generation of positive publicity for the Alabama Career Center system and services to veterans that has generated measurable positive outcomes.

8. Enhancement of on-the-job training, customized job training, or internship training for veterans, particularly veterans in categories of concern, such as Special Disabled veterans, or recently separated veterans.

9. Exceptional efforts in assisting hard-to-place veterans, such as homeless veterans, ex-offenders, and economically disadvantaged veterans, as evidenced by case notes, and/or have been referenced on a Quarterly Manager's Report on Services to Veterans during the program year for which the award is being given.

10. Developing new WIOA partnerships or fostering collaborative efforts to improve positive outcomes of employment and training programs for veterans, or veterans in special categories (e.g. interagency referral agreements).

11. Promotion of entry into federal employment.

12. Any other significant achievement in assisting veterans to obtain, train, or advance in employment, as evidenced by case notes, and/or have been referenced on a Quarterly Manager's Report on Services to Veterans during the program year for which the award is being given.

4. Priority consideration for a performance incentive award will be provided to individuals who demonstrate outstanding outreach on behalf of veterans who have barriers to employment, especially homeless veterans. Team building and motivation to serve veterans and improve the Veterans Service Program, positive feedback from employers and customers, and other indicators of outstanding individual performance and results will be considered in the selection process.

5. Nominations must be submitted on the Alabama Veterans Performance Incentive Awards Program Nomination Form.

5. Period of Performance: The performance, activity, or accomplishments being recognized must have occurred during the previous U.S. Department of Labor Program Year (PY), which commences on July 1 of each year, and concludes on June 30 of the following year. Supporting documentation or numerical data submitted must clearly indicate performance within this evaluation period.

6. Description of the Award:

1. In accordance with Title 38, Section 4112 (7) and the Special Grant Provisions from the U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Service, it is intended that cash awards be granted to individual recipients, each Fiscal Year (FY), as required by law, Alabama must set aside one (1) percent of the Jobs for Veterans State Grant under the Alabama Performance Incentive Awards Program. Each year, the Alabama Performance Incentive Awards Program will recognize individual recipients who meet the eligibility and selection criteria, with cash awards in the amount of up to $5,000 each.
2. The exact cash denominations for each winner is determined by the executive selection committee based on the scoring by this committee for each nomination.
3. Expenditures and the accounting of the Performance Incentive Awards program will be pursuant to federal financial reporting and fiscal requirements in the Jobs for Veterans State Grant. Selection of recipients for awards under the Alabama Performance Incentive Awards Program must be identified by September 30 of each year (the close of the Fiscal Year), and all funds set aside for the awards program must be disbursed or expended each year within ninety (90) days of Fiscal Year closeout (December 31).
7. Promotion and Public Affairs: The Secretary of Labor, Alabama Department of Labor (Grant Administrator) will provide wide dissemination of the Alabama Veterans Performance Incentive Awards Program among eligible candidates within the Alabama Career Center system, and other affiliated entities which are providing employment, training, and job placement services to veterans and military members separating from the U.S. Armed Forces. Nomination forms, instructions, and selection criteria will be made available at all Alabama Career Center locations, or by writing to:

Secretary of Labor, Alabama Department Labor,

ATTN: Veterans Services, Room 2820

649 Monroe St.

Montgomery, AL 36131

Nominations and information are also available by Email by contacting Veterans Services Alabama at:

donal.cieutat@alcc.alabama.gov

8. Submission of Nominations: Nominations for the Alabama Veterans Performance Incentive Awards may be mailed or delivered to:

Alabama Department Labor,

ATTN: Veterans Services,

649 Monroe St., Room 2820

Montgomery, AL 36131

Nominations may also be emailed to:

donal.cieutat@alcc.alabama.gov

9. Nomination Deadlines: All nominations are due by July 30 of each year. All awards disbursements will be identified not later than September 30 of each year (the close of each Fiscal Year).

10. Management of the Awards Program: The success of the Alabama Veterans Performance Incentive Awards Program rests in the premise that appropriate recognition of worthy candidates has the potential to motivate other eligible professionals into providing excellent services to veterans. To that end, the Secretary of Labor, Alabama Department of Labor, will ensure that the following policies, practices, and actions are carried out in support of the Alabama Veterans Performance Incentive Awards Program:

1. Adequate resources and staff will be committed to Administering the Alabama Veteran Performance Incentive

Program.

2. Awards decisions will be based on exemplary performance of individual employees, in services to veterans.

3. Awards will be selected fairly, without regard to race, national origin, gender, or other non-merit factors.

4. Management will assign priority to the integrity and the administration of the Alabama Veterans Performance Incentive Awards Program.

11. Summary Report: Alabama Veterans Performance Incentive Awards

Program funds will be obligated by September 30 of each year (the end of the Fiscal Year), and expended by December 31 of each year. A summary report will be submitted in the Fiscal Year fourth quarter report to the U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS), detailing the expenditures of the Alabama Veterans Performance Incentive Awards.

E. THE POPULATIONS OF ELIGIBLE VETERANS TO BE SERVED, INCLUDING ANY ADDITIONAL POPULATIONS DESIGNATED BY THE SECRETARY AS ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES, AND ANY ADDITIONAL POPULATIONS SPECIFICALLY TARGETED BY THE STATE WORKFORCE AGENCY FOR SERVICES FROM ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM PARTNERS (E.G., NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS; VETERANS IN REMOTE RURAL COUNTIES OR PARISHES);

Targeting Services to Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBEs):

Alabama Career Centers in the statewide American Job Center (AJC) network will provide comprehensive employment, training, and career placement services to nearly 23,688 Veterans a year through a combination of internet-based job services and personal assistance. The Alabama Career Center system in the AJC network operates under the auspices of the Alabama

Department of Labor, the state agency responsible for providing employment and related services to Veterans, and is authorized by the Governor to make application for funds to carry out the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) program as mandated under Title 38 U.S.C. Chapter 41.

The state automated data system enables Veterans to use self-services, including registration. This approach enables DVOP specialists to review the registrations and resumes submitted by Veterans on-line and then contact Veterans who appear to need further assistance. Alabama DVOP specialists prioritize their efforts with Veterans who are facing significant barriers to employment (SBEs). The assignment of DVOP specialists at specific Alabama Career Centers in the statewide AJC network is based on a strategy to ensure Veterans with SBEs are priority customers in the Alabama Workforce Development system. Although many Veterans can and will use the internet-based self-registration and various self-service features, Veterans with SBEs are provided individualized services. Veterans who enter the Alabama Workforce Development system at an AJC are served initially by Wagner-Peyser Career Center Specialists. For Veterans who appear to have an SBE (as defined by current Veterans Program Letters. Career Center Specialists will offer additional services, to include referral to a DVOP who will provide individualized services and case management services:

1. All Veterans enrolled in the Five-track Employment Program administered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Service, covered in a separate agreement with VR&E, determined to be "Job-Ready" by VR&E will be referred by a VR&E Employment Coordinator to the state's Individualized Services Coordinator (ISC), who will refer the Job Ready VR&E client to an appropriate AJC Manager for case management and job placement services.

2. Homeless Veterans, as defined in Section 103(a) of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302(a)).

3. Veterans lacking a high school diploma or equivalent certificate.

4. A recently-separated service member, as defined in 38 U.S.C. Subsection 4211(6), who at any time in the previous 12 months has been unemployed for 27 or more consecutive weeks.

5. Low-income Veterans, as defined by WIOA Section 3(36)).

6. A Veteran who is an ex-offender, as defined by WIOA Section 169, who either (a) has been subject to any stage of the criminal justice process for committing a status offense of delinquent act, or (b) requires assistance in overcoming artificial barriers to employment resulting from a record of arrest or conviction for committing delinquent acts.

7. Veterans ages 18-24 years old transitioning from active military service.

8. A Special Disabled Veteran or Disabled Veteran, as those terms are defined in 38 U.S.C. Subsection 4211(1). Special Disabled and Disabled Veterans are those who are entitled to compensation (or who but for the receipt of military retired pay would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans' Affairs; or, were discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability. Veterans in the categories above will be provided a Comprehensive Assessment of Employability, addressing barriers to employment and a written Individual Employment Plan (IEP) outlining the individual's employability planning.

9. Vietnam-era Veterans, defined as, those with any part of active military, naval, or air service during the Vietnam era. 38 U.S.C. 101(29) defines "Vietnam era" to mean the period beginning on February 28, 1961, and ending on May 7, 1975, in the case of a Veteran who

served in the Republic of Vietnam during that period; and the period beginning on August 5, 1964, and ending on May 7, 1975, in all other cases.

Locating Priority Group Veterans

Veterans in priority groups will be located in the state automated data system by developing special reports and search capabilities of the system. Extensive outreach will be conducted to locate Veterans who may benefit from DVOP services, such as outreach to homeless shelters, Community agencies that provide services to homeless individuals, and through participation in special events such as Homeless Veteran Stand Downs or Veterans Courts.

Special Efforts to Homeless Veterans

Many agencies and volunteer groups have formed coalitions which plan several Veterans Stand Down events across the state each year. LVERs will provide homeless Veterans with job development services, and DVOPs will provide individualized services under the case management approach to identify basic needs regarding safety, health, and shelter. Followup case management services in this effort will include referral to employment and WIOA training providers to identify individual training needs. Assistance is provided to the homeless Veterans on how to find employment opportunities in their specific locality, as well as how to relate their skills and experience into new work in other industries and occupations. Some of the locations where our agency is partnering with coalitions to assist homeless Veterans are as follows:

1. Mobile – Grant funded staff members in the Alabama Career Center in Mobile have developed a partnership with Housing First, A Homeless Coalition. This Coalition, joined by the Mobile AJC, puts together an annual 'Project Homeless Connect' event. During this event the homeless are connected with an extensive list of service providers for needs such as clothing, food, health care, housing, employment or skills training, legal help, haircuts, and identification cards. The grant funded staff members also meet regularly with residents of Eagles Landing, a supportive housing complex for homeless Veterans operated by Volunteers of America. Job search and case management services are provided, as well as resume, job search, and soft skills workshops.

2. North Alabama - the Alabama Career Centers in the AJC network partner with Stand Down Together Huntsville Inc., which is a 501(c)3 Agency that assists homeless and at-risk Veterans in north Alabama to become self-sustaining members of their community.

3. Dothan – the Career Center partners with the South East Alabama Coalition on Homelessness (SEACH) to provide employment services to homeless Veterans.

4. Birmingham – under an agreement with Alethia House, which was awarded a grant by VETS under the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Act (HVRP), DVOPs are assigned to assist homeless Veterans to acquire skills training and employment. In addition, the AJC and JVSG staff are active participants in the annual Metro Birmingham Alabama Veterans Stand Down, sponsored by the Birmingham VA and Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Chapter #4. Our agency joins with the VA Medical Center staff, other federal agencies, Veteran organizations, and community support organizations to provide homeless Veterans and their families with employment services, basic healthcare, mental health and spiritual counseling, and clothing.

5. Montgomery - under an agreement with Alethia House, which was awarded a grant by VETS under the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Act (HVRP), DVOPs are assigned to assist homeless Veterans to acquire skills training and employment.

F. HOW THE STATE IMPLEMENTS AND MONITORS THE ADMINISTRATION OF PRIORITY OF SERVICE TO COVERED PERSONS;

Priority of Service

In affiliation with the American Job Center (AJC) network, the Alabama Veterans' Services Program within the Alabama Career Center system shall offer comprehensive employment and career placement service to nearly 23,688 Veterans per year, through a combination of self-service internet-based job services and direct assistance at AJCs throughout the state. The state's automated data system, as a point of entry for self-service registration, provides a priority service notification to Veterans and covered persons at https://joblink.alabama.gov/ada/mn_veterans_dsp.cfm .Veterans and persons entitled to priority services and training complete a universal application that includes features and questions designed to assist staff members in identifying them for priority services and training at the point of entry into the Workforce Development system. Veterans who can use the automated data system competently are encouraged to self-register and make maximum use of the automated access to resources. Career Center Specialists and Veterans' Employment Specialists review applications submitted by Veterans and other Eligible Persons who register using self-service for the purpose of assessing the quality of the applications and resumes to ensure they reflect clearly stated job objectives, meaningful information with regards to work history, education and training, and that Veterans resumes represent Veteran job seekers adequately to enable employers to locate qualified Veterans for job openings.

Another action to ensure that Veterans receive priority is the 24-hour email alerts sent to Veterans on any matching work we find in the data system. Priority service is also provided when Veterans, or others eligible for priority, are identified at intake when registering for services at any AJC or other service delivery points. Career Center Specialists will ensure that each Veteran completing a full application will have properly recorded their skills, education, training, job or career interests, work experience, licenses or certifications, employment availability, contact information, and other vital information. Additionally, AJCs will use signage, graphics, and displays to inform Veterans and Covered Persons of priority service (as described under Title 38 U.S.C., Chapter 41 and 20 CFR part 1010) and as applicable to all federally funded employment services and training. Moreover, local Career Center Managers will develop outreach activities to locate Covered Persons under Veterans Priority. Managers or designated representatives will review special reports generated by the state data system for the purpose of identifying Veterans and Covered Persons who may be contacted and made aware of their priority in services and training. Career Center Managers will develop local service strategies and training goals for Veterans and Covered Persons entitled to Veterans Priority, in consultation with their partner agencies and training providers, to encourage maximum utilization of services and training by Veterans and Covered Persons.

All Alabama Workforce Development regions have implemented Veterans Priority in the State WIOA and Wagner-Peyser Plan of Service. Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists and Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) shall compliment Priority of Service (POS) provided by the AJC to Veterans and Covered Persons, as mandated under Title 38 U.S.C., Chapter 41, and in accordance with the general and special provisions of the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG), and applicable regulations, policies, and directive guidance for JVSG from the Assistant Secretary, Veterans Employment and Training (ASVET), including Veterans Program Letters (VPL) addressing DVOP-LVER Roles and Responsibilities. The Alabama strategy leverages improvements in technology to enable Career Center Specialists to locate and review the resumes of Veterans using on-line self-services for the purpose of offering helpful advice or suggestions on presenting their skills and abilities to prospective employers, because the data system is designed to support employers searching for key words, and automatically flags the resumes of Veterans and Covered Persons who are identified as qualified candidates within the parameters entered by the employers. This advantage offers Veterans and Covered Persons a Priority in Service and enables an employer to contact them directly, with or without a referral through a posted job order.

G. HOW THE STATE PROVIDES OR INTENDS TO PROVIDE AND MEASURE, THROUGH BOTH THE DVOP AND AMERICAN JOB CENTER STAFF:

1. JOB AND JOB TRAINING INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES,

Standard DVOP case management practices will include:

1. Assisting Veteran-clients in development of job objectives and a resume.
2. Identifying significant barriers to employment.
3. Referring or assisting Veteran-clients to appropriate supportive services.
4. Determining a Veteran-client's economic need.
5. Identifying training or educational goals.
6. Documenting contact with employers on behalf of individual clients.
7. Maintaining current contact information.
8. Documenting job referrals.

Individualized Services

1. DVOPs will facilitate individualized services under a strategy of case management to Veterans with special employment and training needs due to an SBE, as defined by VPLs 03-14, 04-14, and 03-19. These services may include any combination of services listed below, but at a minimum, a comprehensive assessment of employability and a written individualized employment plan are required in a program of case management. All services are to be documented including assessments, career supportive services, referrals to job training, and referral of "Job Ready" clients to Career Center Business Service Representatives (BSRs) or LVERs.

2. DVOPs prioritize services to Veterans with SBEs who are economically or educationally disadvantaged; Veterans enrolled as clients of Vocational Rehabilitation administered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans who are homeless; and other Veterans identified as need individualized assistance and case management as determined by the Assistant Secretary for Veterans Employment and Training Services.

3. DVOPs provide case management to Veterans with significant obstacles and challenges to employment.

All Career Center staff will assist federal agencies to recruit Veterans, particularly disabled Veterans and Veterans described by the Veterans Employment Service for special emphasis under Title 38 U.S.C. Chapter 42 and the grant provisions, and 20 CFR part 1010 (Priority Service for Covered Persons; and special recruitment initiatives of Veterans by individual federal agencies). As provided for under Title 10 U.S.C., the Alabama Career Center system in the AJC network will provide assistance to military service members and eligible spouses in transition to civilian jobs and careers through the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) at several military facilities in Alabama, and will provide individualized services to Veterans participating in vocational rehabilitation, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (US DVA), as provided under Title 38 U.S.C., Chapter 31. Alabama assigned the State Individualized Service Coordinators to work directly with Employment Coordinators at the US DVA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Service to coordinate the referral of "Job Ready" Veterans enrolled in vocational rehabilitation service under Chapter 31 of Title 38 U.S.C. to the AJC for assistance in gaining suitable employment consistent with their vocational rehabilitation plans. Policy for the delivery of Priority of Service (POS) by the State, Local

Workforce Investment Boards, and the Alabama Career Centers in the AJC network include the following measure:

The first point of contact for Veterans and Eligible Persons seeking services from Alabama's Career Center System in the AJC network is a Wagner-Peyser grant funded representative. Those who access self-services through the internet will complete a universal application that includes features and questions designed to assist staff members in identifying them for POS and training at any point of entry into the Workforce Development system. Additionally, AJC locations will use signage, graphics, and displays to create awareness of the policy that requires Priority of Service for eligible Veterans and eligible spouses.

Referral to Training

DVOPs will work with homeless shelters, civic and community agencies, WIOA partners in the AJC network, vocational rehabilitation agencies, the AIDT program, and other training providers to locate Veterans in need of individualized employment services. Veterans having SBEs will be referred to DVOPs for individualized services. DVOPs could also be assigned to orientation sessions hosted by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) to assist potential VR&E clients to make good choices in their Chapter 31 occupational and career training.

Measuring Performance Outcomes

For comparison of performance to negotiated outcomes, state Individual Service Coordinators (ISC) will use automated reports prepared from the state automated system and the ETA-9173 reports from the U.S. Department of Labor. Additionally, AJC Managers will submit a Manager Quarterly Report on Services to Veterans in the format approved by the U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Service. AJC Managers will also provide an assessment as to whether individualized services provided by DVOP specialists assigned to them are being correctly documented and effective.

2. EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT SERVICES, AND

To promote the hiring and retention of eligible Veterans and other Eligible Persons:

1. Alabama will continue with plans under the Accelerate Alabama initiative that will include the services provided by Alabama Career Centers affiliated with the American Job Center network to include Veterans and Eligible Persons with resources and emphasis for technical training and higher education.

2. Increase business services outreach to Federal defense contractors and subcontractors, such as Austal Ltd. of Mobile for work on the Navy's Littoral Combat Ship; Northrop Grumman of Huntsville for research and development services in support of integrated missile defense; Boeing Corporation for work on Army helicopters; L-3 Coleman Aerospace of Huntsville from the Missile Defense Agency.

3. Expand the WIOA OJT and AIDT training and job opportunities listing on the Alabama Job Link (AJL) https://joblink.alabama.gov/ada/ to increase priority referral of Veterans and Eligible Persons to jobs and job training.

4. Increase employer outreach in the automotive and aviation manufacturing sectors which employ many Recently Separated Veterans and pay the highest average wages of manufacturing industry in Alabama – nearly $75,000.00.

5. Encourage more Veterans to enroll in the State's workforce job-driven training, in trade, manufacturing, and shipbuilding apprenticeship programs offered through the Alabama

Industrial Development Training (AIDT) to increase the entered employment rate of Recently Separated Veterans and long-term unemployed, older Veterans.

6. Expand innovative partnerships such as the initiative of the Alabama Career Center in

Mobile, American Job Center affiliate that is training Veterans in the welding training and certification program under a joint-venture by AIDT with the ship building industry. Historically, Veterans who complete training are placed in well-paying and stable jobs.

B. <u>Targeting Services to Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBEs):</u>

Alabama Career Centers in the statewide American Job Center (AJC) network will provide comprehensive employment, training, and career placement services to nearly 23,688 Veterans a year through a combination of internet-based job services and personal assistance. Alabama has more than 28,000 residents currently serving in the Armed Forces, and of that nearly 20,000 are in National Guard and Reserve components. The Alabama National Guard alone has a $1.3B economic impact in the state. The Alabama Career Center system in the AJC network operates under the auspices of the Alabama Department of Labor, the state agency responsible for providing employment and related services to Veterans, and is authorized by the Governor to make application for funds to carry out the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) program as mandated under Title 38 U.S.C. Chapter 41.

The Alabama Job Link (AJL) enables Veterans to use self-services, including registration. This approach enables DVOP specialists to review the registrations and resumes submitted by Veterans on-line and then contact Veterans who appear to need further assistance. Alabama DVOP specialists prioritize their efforts with Veterans who are facing significant barriers to employment (SBEs). The assignment of DVOP specialists at specific Alabama Career Centers in the statewide AJC network is based on a strategy to ensure Veterans with SBEs are priority customers in the Alabama Workforce Development system. Although many Veterans can and will use the internet-based self-registration and various self-service features, Veterans with SBEs are provided individualized services. Veterans who enter the Alabama Workforce Development system at an AJC are served initially by Wagner-Peyser Career Center Specialists. For Veterans who appear to have an SBE (as defined by Veterans Program Letters (VPL) 03-14, VPL 04-14, and VPL 03-19) Career Center Specialists will offer additional services, to include referral to a DVOP who will provide individualized services and case management services:

1. All Veterans enrolled in the Five-track Employment Program administered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Service, covered in a separate agreement with VR&E, determined to be “Job-Ready” by VR&E will be referred by a VR&E Employment Coordinator to the state’s Individualized Services Coordinator (ISC), who will refer the Job Ready VR&E client to an appropriate AJC Manager for case management and job placement services.

2. Homeless Veterans, as defined in Section 103(a) of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302(a)).

3. Veterans lacking a high school diploma or equivalent certificate.

4. A recently-separated service member, as defined in 38 U.S.C. Subsection 4211(6), who at any time in the previous 12 months has been unemployed for 27 or more consecutive weeks.

5. Low-income Veterans, as defined by WIOA Section 3(36)).

6. A Veteran who is an ex-offender, as defined by WIOA Section 169, who either (a) has been subject to any stage of the criminal justice process for committing a status offense of delinquent act, or (b) requires assistance in overcoming artificial barriers to employment resulting from a record of arrest or conviction for committing delinquent acts.

7. Veterans ages 18-24 years old transitioning from active military service.

8. A Special Disabled Veteran or Disabled Veteran, as those terms are defined in 38 U.S.C. Subsection 4211(1). Special Disabled and Disabled Veterans are those who are entitled to compensation (or who but for the receipt of military retired pay would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans' Affairs; or, were discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability. Veterans in the categories above will be provided a Comprehensive Assessment of Employability, addressing barriers to employment and a written Individual Employment Plan (IEP) outlining the individual's employability planning.

9. Vietnam-era Veterans, as defined in VPL 03-19, are those with any part of active military, naval, or air service during the Vietnam era. 38 U.S.C. 101(29) defines "Vietnam era" to mean the period beginning on February 28, 1961, and ending on May 7, 1975, in the case of a Veteran who served in the Republic of Vietnam during that period; and the period beginning on August 5, 1964, and ending on May 7, 1975, in all other cases.

Locating Priority Group Veterans

Veterans in priority groups will be located in the AJL data system by developing special reports and search capabilities of the system. Extensive outreach will be conducted to locate Veterans who may benefit from DVOP services, such as outreach to homeless shelters, Community agencies that provide services to homeless individuals, and through participation in special events such as Homeless Veteran Stand Downs or Veterans Courts.

Employment Service Case Management by DVOP Specialists

Standard DVOP case management practices will include:

1. Assisting Veteran-clients in development of job objectives and a resume.
2. Identifying significant barriers to employment.
3. Referring or assisting Veteran-clients to appropriate supportive services.
4. Determining a Veteran-client's economic need.
5. Identifying training or educational goals.
6. Documenting contact with employers on behalf of individual clients.
7. Maintaining current contact information.
8. Documenting job referrals.

DVOP specialists will use the AJL case management feature to load cases into "My Cases" portfolio. Case management review of the caseload for every DVOP specialist under the AJL "My Cases" feature will be conducted by Employment Service Managers on a monthly basis to ensure adherence to required practices and privacy concerns. Employment Service Managers will also review the "My Cases" portfolio of their DVOP specialists to identify

effective performances (best practices and success stories) and shortcomings in services needing correction.

DVOPs will use reports provided from the AJL to outreach and contact Recently Separated Veterans, ages 18 to 24, and Veterans receiving ex-service member Unemployment Benefits (UCX) for the purpose of offering job placement or job training services. Veterans responding to this outreach will be provided assessment services to determine their readiness to apply for employment opportunities in there are of choice with their current skills. Assessment will include evaluating the additional skills needed for employment with employers having those jobs. This approach provides Veterans with customer choice as to specific occupations for which to begin training. Veterans are also acquainted with the AJC resources that are available to pursue job-driven training in emerging industries, such as fast-growing jobs in Green industries.

Measuring Performance Outcomes

For comparison of performance to negotiated outcomes, state Individual Service Coordinators (ISC) will use automated reports prepared from the AJL system and the ETA-9173 reports from the U.S. Department of Labor. Additionally, AJC Managers will submit a Manager Quarterly Report on Services to Veterans in the format approved by the U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Service. AJC Managers will also provide an assessment as to whether individualized services provided by DVOP specialists assigned to them are being correctly documented and effective.

C. <u>Planned Deployment of Grant-Funded Staff</u>

JVSG funds allocated to Alabama will support 21 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) DVOP positions, 12 FTE LVER positions, and 3 FTE Consolidated DVOP/LVER positions. All LVER, DVOP and Consolidated positions are state merit system employees. LVERs, DVOPs and Consolidated positions will be assigned to Alabama Career Centers in the AJC network to ensure maximum effectiveness and complete integration of grant activities and services on behalf of Veterans. As described in Title 38 U.S.C. Chapter 41, LVERs and DVOPs have distinctly different roles and responsibilities in support of Priority of Service to Veterans and Eligible Persons in service delivery programs carried out by the AJCs.

The activities and functions of LVERs and DVOPs funded under the grant will be carried out in strict adherence to the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended; the Workforce Innovation

Opportunity Act, as amended; and Title 38 U.S.C., Chapters 41 and 42, as amended by the Jobs for Veterans Act (Public Law 107-288), and will be subject to the provisions of the grant and supplementary operating requirements that may be promulgated through Veterans Program Letters (VPLs), and related guidance from Veterans Employment and Training Service. All LVER and DVOP specialists as required by the Jobs for Veterans Act, as amended, will attend training at the National Veterans Training Institute (NVTI) within 18 months of their hire date. Applications for NVTI mandated training will be submitted by the AJC Manager to the State Director, Veterans Employment and Training Service (DVET), or designated NVTI coordinator, within one month of hire date. LVER and DVOP assignments are made in consultation with the DVET.

DVOPs are to be located in proximity to community organizations and other entities serving Veterans with significant barriers to employment, and where DVOP outreach is effective at locating Veterans with SBEs and other Eligible Persons in need of individualized services and case management, as prescribed in VPLs 03-14, 04-14, and 03-19, such as locations within the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs that provide medical and benefits services, other U.S. Department of Labor grant recipients offering services to homeless Veterans and Veterans who have been justice involved, with an emphasis on extending outreach to Veterans and Eligible Persons who are educationally and economically disadvantaged. DVOPs assigned to work for Managers of Alabama Career Centers in the AJC network will accept only Veteran-clients referred by Career Center Representatives and determined to have an SBE, as per the definition.

D. <u>DVOP Specialists</u>

DVOP duties will be assigned in accordance with 38 U.S.C. Subsection 4103A, as amended by the Jobs for Veterans Act (Public Law 107-288). DVOPs are Employment Service (ES) staff, with principle duties to carry out individualized services to meet the employment needs of eligible Veterans, and the following priority in the provision of services:
(a) Special disabled Veterans (b) Other disabled Veterans. (c) Other eligible Veterans determined as priority, considering applicable rates of unemployment and the employment emphasis for covered Veterans under federal contracts. DVOPs service only Veterans with SBEs as defined by VPLs 03-14, 04-14, and 03-19.
Veterans using self-service to register on the internet-based Alabama Job Link will be Identified from reports prepared for AJC Managers to determine if the Veterans may have an

SBE and could benefit from DVOP follow-up and individualized services.

Alabama DVOP Role and Responsibilities Listed by Task and Activities:

Individualized Services

1. DVOPs will facilitate individualized services under a strategy of case management to Veterans with special employment and training needs due to an SBE, as defined by VPLs 03-14, 04-14, and 03-19. These services may include any combination of services listed below, but at a minimum, a comprehensive assessment of employability and a written individualized employment plan are required in a program of case management. All services are to be documented including assessments, career supportive services, referrals to job training, and referral of "Job Ready" clients to Career Center Business Service Representatives (BSRs) or LVERs.

2. DVOPs prioritize services to Veterans with SBEs who are economically or educationally disadvantaged; Veterans enrolled as clients of Vocational Rehabilitation administered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans who are homeless; and other Veterans identified as need individualized assistance and case management as determined by the Assistant Secretary for Veterans Employment and Training Services.

3. DVOPs provide case management to Veterans with significant obstacles and challenges to employment.

Outreach

DVOPs will conduct outreach activities or provide services at alternative service locations to locate candidates who could benefit from individualized services and market these services to potential client in programs and places such as Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E), Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project (HVRP), and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) hospitals and Vet Centers, with an emphasis on meeting the needs of those who are unable to obtain employment through core services.

Referral to Training

DVOPs will work with homeless shelters, civic and community agencies, WIOA partners in the AJC network, vocational rehabilitation agencies, the AIDT program, and other training providers to locate Veterans in need of individualized employment services. Veterans having SBEs will be referred to DVOPs for individualized services. DVOPs could also be assigned to orientation sessions hosted by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) to assist potential VR&E clients to make good choices in their Chapter 31 occupational and career training.

E. <u>LVER Staff</u>

LVER duties will be assigned in accordance with 38 U.S.C. Subsection 4104, as amended by the Jobs for Veterans Act (Public Law 107-288), the Special Grant provisions of the JVSG, and VPLs 03-14, 04-14, and 03-19 to exclusively benefit Veterans and other Eligible Persons by

promoting the advantages of hiring Veterans to employers, employer associations, and business groups, as well as those duties that facilitate employment, training, and placement services furnished to Veterans through the Career Centers within the AJC network of providers. In Alabama, LVERs are assigned as team members in Business Service Units to: (a) advocate for all eligible Veterans and Eligible Persons served by the AJC with business, Industry, and other community-based organizations by participating in appropriate outreach activities such as job and career fairs, conducting job search workshops with employers, employer summits, coordinating with unions, apprenticeship programs, and business organizations to promote and secure employment and training programs; and (b) facilitate employment, training, and placement services furnished to Veterans through the labor exchange services offered under the Wagner-Peyser Act and the Jobs for Veterans Act, as amended (Ref. 20 CFR part 1010).

The purpose of conducting outreach to employers in the area is to develop relationships, jobs, training, or training opportunities for Veterans and other Eligible Persons. The purpose of conducting seminars and establishing self-directed job search work groups is to ensure a greater number of eligible Veterans and other Eligible Persons have the skills needed to find employment.

Alabama LVER Roles and Responsibilities Listed by Tasks and Activities:

Expanding the Capacity of the Workforce Development System to Assist Veterans

1. LVERs will assist and facilitate in expanding the capacity of other Career Center partners in the AJCs in providing assistance and training to Veterans and Eligible Persons by taking actions to ensure Veterans are provided easier access to the full range of labor exchange services needed to meet their employment and training needs.

2. LVERs will work with other Workforce Development providers to develop their capacity to recognize and respond to these needs. Responsibilities may include the following activities: (a) train other staff and service delivery system partners to enhance their knowledge of Veterans' employment and training issues; (b) promote the participation of Veterans inn employment and training; (c) refer Veterans to training and educational opportunities with Career Center (One-Stop) partners as well as other community providers.

3. LVERs provide technical assistance to community-based organizations for employment and training services to Veterans with SBEs.

Advocate for Veterans with Employers and Educational and Training Providers, Unions, Apprenticeship Programs, and the Business Community to Promote Employment and Training Opportunities for Veterans

AJCs will promote job-driven apprenticeship training to Veterans under the initiatives offered through unions, apprenticeship in the trades, as well as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) OJT employment and training programs.

1. LVERs will maintain current information on employment and training opportunities.

2. LVERs will plan and participate in job fairs and employer summits to promote Veterans.

3. LVERs will develop and promote apprenticeship and OJT positions for Veterans with SBEs.

Outreach to Employers on Behalf of Veterans

1. LVERs as team members of the Business Service Units will develop employer relations contact plans for Career Centers in the AJC network. They will also assist to identify federal contractors, and recruit jobs for all Veterans from local employers.

2. LVERs will establish, maintain, or facilitate regular contact with employers to develop employment and training openings for all Veterans.

3. LVERs will monitor job listings by federal contractors and encourage the referral of qualified Veterans who may not have been referred to those jobs by the AJL automated notification/referral system.

Monitor, Evaluate, and Advise Management on Services and Training to Veterans

LVERs are administratively responsible to Managers of Employment Services provided by Career Centers within the AJC network, and will assist the Managers in developing quarterly reports regarding compliance with law and regulations in respect to special services and Priority of Service (POS) for eligible Veterans and other Eligible Persons. Consistent with Title 38 U.S.C. and applicable VPLs, quarterly reports will be forwarded by Career Center Managers, through the line of administrative authority, to the Director of Veterans Employment and Training (DVET) regarding compliance with federal law and regulations with respect to special services and POS for eligible Veterans and other Eligible Persons in the provision of employment services and training, as per 20 CFR part 1010.

LVERs will analyze recorded performance data made available to them through the AJC Veterans reports for the Career Center/AJC to which assigned to determine accomplishments or shortcomings towards meeting the state's LVER performance measures for outcomes.

F. <u>Consolidated DVOP/LVER Staff</u>

In order to expand the quality of services provided under Title 38 U.S.C., Chapters 41 and 42

to Alabama Veterans in rural areas of the state, 3 JVSG funded positions have become Consolidated DVOP/LVER specialists. LVER duties will be assigned (on a half-time basis) in accordance with 38 U.S.C. Subsection 4104, as amended by the Jobs for Veterans Act (Public Law 107-288), the Special Grant provisions of the JVSG, and VPLs 03-14, 04-14, and 03-19 to exclusively benefit Veterans and other Eligible Persons by promoting the advantages of hiring Veterans to employers, employer associations, and business groups, as well as those duties that facilitate employment, training, and placement services furnished to Veterans through the Career Centers within the AJC network of providers. DVOP duties will be assigned (on a half-time basis) in accordance with 38 U.S.C. Subsection 4103A, as amended by the Jobs for Veterans Act (Public Law 107-288). In the DVOP role, the duties are to carry out individualized services to meet the employment needs of eligible Veterans, and the following priority in the provision of services:
(a) Special disabled Veterans (b) Other disabled Veterans. (c) Other eligible Veterans determined as priority, considering applicable rates of unemployment and the employment emphasis for covered Veterans under federal contracts. DVOPs service only Veterans with SBEs as defined by VPLs 03-14, 04-14, and 03-19.

G. <u>ISC Staff</u>

Alabama has 2 Individual Service Coordinators (ISC) who assist and provide guidance as necessary to Area Managers, Career Center Managers, LVERs, DVOPs, and Career Center Specialists so that procedures or methods are implemented per Federal, State, and Departmental guidelines in a timely and sufficient manner. They also assist in planning and participating in state workforce development training conferences and workshops with topics regarding priority services to Veterans and marketing Veterans to employers.

Monitor and Guide Services to Veterans

1. The ISCs will ensure understanding of and compliance with laws and regulations with respect to special services and Priority of Service (POS) for eligible Veterans and other Eligible Persons.

2. The ISCs will observe and monitor LVERs, DVOPs, and Career Center team members to identify work flow issues and make necessary suggestions for adjustments to Career Center Managers, Area Managers, and Employment Service Supervisors to ensure the primary goals of the Chapter 31 VA Vocational Rehabilitation are met.

3. Monitor LVERs, DVOPs, and Career Center team member's performance, in a timely manner, so that expectations and accurate feedback are provided to the Career Center Managers concerned, to result in acceptable performance outcomes.

4. Encourage and facilitate cooperation among all agencies and programs providing services and assistance to Veterans to promote maximum awareness and availability of benefits among Veterans, particularly Veterans who may need such services or assistance in gaining employment or job training.

H. Program Integration and Leverage Resources

The partnership agreements among all service providers located within the Alabama Career Center in the statewide AJC network and other strategic outstation activities have been Established or modified to include common focus on services to Veterans. LVER and DVOP services and program activities will be under the auspices of the Employment Service Division of the Alabama Department of Labor, the JVSG grantee and operator of the statewide network of American Job Centers, and a primary partner will all agencies in the Alabama Workforce Development system that includes all approved training providers in the Alabama Career Center system.

LVERs and DVOPs work directly for Employment Service Managers and are tasked to assist Managers in the evaluation as to the degree of utilization of all services and training by Veterans. LVERs will assist in providing training on Priority of Service (POS) to partners in the statewide network. LVERs will be assigned activities to increase public awareness that eligible Veterans and other Eligible Persons have POS, as defined under 20 CFR part 1010, and will assist Managers in the training of POS requirements to all Career Center partners within the AJC network.

All Career Center staff will assist federal agencies to recruit Veterans, particularly disabled Veterans and Veterans described by the Veterans Employment Service for special emphasis under Title 38 U.S.C. Chapter 42 and the grant provisions, and 20 CFR part 1010 (Priority Service for Covered Persons; and special recruitment initiatives of Veterans by individual federal agencies). As provided for under Title 10 U.S.C., the Alabama Career Center system in the AJC network will provide assistance to military service members and eligible spouses in transition to civilian jobs and careers through the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) at several military facilities in Alabama, and will provide individualized services to Veterans participating in vocational rehabilitation, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (US DVA), as provided under Title 38 U.S.C., Chapter 31. Alabama assigned the State Individualized Service Coordinators to work directly with Employment Coordinators

at the US DVA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Service to coordinate the referral of "Job Ready" Veterans enrolled in vocational rehabilitation service under Chapter 31 of Title 38 U.S.C. to the AJC for assistance in gaining suitable employment consistent with their vocational rehabilitation plans. Policy for the delivery of Priority of Service (POS) by the State, Local Workforce Investment Boards, and the Alabama Career Centers in the AJC network include the following new or existing measures:

1. The first point of contact for Veterans and Eligible Persons seeking services from Alabama's Career Center System in the AJC network is a Wagner-Peyser grant funded representative. Those who access self-services through the internet will complete a universal application that includes features and questions designed to assist staff members in identifying them for POS and training at any point of entry into the Workforce Development system. Additionally, AJC locations will use signage, graphics, and displays to create awareness of the policy that requires Priority of Service for eligible Veterans and eligible spouses.

2. The Governor of Alabama established the Alabama Workforce Council and appointed state leaders in business, industry, education, and government to improve collaboration between educators and employers so that job seekers can identify and participate in job-driven training that fits the skills sets needed for jobs available in business and industry. The grantee is a member of the council, which will be helpful in connecting military skill sets to corresponding job-driven occupational training.

Program Integration and Leverage Resources

The partnership agreements among all service providers located within the Alabama Career Center in the statewide AJC network and other strategic outstation activities have been Established or modified to include common focus on services to Veterans. LVER and DVOP services and program activities will be under the auspices of the Employment Service Division of the Alabama Department of Labor, the JVSG grantee and operator of the statewide network of American Job Centers, and a primary partner will all agencies in the Alabama Workforce Development system that includes all approved training providers in the Alabama Career Center system.

LVERs and DVOPs work directly for Employment Service Managers and are tasked to assist Managers in the evaluation as to the degree of utilization of all services and training by Veterans. LVERs will assist in providing training on Priority of Service (POS) to partners in the statewide network. LVERs will be assigned activities to increase public awareness that eligible Veterans and other Eligible Persons have POS, as defined under 20 CFR part 1010, and will assist Managers in the training of POS requirements to all Career Center partners within the AJC

network.

All Career Center staff will assist federal agencies to recruit Veterans, particularly disabled Veterans and Veterans described by the Veterans Employment Service for special emphasis under Title 38 U.S.C. Chapter 42 and the grant provisions, and 20 CFR part 1010 (Priority Service for Covered Persons; and special recruitment initiatives of Veterans by individual federal agencies). As provided for under Title 10 U.S.C., the Alabama Career Center system in the AJC network will provide assistance to military service members and eligible spouses in transition to civilian jobs and careers through the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) at several military facilities in Alabama, and will provide individualized services to Veterans participating in vocational rehabilitation, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (US DVA), as provided under Title 38 U.S.C., Chapter 31. Alabama assigned the State Individualized Service Coordinators to work directly with Employment Coordinators at the US DVA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Service to coordinate the referral of "Job Ready" Veterans enrolled in vocational rehabilitation service under Chapter 31 of Title 38 U.S.C. to the AJC for assistance in gaining suitable employment consistent with their vocational rehabilitation plans. Policy for the delivery of Priority of Service (POS) by the State, Local Workforce Investment Boards, and the Alabama Career Centers in the AJC network include the following new or existing measures:

1. The first point of contact for Veterans and Eligible Persons seeking services from Alabama's Career Center System in the AJC network is a Wagner-Peyser grant funded representative. Those who access self-services through the internet will complete a universal application that includes features and questions designed to assist staff members in identifying them for POS and training at any point of entry into the Workforce Development system. Additionally, AJC locations will use signage, graphics, and displays to create awareness of the policy that requires Priority of Service for eligible Veterans and eligible spouses.

2. The Governor of Alabama established the Alabama Workforce Council and appointed state leaders in business, industry, education, and government to improve collaboration between educators and employers so that job seekers can identify and participate in job-driven training that fits the skills sets needed for jobs available in business and industry. The grantee is a member of the council, which will be helpful in connecting military skill sets to corresponding job-driven occupational training.

Partnerships and Alliances with Supportive Services

The State of Alabama has made a commitment to provide the best possible services to our nation's military service members, Veterans and their families (SMVF) by establishing the

signed by the Governor on 10 December 2013, and the Commission's mission was

expanded by Executive Order 712 signed by Governor Kay Ivey on 8 November 2017. The Commission is comprised of the following state agencies: Department of Veterans Affairs; Department of Mental Health; Alabama National Guard; Department of Labor; Serve Alabama; Office of the Attorney General; Department of Education; Department of Corrections; Department of Economic and Community Affairs; Department of Post-Secondary Education; Commission on Higher Education; Department of Rehabilitation Services; Department of Public Health; Medicaid Agency; Law Enforcement Agency; Department of Human Resources; Department of Transportation; and Office of the Chief Justice.

The Executive Order requires the AlaVetNet Commission to study and evaluate all services in the state and direct at improving the well-being of SMVF in the areas of education, employment, health, homelessness, and legal assistance. The Commission also includes family services. The six committees functioning under its authority developed a Long Range Plan of Recommendations to assist SMVF in the areas of Behavioral Health, Education, Employment, Homelessness, Legal Assistance, and Family Services. The statewide AJC network is an integral partner in the coordination of all state resources and services to assist SMVF, which to the extent possible, is to be based on using best practices combined with innovation.

Integration of VA VR&E Programs

The VR&E Partnership is fully integrated into the statewide AJL network as a required component of the LVER-DVOP grant (VPL 01-09 dated 11 December 2008). DVOP representatives will case manage all active VR&E clients referred from VR&E Counselors, in addition to Veterans with other SBEs. DVOP specialists' primary role with VR&E clients is to assist VR&E Counselors and Veteran-clients to develop career objectives and an effective employment plan. Other Employment Service case management services to be documented include assessment of vocational or training needs, and economic considerations. Employment barriers with regard to the job search are to be described with the detail needed for carrying out successful job referrals or job development with potential employers. Services, job referrals, and contact with specific employers on behalf of clients are to be documented using the AJL case management screens. VR&E clients will have a services screen entry that identifies the client as "Job Ready", as determined by VA VR&E.

Integration with other VETS Initiatives and Programs

Alabama will continue to conduct training sessions with LVERs, DVOPs, and AJC Managers on development of initiatives that will promote the hiring of returning and transitioning

Alabama National Guard members, Reservists, and other Veterans such as participants in Transition Assistance Program (TAP) workshops. The priority group in this effort are returning Alabama National Guard members and Reservists, particularly those on medical hold and awaiting medical discharge. Alabama has a partnership with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Division (VA VR&E) to ensure military personnel at Warrior Transition Units are afforded services offered by VETS through the state's JVSG. TAP is conducted by the VETS contractor at the U.S. Army installations at Fort Rucker and Redstone Arsenal.

Integration into Statewide AJC Training

LVERs and DVOPs funded under the JVSG will participate in many outreach, training, and supportive service opportunities that will require continuous professional development of their skills and knowledge of resources that may be available to assist Veterans. For that purpose, Alabama will budget approximately $55,000.00 of the projected allocation to conduct all Alabama Veterans' Training Conferences. The training agendas will be developed in consultation with the Alabama DVET and may include professional training provided by the National Veterans' Training Institute (NVTI), in accordance with VPLs 06-09 and 05-18, or an annual professional training conference to improve LVER-DVOP skills/knowledge, and to foster effective working relationships with Workforce Development partners and agencies in the AJC network. Appropriate NVTI off-site course(s) of instruction and the development of agendas for quarterly Alabama Veterans' Training Conferences will be in consultation with the DVET to ensure all NVTI training and conference agendas will be in keeping with our mission. Requests for NVTI off-site training will be submitted per VPL 05-18 or the latest guidance.

Special Efforts to Homeless Veterans

Many agencies and volunteer groups have formed coalitions which plan several Veterans Stand Down events across the state each year. LVERs will provide homeless Veterans with job development services, and DVOPs will provide individualized services under the case management approach to identify basic needs regarding safety, health, and shelter. Follow up case management services in this effort will include referral to employment and WIOA training providers to identify individual training needs. Assistance is provided to the homeless Veterans on how to find employment opportunities in their specific locality, as well as how to relate their skills and experience into new work in other industries and occupations. Some of the locations where our agency is partnering with coalitions to assist homeless Veterans are as follows:

1. Mobile – Grant funded staff members in the Alabama Career Center in Mobile have developed a partnership with Housing First, A Homeless Coalition. This Coalition, joined by the Mobile AJC, puts together an annual 'Project Homeless Connect' event. During this event the homeless are connected with an extensive list of service providers for needs such as clothing, food, health care, housing, employment or skills training, legal help, haircuts, and identification cards. The grant funded staff members also meet regularly with residents of Eagles Landing, a supportive housing complex for homeless Veterans operated by Volunteers of America. Job search and case management services are provided, as well as resume, job search, and soft skills workshops.

2. North Alabama - the Alabama Career Centers in the AJC network partner with Stand Down Together Huntsville Inc., which is a 501(c)3 Agency that assists homeless and at-risk Veterans in north Alabama to become self-sustaining members of their community.

3. Dothan – the Career Center partners with the South East Alabama Coalition on Homelessness (SEACH) to provide employment services to homeless Veterans.

4. Birmingham – under an agreement with Alethia House, which was awarded a grant by VETS under the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Act (HVRP), DVOPs are assigned to assist homeless Veterans to acquire skills training and employment. In addition, the AJC and JVSG staff are active participants in the annual Metro Birmingham Alabama Veterans Stand Down, sponsored by the Birmingham VA and Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Chapter #4. Our agency joins with the VA Medical Center staff, other federal agencies, Veteran organizations, and community support organizations to provide homeless Veterans and their families with employment services, basic healthcare, mental health and spiritual counseling, and clothing.

5. Montgomery - under an agreement with Alethia House, which was awarded a grant by VETS under the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Act (HVRP), DVOPs are assigned to assist homeless Veterans to acquire skills training and employment.

I. Priority of Service

In affiliation with the American Job Center (AJC) network, the Alabama Veterans' Services Program within the Alabama Career Center system shall offer comprehensive employment and career placement service to nearly 23,688 Veterans per year, through a combination of self-service internet-based job services and direct assistance at AJCs throughout the state.

The Alabama Job Link (AJL) system, as a point of entry for self-service registration, provides a priority service notification to Veterans and covered persons at https://joblink.alabama.gov/ada/mn_veterans_dsp.cfm .

Veterans and persons entitled to priority services and training complete a universal application that includes features and questions designed to assist staff members in identifying them for priority services and training at the point of entry into the Workforce Development system. Veterans who can use AJL competently are encouraged to self-register

and make maximum use of the automated access to resources. Career Center Specialists and Veterans' Employment Specialists review applications submitted by Veterans and other Eligible Persons who register using self-service for the purpose of assessing the quality of the applications and resumes to ensure they reflect clearly stated job objectives, meaningful information with regards to work history, education and training, and that Veterans resumes represent Veteran job seekers adequately to enable employers to locate qualified Veterans for job openings.

Another action to ensure that Veterans receive priority is the 24-hour email alerts sent to Veterans on any matching work we find in the AJL data system. Priority service is also provided when Veterans, or others eligible for priority, are identified at intake when registering for services at any AJC or other service delivery points. Career Center Specialists will ensure that each Veteran completing a full application will have properly recorded their skills, education, training, job or career interests, work experience, licenses or certifications, employment availability, contact information, and other vital information. Additionally, AJCs will use signage, graphics, and displays to inform Veterans and Covered Persons of priority service (as described under Title 38 U.S.C., Chapter 41 and 20 CFR part 1010) and as applicable to all federally funded employment services and training. Moreover, local Career Center Managers will develop outreach activities to locate Covered Persons under Veterans Priority. Managers or designated representatives will review special reports generated by AJL for the purpose of identifying Veterans and Covered Persons who may be contacted and made aware of their priority in services and training. Career Center Managers will develop local service strategies and training goals for Veterans and Covered Persons entitled to Veterans Priority, in consultation with their partner agencies and training providers, to encourage maximum utilization of services and training by Veterans and Covered Persons.

All Alabama Workforce Development regions have implemented Veterans Priority in the State WIOA and Wagner-Peyser Plan of Service. Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists and Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) shall compliment Priority of Service (POS) provided by the AJC to Veterans and Covered Persons, as mandated under Title 38 U.S.C., Chapter 41, and in accordance with the general and special provisions of the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG), and applicable regulations, policies, and directive

guidance for JVSG from the Assistant Secretary, Veterans Employment and Training (ASVET), including Veterans Program Letters (VPL) addressing DVOP-LVER Roles and Responsibilities. The Alabama strategy leverages improvements in technology to enable Career Center Specialists to locate and review the resumes of Veterans using on-line self-services for the purpose of offering helpful advice or suggestions on presenting their skills and abilities to prospective employers, because the AJL data system is designed to support employers searching for key words, and automatically flags the resumes of Veterans and Covered Persons who are identified as qualified candidates within the parameters entered by the employers. This advantage offers Veterans and Covered Persons a Priority in Service and enables an employer to contact them directly, with or without a referral through a posted job order.

3. JOB-DRIVEN TRAINING AND SUBSEQUENT PLACEMENT SERVICE PROGRAM FOR ELIGIBLE VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE PERSONS;

DVOPs will work with homeless shelters, civic and community agencies, WIOA partners in the AJC network, vocational rehabilitation agencies, the AIDT program, and other training providers to locate Veterans in need of individualized employment services. Veterans having SBEs will be referred to DVOPs for individualized services. DVOPs could also be assigned to orientation sessions hosted by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) to assist potential VR&E clients to make good choices in their Chapter 31 occupational and career training. DVOP's will also refer qualified Veterans and

covered persons to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) representatives for job driven training.

H. THE HIRE DATE ALONG WITH MANDATORY TRAINING COMPLETION DATES FOR ALL DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF; AND

The hire and mandatory training completions dates for all DVOP specialist and LVER Staff are maintained on a shared drive by the State Coordinator and the Assistant State Coordinator. These date are also maintained by Alabama Department of Labor Training staff. The hire dates are reported quarterly to USDOL VETS submitted in the quarterly report. The State Coordinator coordinates mandatory training dates for new staff with the National Veterans Training Institute (NVTI).

EMPLOYEE NAME	PROGRAM (DVOP, LVER, or Consolidated)	DATE ASSIGNED	COMPLETED ALL REQUIRED TRAINING?
Leslie J. Hill	CONSOLIDATED	10/16/2019	No
LC Jackson	DVOP	3/03/2014	Yes

EMPLOYEE NAME	PROGRAM (DVOP, LVER, or Consolidated)	DATE ASSIGNED	COMPLETED ALL REQUIRED TRAINING?
Irvin Turberville	DVOP	8/18/2014	Yes
Henry ‘Hank’ Lahti	LVER	4/01/2016	Yes
Kevin Lee	DVOP	9/16/2019	No
Harold Walker	DVOP	6/02/2015	Yes
Roderick Royal	LVER	12/17/2018	Yes
Marion Harrison	CONSOLIDATED	10/01/2019	No
Carlston Flemons	DVOP	2/18/2014	Yes
Victor Cordier	LVER	9/16/2019	Yes
Larry Vaughn	DVOP	6/01/2016	Yes
Cheryl Pleasant	DVOP	3/16/2018	Yes
Kerry Cornelius	LVER	11/01/2019	No
Phillip 'Mike' Warren	CONSOLIDATED	10/01/2019	Yes
Sheila Hand	LVER	12/16/2019	No
Leticia Whitfield	DVOP	4/01/2019	Yes
Maxwell Merritt	DVOP	10/01/2010	Yes
Tamla Green	DVOP	7/18/2016	Yes
Joseph Hall	LVER	12/02/2019	No
Christian Casallo	LVER	2/18/2020	No
Patrick 'Shane' Bright	DVOP	2/18/2020	No
Eric Marshall	DVOP	9/04/2018	Yes
Michael Watson	LVER	1/16/2020	No
Teddy Dinkins	DVOP	1/02/2020	No
Selena Ricks	DVOP	2/16/2017	Yes
Brandon Baker	DVOP	5/16/2019	No
Ethel 'Lois' Harris	DVOP	2/16/2016	Yes
John 'Stephen' Rutherford	LVER	8/01/2018	Yes
Nicholas Bowen	DVOP / Assistant JVSG Program Coordinator	10/01/2010	Yes
Susan Smith	DVOP / ISC - South	8/01/2018	Yes

EMPLOYEE NAME	PROGRAM (DVOP, LVER, or Consolidated)	DATE ASSIGNED	COMPLETED ALL REQUIRED TRAINING?
Lisa Owen	LVER / JVSG Coordinator Assistant	3/01/2018	Yes
Donal Cieutat	LVER / JVSG Program Coordinator	1/01/2015	Yes

I. SUCH ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AS THE SECRETARY MAY REQUIRE.

Jobs For Veterans State Grant

	Program Year: 2022 Negotiated Level	Program Year: 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment 2nd QTR after exit	50%	50%
Employment 4th QTR after exit	49%	49%
Median Earnings: 2nd QTR after exit	$4,900	$4,900

SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (SCSEP)

A. ECONOMIC PROJECTIONS AND IMPACT

1. DISCUSS LONG-TERM PROJECTIONS FOR JOBS IN INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS IN THE STATE THAT MAY PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR OLDER WORKERS. (20 CFR 641.302(D)) (MAY ALTERNATIVELY BE DISCUSSED IN THE ECONOMIC ANALYSIS SECTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN.)

The American workforce is getting older. In fact, by 2024 the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that 25% of the US workforce will be composed of workers over the age of 55, and a third of those workers will be older than 65. The reasons, for the most part, are due to the country's overall ageing population as a result of declining birth rates and better life expectancy. Alabama is a prime example of an aging nation as the 65 and older population is projected to increase by 382,140, or 50.1% between 2017 – 2040.

This is both a good thing and a challenge for employers. On the one hand, older employees bring experience, loyalty, stability and reliability to the office, particularly in these times of low unemployment and a tight labor market. But these same employees also require a different kind of approach to not only keep them productive and valuable while working, but also to ensure

that they can smoothly transition to retirement without becoming a financial burden to their employers.

According to the Alabama Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Division (LMI), the following are the top ten occupations that may potentially employ workers age 55 and older.

- Food Preparation and Serving Workers
- Cashiers
- Waiters and Waitresses
- Retail Salespersons
- Truck Drivers
- Janitors and Cleaners
- Nurses Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants
- Secretaries
- Registered Nurses
- Cooks

Many of these occupations, including food preparation, cashiers, waiters and waitresses, and retail sales start at the lower end of the pay scale. However, ADSS and its partner agencies will seek to place older workers in higher paying jobs where possible, including truck drivers, secretaries, and nurses.

2. DISCUSS HOW THE LONG-TERM JOB PROJECTIONS DISCUSSED IN THE ECONOMIC ANALYSIS SECTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN RELATE TO THE TYPES OF UNSUBSIDIZED JOBS FOR WHICH SCSEP PARTICIPANTS WILL BE TRAINED AND THE TYPES OF SKILL TRAINING TO BE PROVIDED. (20 CFR 641.302(D))

Projections indicate that Alabama will be substantially impacted by the "graying" of its population over the coming two decades. In fact, its aging rate will outpace developments in most other states and the nation. The pool of persons ages 65 and older is projected to grow by 50% over the next twenty years, compared to only a 8.8% growth rate for the state's total population. Persons age 65 and older will account for nearly 75% of the projected increase in the nation's working-age population in the next decade, a historically unprecedented development. Alabama will be a part of this dramatic shift in the workforce.

What does this mean to the employment situation for older workers in Alabama?

It means tremendous opportunity for seniors who want to stay in the workforce or re-enter it after having retired. Many leading national corporations like Home Depot and CVS have discovered the value of the older worker and have put programs in place to keep older workers on staff or hire them back as consultants. Those companies that choose to ignore this "age wave" will struggle to keep their workforce intact in the very near future. Due to the decrease in the number of young people entering the workforce, jobs will be there for older workers who want to work.

These demographic and labor force changes in Alabama in the coming decade will pose several important challenges for the state's private and public sector employees and the workforce development system as a whole. In the years ahead, most employers will have to substantially increase the number of older workers on their payrolls and restructure their hiring practices to accommodate greater numbers of older workers.

Some of the strategies we will utilize include the following:

- Provide a single point of entry through our 350 plus Senior Centers in the state, who will work closely with the One Stop Career Centers.
- Develop training for employers that clearly defines the benefits of retaining mature workers.
- Conduct statewide outreach to mature adults to create a new way of thinking about retirement, and to make individuals aware of the educational opportunities available to the mature worker.
- Analyze possible disincentives that exist in the current system that would discourage the involvement of older Alabamians.

The Alabama SCSEP program will strive to improve the employability of our seniors, and extend the work lives of older Alabamians, especially the economically disadvantaged.

3. DISCUSS CURRENT AND PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE STATE (SUCH AS BY PROVIDING INFORMATION AVAILABLE UNDER §15 OF THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT (29 U.S.C. 491-2) BY OCCUPATION), AND THE TYPES OF SKILLS POSSESSED BY ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS. (20 CFR 641.325(C))

The Alabama Department of Labor LMI Division has provided a "New Hires by Industry" report which lists the top ten industries employing workers 55 and older in Alabama.

The top ten industries are the following:

- Administrative and Support Services
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
- Ambulatory Health Care Service
- Food Services
- Specialty Trade Contractors
- Truck Transportation
- Nursing and Residential Care Facilities
- General Merchandise Stores
- Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers
- Construction

Alabama has analyzed the state's occupations projections. We identified those occupations providing significant employment opportunities for SCSEP participants due to growth or high turnover. In identifying these occupations, ADSS considered the profiles of the SCSEP participants being served, including their employment history, educational level, and work skills as well as the challenges of those most-in-need. Consequently, Alabama concentrated on occupations requiring short-term or moderate-term on-the-job-training.

Many of the occupational titles appropriate for SCSEP participants are in growing industries. For example, healthcare occupations will continue to grow at a fast pace due to the aging of the state's population. Healthcare and social assistance employment will continue to grow over the next decade. Alabama SCSEP plans to partner with the newly created Alabama Office of Apprenticeship to create training programs for mature workers that will provide the skills necessary to obtain employment in the health care field, where huge manpower shortages already exist.

Other industries exhibiting significant growth are the office and administrative support occupations, food services, and retail.

Alabama SCSEP will work collaboratively to address issues ensuring host agency assignments are truly providing skills training to meet the needs of both participants and employers. Sub-grantees will continue to utilize the Individual Employment Plan (IEP), in partnership with the participant and host agency supervisor, ensuring community service employment assignments are providing skills training that meet the needs of the participant and host agency. Sub-grantees will monitor participants at least once every six months at their community service employment assignments. During those visits, sub-grantee staff will review and update the IEP with both the participant and host agency supervisor.

Sub-grantees will continue to monitor the training to ensure participants will be prepared for unsubsidized employment through the acquisition of transferable skills in demand by local employers. In addition, where applicable, sub-grantees, in partnership with participants, will develop IEPs that combine community service employment with other permissible training (e.g., classroom training or on- the- job experience (OJE) in the private for-profit sector) as funding permits.

While realizing some seniors may not be best suited for many of the manufacturing and technology jobs in the state, there will be other opportunities for mature workers to "back fill" jobs in industries showing significant growth. Alabama SCSEP plans to partner regionally with local community colleges to create training programs for mature workers that will provide the skills necessary to obtain employment in the health care field, where huge manpower shortages already exist.

Alabama's continued economic growth cannot be realized without including mature workers in workforce planning and training efforts.

B. SERVICE DELIVERY AND COORDINATION

1. A DESCRIPTION OF ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER PROGRAMS. THIS MAY ALTERNATIVELY BE DISCUSSED IN THE STATE STRATEGIES SECTION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN, BUT REGARDLESS OF PLACEMENT IN DOCUMENT, MUST INCLUDE:

A. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE ACTIVITIES OF SCSEP GRANTEES WITH WIOA TITLE I PROGRAMS, INCLUDING PLANS FOR USING THE WIOA ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM AND ITS PARTNERS TO SERVE INDIVIDUALS AGED 55 AND OLDER. (20 CFR 641.302(G), 641.325(E))

Planned actions to coordinate activities of SCSEP with WIOA Title I programs

SCSEP is a mandated WIOA partner. Alabama's SCSEP looks forward to continuing our coordination and collaboration with Alabama's WIOA during the next four years by looking to implement the following strategies to benefit SCSEP participants:

1. Work with WIOA partners, faith-based and community organizations to identify financial assistance and financial planning supportive services for SCSEP participants;

2. Work with the WIOA and One Stop System to identify senior user-friendly technology and identify resources to secure the technology, such as WorkKeys, as a career readiness tool for participants;

3. Work with WIOA partners, faith-based and community organizations to identify and encourage SCSEP participant participation in work-related training and education activities;

4. Identify literacy resources in Alabama and work to build partnerships and improve coordination of these resources with WIOA and SCSEP; encourage participation by SCSEP participants in these programs.

B. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE ACTIVITIES OF SCSEP GRANTEES WITH THE ACTIVITIES BEING CARRIED OUT IN THE STATE UNDER THE OTHER TITLES OF THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT (OAA). (20 CFR 641.302(H))

SCSEP sub-grantees are co-located with the Area Agencies on Aging and the Regional Planning and Development Commissions/Councils of Governments (COGs). The AAAs and Regional Commissions/COG's have a network of partners, stakeholders, sub-grantees and member governments which are ideal locations for training and employment. A traditional partnership is reflected in the United Way Agencies that have been a major source of both training and employment. New and emerging partners are the community foundations which are assuming a regional character that approximate the regional service areas of AAAs and Regional Commissions/COG's. The community foundations are creating networks of partnerships which they fund; that overlap the SCSEP, AAA, Regional Commission and COG partnerships and have the potential of being a source for training and employment. SCSEP is a part of an emerging trend of regionalism and networking that has become the new template for both public and nonprofit agencies.

The purpose of SCSEP is to provide training opportunities for older individuals who want to re-enter the workforce. Gaining additional or enhanced job skills improves their employability. Job training is provided by host agencies that are either 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organizations or government agencies. SCSEP provides valuable training opportunities while increasing the capacity of these host agencies to fulfill their missions.

The mission and goals of SCSEP and its many host agencies overlap the mission and outreach of other OAA funded activities and programs. For example, one of the primary missions of OAA funded entities is to be the single-point-of-entry (or "no wrong door") for older or disabled consumers. Frequently, consumers have needs that can only be met monetarily. The network of host agencies working with SCSEP enhances the capacity of the aging network to meet these needs and make good referrals to host agencies that may provide direct or indirect financial assistance. In addition, the consumer may see employment as an option to meet income needs.

Many OAA activities are coordinated under the Aging & Disability Resource Center, (ADRC) including training, cross-training, and outreach. The following actions will be taken to enhance the partnership between OAA (ACL, CMS) funded programs, host agencies, and other community partners:

***Goal*:** To coordinate SCSEP activities with the activities of other OAA funded programs

Objective 1: ADSS will take the lead to encourage intra-agency cross-training that will increase staff members' knowledge of all OAA funded programs and activities, thereby increasing the coordination of services and activities.

Objective 1.1: ADSS will continue to develop training materials for each OAA funded program.

Objective 1.2: ADSS will provide cross-training opportunities and also develop testing to gauge the success of cross-training. Training may be in the form of webinars, seminars, joint-program meetings, etc. Testing may be web-based, multiple choice, standardized, or other forms.

Objective 1.3: ADSS will implement team meetings as needed, where Project Directors, Host Agency Supervisors, Fiscal Directors, and other staff can discuss planned activities, program needs, and participant needs.

By facilitating communication among programs and program coordinators, Alabama SCSEP will ensure that activities get the maximum "bang for the buck." For example, if the State Health Insurance Program (SHIP) is planning an outreach, then SCSEP can participate in this outreach or, at the very least, provide intake forms or materials for distribution to its target population. Another example: if SCSEP is planning a job fair and wants assistance with publicity, the nutrition program can include a flier to the senior center managers or include an article in the monthly nutrition newsletter.

Objective 2: ADSS will take the lead to encourage inter-agency cross training among its major partners.

All grantees will continue to develop partnerships and collaborate with other public and private entities that bring quality and valuable resources to the table, for the benefit of the participants. We have working relationships with faith-based organizations in the community serving low-income individuals who need supportive services, including training and employment. As we learn of other agencies that benefit our participants, we will engage with them to establish partnerships that advance each of our missions.

C. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER PRIVATE AND PUBLIC ENTITIES AND PROGRAMS THAT PROVIDE SERVICES TO OLDER AMERICANS, SUCH AS COMMUNITY AND FAITH- BASED ORGANIZATIONS, TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS, AND PROGRAMS FOR THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS OR DISABILITIES. (20 CFR 641.302(I))

Alabama SCSEP will continue to coordinate with partner agencies to enhance services to older Alabamians. Some examples of programs and partners that serve our seniors include the following:

The Alabama Department of Human Resources operates the JOBS Program to help recipients of Family Assistance (FA) find and keep jobs. This includes supportive services such as transportation and clothes. This help is available to all recipients of FA regardless of age. In addition, many counties have a JOBS Task Force where they pull together civic and faith-based groups, employment agencies and employers to help individuals get jobs. These groups are open to any interested individual, program or agency and participation is encouraged.

Job readiness classes funded by DHR are available in a variety of counties and are open to anyone below 200% of the federal poverty line. These classes vary in length from a few days to four weeks and cover a wide range of topics. Emphasis is on how to find a job and the soft skills needed to keep a job.

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) is the designated state unit recognized by the Federal Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) to deliver independent living (IL) services to older adults who are blind and/or deaf in the State of Alabama. ADRS has a long history of providing rehabilitation teaching services for seniors who are blind. Within ADRS, the Older Alabamians System of Information and Services Program, referred to as the OASIS Program, provides IL services to older adults with visual impairments.

The OASIS Program is designed to meet the needs of both rural and urban segments of the population of elders who are visually impaired throughout Alabama.

The overall goal of the OASIS Program is to enhance the level of independence among the State's elderly population who are blind or visually impaired. To be eligible for the OASIS program individuals must be age 55 or older, reside in the State of Alabama, and be blind or functionally visually impaired.

Vocational Rehabilitation Service (VRS), the largest division within the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, helps Alabamians with disabilities achieve independence through employment. VRS provides specialized employment and education related services and training to assist adults with disabilities in becoming employed.

To be eligible for VRS services, individuals must have a physical or mental impairment that is a substantial impediment to employment and must be able to benefit from services in terms of going to work. For Alabamians with disabilities, VRS represents much more than a monetary return. Much like the SCSEP program, VRS helps participants gain employment, which creates pride, dignity and in

The Governor's Office of Volunteer Service coordinates the AmeriCorps State program and works closely with local faith-based and community organizations particularly those involved in disaster preparedness and response. Through the network of AmeriCorps State programs annually hundreds of volunteers are engaged in communities across Alabama serving to meet critical needs.

AmeriCorps programs engage people of all ages and they actively recruit people with disabilities. Other national service programs operating in the State of Alabama include Senior Corps and AmeriCorps VISTA.

D. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER LABOR MARKET AND JOB TRAINING INITIATIVES. (20 CFR 641.302(J))

Older workers and the pre-existing programs authorized under the Older Americans Act (OAA), including Alabama's SCSEP, are now considered part of Alabama's comprehensive workforce development system. Alabama's SCSEP is an integral partner in the Alabama workforce development delivery system. This participation offers an unprecedented opportunity to assess the needs of mature and older workers in a unified and coordinated manner, at a time when those workers represent a dominant portion of the workforce.

For those who need to remain part of (and even participate in training and retraining activities) the state's civilian labor force, their ability to use the workforce development system effectively will be critical to improving their skills and remaining in the labor force at levels enough to support their income needs as well as the needs of employers. SCSEP plans to continue participation in Alabama's labor market and job training initiatives

E. ACTIONS TO ENSURE THAT SCSEP IS AN ACTIVE PARTNER IN THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM AND THE STEPS THE STATE WILL TAKE TO ENCOURAGE AND IMPROVE COORDINATION WITH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM. (20 CFR 641.335)

All SCSEP operators in Alabama shall, to the extent feasible, establish and maintain cooperative relationships and working linkages with other employment and training programs, to include activities conducted under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and with affiliated agencies concerned with senior citizens. A major objective of coordination is to avoid the duplication of services and expand employment opportunities for senior workers. It is also desirable to provide a variety of services and training opportunities that respond to the needs of senior workers by linking them with services and programs provided by the Area Agencies on Aging.

To make certain the State Plan is inclusive and as comprehensive as possible, organizations engaged in older worker activities and employment services for older workers were invited to provide information on their activities that would be pertinent to workforce development. Local senior worker programs will be encouraged to work collaboratively with One-Stop Centers to maximize the effectiveness of the training and placement process.

ADSS is a partner in the Workforce Investment Board's delivery of workforce development services. Entities responsible for WIOA activities will continue collaborating to create a delivery system that enhances access to services and improves employment outcomes for individuals receiving those services. SCSEP participants train at many of our One Stop Career Centers. Several of our SCSEP project directors are represented on the local boards. The WIOA included SCSEP as a required partner in the One Stop delivery system to ensure older workers have access to information about the range of employment related services available to them.

An "umbrella" or "blanket" Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is being used to define the roles and responsibilities of the Career Center (One-Stop) partner agencies for the provision and improvement of employment and training services to Alabama citizens residing within the 65 county Alabama Workforce Investment Area (AWIA). The MOU is between the Alabama Local Workforce Investment Board and the Career Center partners, including ADSS. It establishes guidelines for the partners to create and maintain cooperative working relationships. The blanket MOU, being more general in nature, works best to set direction while allowing flexibility.

The WIOA intends that all job seekers and persons looking to further their careers will be able to access the employment, education, training, and information services they need at Career Centers in their neighborhoods. The Centers offer core services (available to all adults with no eligibility requirements), intensive services (available to those individuals who are unable to find jobs through core services alone), and training services. In this age of limited resources, it is essential for programs to ensure they are not duplicating the efforts of others and are using funds in the most effective and efficient manner. Some of the ways our programs cooperate to provide the best employment services possible for the older population are through joint planning sessions, information sharing, recruitment, cross referral of training, joint training, and development of a network of community service providers for older persons.

F. EFFORTS TO WORK WITH LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICES IN RURAL LOCATIONS.

Forty-five percent of the state's SCSEP-eligible population is rural. SCSEP's definition of *rural* is based on Rural Urban Commuting Area (RUCA) codes, defined at the census tract level. Forty-three of Alabama's 67 counties have 100 percent rural populations.

Grantees' greatest obstacles to providing SCSEP services in rural areas and assisting participants to find unsubsidized jobs are all related to shortages: of resources, services, and jobs, particularly in more isolated areas.

Alabama SCSEP sub-grantees have well-established partnerships with local Chambers of Commerce. Sub-grantees often attend meetings in order to network with local business representatives. Through training provided by Senior Service America, sub-grantees regularly get on a Chamber's agenda to engage employers by promoting both SCSEP and job ready participants.

All SCSEP Grantees in Alabama use local project directors to network with employers, business organizations, and community groups.

2. THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR ENGAGING EMPLOYERS TO DEVELOP AND PROMOTE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PLACEMENT OF SCSEP PARTICIPANTS IN UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT. (20 CFR 641.302(E)) (MAY ALTERNATIVELY BE DISCUSSED IN THE STATE STRATEGIES SECTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN.)

Engaging Employers

Alabama SCSEP sub-grantees have well-established partnerships with local Chambers of Commerce. Sub-grantees often attend meetings in order to network with local business representatives. Through training provided by Senior Service America, sub-grantees regularly get on a Chamber's agenda to engage employers by promoting both SCSEP and job ready participants.

Other employer outreach training provided to sub-grantees focuses on showing how to approach the hidden job market by establishing relationships with their local, county and state economic development councils and accessing their press releases of future or growing business announcements. ADSS staff trains sub-grantees to approach these employers with the goal of establishing relationships as business partners. Job Development training of sub-grantees will remain multi-focused. One area of focus will continue to promote the identification and targeting of local employers by using the internet, especially in rural areas. Another focus will be on the basics of how to conduct employer outreach. The training to be provided includes group activities, role plays, and videos about job development. Another area of focus will be to provide technical assistance geared towards developing advanced networking skills of both sub-grantees and SCSEP participants.

Furthermore, as we increase employer engagement, SCSEP will also increase exploration of on-the-job-experience (OJE) as a method of expanding employer engagement. While OJE has not been widely utilized by our sub-grantees in the past, the Program Officers will actively promote OJE as a tool for sub-grantees to use in future program years to gain more unsubsidized jobs for participant job seekers.

Preparing Participants for Unsubsidized Employment

SCSEP Program Officers will further expand sub-grantees capabilities to use a multi-pronged approach to prepare participants for unsubsidized jobs. Program Officers develop turnkey tools that a sub-grantee can use when meeting with participants. For example, a presentation has been developed on how to navigate a job fair that a sub-grantee can deliver at a participant meeting. Additionally, Program Officers provide sample agendas and activities, as well as facilitate job club meetings at sub-grantee locations. Program Officers are often asked to present at participant meetings. Topics may vary and can include interviewing techniques, résumé writing tips, approaching the hidden job market, using social media in a job search and completing online job applications.

Employer Outreach Staffing

All SCSEP Grantees in Alabama use local project directors to network with employers, business organizations, and community groups.

Seeing Employers as Customers

To bridge the divide between the business and education/social service spheres, Grantees emphasize their commitment to assisting employers to find and hire workers with the needed skills and qualities. They ask employers to describe the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and qualities they are looking for in new hires. Grantees may also consult with employers about how SCSEP can bypass job application hurdles. Understanding the hiring process helps build relationships over time with private sector employers in local targeted industries. Grantees also promote the qualities possessed by many older job seekers that employers seek:

- Commitment to doing quality work;
- Strong customer service orientation;
- Getting along with other employees;
- Dependability;
- Able to pass a drug test; and
- Willingness to learn.

Once employers' needs are defined, staff evaluate whether any area participants have the needed skills and are job-ready. If so, they are able to promote the skills and competence of participants as trained workers who will add value to the company.

Strategies for Engaging Employers

Alabama SCSEP Grantees will carry out the following actions:

Pursue partnerships with employers that:

1. Are host agencies that may have job openings for individuals with the same or similar skill requirements;
2. Have successfully employed participants;
3. Are interested in hiring older workers, based on the local knowledge of Boards, business organizations, and others in the community; or
4. Are identified in online labor market information as major employers in local targeted industries.
5. Attend Chamber of Commerce and board meetings and other economic development organizations when possible to:
6. Expand their employer networks;
7. Find out which employers are hiring; and

8. Contact employers to find out the skills and qualities needed to be successful in these jobs.

3. THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR SERVING MINORITY OLDER INDIVIDUALS UNDER SCSEP. (20 CFR 641.302 (C))

Targeted recruitment efforts must be incorporated into program operations to increase minority enrollments if identified as a concern based on data contained in the quarterly progress report. Additional recruitment efforts in minority communities could include advertising in minority newspapers, canvassing local venues to promote the program by displaying brochures or posting fliers, speaking to minority groups and organizations, and communicating with faith-based organizations that are frequented by minority members of the community.

To address underservice and disparities in outcomes, Senior Service America developed its *Analysis of Sub-grantee Service to Minorities* in PY17. This report provides, at the sub-grantee level, the breakdown of service to minorities by race and ethnicity. Specifically, it reports (1) the number served during a specific time period, (2) the Census Bureau's estimate of SCSEP-eligible people by subgroup, (3) the SCSEP percent served by subgroup, (4) the numerical difference between the SCSEP-eligible percent and those served by subgroup, and (5) subgroups who are notably underserved. This report provides an easy-to-understand and data-rich analysis of where the sub-grantee needs to focus. Further, it facilitates more focused dialogue and recommended actions between Senior Service America and sub-grantee staff. Staff and sub-grantee reaction to the report has been positive and they indicate that it is making a difference. As one staff said, ensuring service to minorities "has become a much bigger focus for me this year over the prior year. With the newly developed reports, it has allowed me to provide more detailed and informed assistance to sub-grantees individually and in group meetings." This tool enables grantee staff to provide its sub-grantees more support and targeted enrollment technical assistance.

Some of the interventions that have resulted in increased service to minorities that are being replicated include: use of multi-lingual participant staff (e.g., Spanish), enlisting and partnering with host agencies that serve underserved subgroups and referral programs among current participants who are part of an underserved subgroup. One sub-grantee asked its minority participants to refer family members and friends who might qualify for SCSEP. Similar interventions are being implemented to promote employment among minority SCSEP participants. Specifically, we are promoting job development and job fairs that focus on minority-owned businesses and inviting minority business persons to speak at SCSEP workshops.

4. A LIST OF COMMUNITY SERVICES THAT ARE NEEDED AND THE PLACES WHERE THESE SERVICES ARE MOST NEEDED. SPECIFICALLY, THE PLAN MUST ADDRESS THE NEEDS AND LOCATION OF THOSE INDIVIDUALS MOST IN NEED OF COMMUNITY SERVICES AND THE GROUPS WORKING TO MEET THEIR NEEDS. (20 CFR 641.330)

SCSEP sub-grantees are co-located with the Area Agencies on Aging and the Regional Planning and Development Commissions/Councils of Governments (COGs). The AAAs and Regional Commissions/COG's have a network of partners, stakeholders, sub-grantees and member governments which are ideal locations for training and employment. A traditional partnership is reflected in the United Way Agencies that have been a major source of both training and employment. New and emerging partners are the community foundations which are assuming a regional character that approximate the regional service areas of AAAs and Regional Commissions/COG's. The community foundations are creating networks of partnerships which

they fund; that overlap the SCSEP, AAA, Regional Commission and COG partnerships and have the potential of being a source for training and employment. SCSEP is a part of an emerging trend of regionalism and networking that has become the new template for both public and nonprofit agencies.

5. THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY TO IMPROVE SCSEP SERVICES, INCLUDING PLANNED LONG-TERM CHANGES TO THE DESIGN OF THE PROGRAM WITHIN THE STATE, AND PLANNED CHANGES IN THE USE OF SCSEP GRANTEES AND PROGRAM OPERATORS TO BETTER ACHIEVE THE GOALS OF THE PROGRAM. THIS MAY INCLUDE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT AS APPROPRIATE. (20 CFR 641.302(K))

Over the next four years Alabama SCSEP Grantees will work collaboratively to

consider practical approaches to address challenges in recruiting most-in-need individuals as well as best practices for preparing these individuals for unsubsidized employment. Below are some examples of strategies that will be used:

- Grantees will seek to establish semi-annual collaboration meetings with other national grantees with the goal of sharing best practices, identifying challenges and developing strategies to overcome those challenges.
- Grantees will seek to improve participation and coordination of services between SCSEP and One-Stop Career Center partners.
- Grantees will identify and provide additional training opportunities and resources for participants, thus better preparing participants for entry into unsubsidized employment.
- Grantees will continue to be an active WIOA partner and advocate for meaningful services for the seniors of Alabama.

All national grantees and sub-grantees in Alabama remain committed to fulfilling SCSEP's dual mission of fostering individual and economic self-sufficiency as well as providing community service opportunities for those that we serve.

6. THE STATE'S STRATEGY FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN THE LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE FOR SCSEP PARTICIPANTS' ENTRY INTO UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT, AND TO ACHIEVE, AT A MINIMUM, THE LEVELS SPECIFIED IN OAA SECTION 513(A)(2)(E)(II). (20 CFR 641.302(F))

In keeping with the DOL's principle of continuous improvement, Alabama SCSEP will strive to increase our "Entered Employment, 2nd Quarter" rate by 5% each program year through 2019. Additionally, Alabama will make every effort to meet the higher of the state and national goals each program year.

In order to meet and exceed our goals, Alabama SCSEP will continue to develop new relationships, as well as foster current relationships, with local and national employers throughout Alabama. Sub-grantees will work to educate employers on balancing their workforce needs with the "aging workforce". Efforts will also be made to identify and train local HR Managers and their staff on "The Myths of Hiring Older Workers", thus allowing them to become engaged with our mission to find employment opportunities for SCSEP participants'.

Alabama SCSEP will employ a variety of means to monitor and achieve state and national goals, such as providing ongoing and continuous training for sub-grantee staff as well as using a variety of management reports to track progress. Some of the strategies sub-grantees in Alabama use to place participants in unsubsidized employment are:

- Offering job-seeking skills training courses
- Enforcing job search requirements and written IEP's
- Contacting participants with job leads
- Ensuring quality training is being provided through host agency assignments
- Requiring participants to register and be screened for WIOA Title I services at local One-Stop Career Centers
- Requiring participants to attend local job fairs

Grantees will continuously monitor the performance of sub-grantees regarding unsubsidized placement. Sub-grantees identified as at risk for not meeting this performance measure will be provided additional technical assistance and training specific to identifying "job ready" participants and how best to identify unsubsidized employment opportunities.

C. LOCATION AND POPULATION SERVED, INCLUDING EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION

1. A DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCALITIES AND POPULATIONS FOR WHICH PROJECTS OF THE TYPE AUTHORIZED BY TITLE V ARE MOST NEEDED. (20 CFR 641.325 (D))

Alabama is comprised of sixty-seven counties with a 2017 population estimate of 4,850,771 residents. The most populated counties include Jefferson, Mobile, Madison, Montgomery, and Shelby County. Twenty of the 67 counties in Alabama meet the threshold for persistent unemployment, which is met when the annual average unemployment rate for a county is more than twenty percent higher than the national average for two out of the last three years. The following counties have persistent unemployment indicating a significant barrier to employment:

Barbour County - AL
Bullock County - AL
Butler County - AL
Calhoun County - AL
Choctaw County - AL
Clarke County - AL
Conecuh County - AL
Dallas County - AL
Greene County - AL
Hale County - AL

Barbour County - AL
Lowndes County - AL
Macon County - AL
Marengo County - AL
Mobile County - AL
Monroe County - AL
Perry County - AL
Pickens County - AL
Sumter County - AL
Washington County - AL
Wilcox County - AL

Rural Areas

Forty-five percent of the state's SCSEP-eligible population is rural. SCSEP's definition of *rural* is based on Rural Urban Commuting Area (RUCA) codes, defined at the census tract level. Forty-three of Alabama's 67 counties have 100 percent rural populations.

Rural Service Delivery Challenges and Strategies to Address These Challenges

Grantees' greatest obstacles to providing SCSEP services in rural areas and assisting participants to find unsubsidized jobs are all related to shortages: of resources, services, and jobs, particularly in more isolated areas.

Lack of Adequate Transportation

Lack of adequate transportation significantly hinders SCSEP service delivery in rural areas. Area Agencies on Aging have identified transportation as the number one priority need for seniors in their annual plans. The minimal transportation available in small towns is on-demand assistance geared toward persons with disabilities and to taking people to doctor appointments.

Although the majority of SCSEP participants drive their own cars, for those who do not have cars or are no longer able to drive, the lack of transportation poses a significant barrier to SCSEP participation and to finding and retaining unsubsidized employment.

Strategies that Grantees will employ to address rural transportation needs include the following:

- Seek to place participants and rotate participants in community service assignments as close as possible to their residences.
- Seek host agency assignments that have transportation resources. Grantees will contact school districts and child care networks/facilities to determine in which rural areas the school bus is a feasible alternative. For example, if community service assignments with a school district or child care facility are feasible and appropriate for participants' career goals, Grantees will seek to negotiate with agencies to enable participants to use the same bus or van transportation provided for children to travel to and from their community service assignments Faith-based organizations providing community services may be able to serve as host agencies and provide transportation.

2. LIST THE CITIES AND COUNTIES WHERE THE PROJECT WILL BE CONDUCTED. INCLUDE THE NUMBER OF SCSEP AUTHORIZED POSITIONS AND INDICATE WHERE THE POSITIONS CHANGED FROM THE PRIOR YEAR.

	PY 19 Total ED Based on Census	PY 19 State Allocation	PY 18 State Allocations	PY18-PY19 Change	PY 19 National Grantee Allocation	PY 18 National Grantee Allocation	PY18-PY19 Change
Alabama	**745**	**152**	**151**	1	**593**	**592**	**1**
Autauga County, Alabama	6	0	0	0	6	6	**0**
Baldwin County, Alabama	22	5	5	0	17	17	**0**
Barbour County, Alabama	5	0	0	0	5	5	**0**
Bibb County, Alabama	4	0	0	0	4	4	**0**
Blount County, Alabama	9	2	2	0	7	7	**0**
Bullock County, Alabama	2	0	0	0	2	2	**0**
Butler County, Alabama	5	0	0	0	5	5	**0**
Calhoun County, Alabama	21	5	5	0	16	16	**0**
Chambers	9	3	3	0	6	6	**0**

	PY 19 Total ED Based on Census	PY 19 State Allocation	PY 18 State Allocations	PY18-PY19 Change	PY 19 National Grantee Allocation	PY 18 National Grantee Allocation	PY18-PY19 Change
County, Alabama							
Cherokee County, Alabama	5	0	0	0	5	5	**0**
Chilton County, Alabama	7	2	2	0	5	5	**0**
Choctaw County, Alabama	4	2	2	0	2	2	**0**
Clarke County, Alabama	6	2	2	0	4	4	**0**
Clay County, Alabama	3	0	0	0	3	3	**0**
Cleburne County, Alabama	3	0	0	0	3	3	**0**
Coffee County, Alabama	8	3	3	0	5	5	**0**
Colbert County, Alabama	9	2	2	0	7	7	**0**
Conecuh County, Alabama	4	0	0	0	4	4	**0**
Coosa County, Alabama	2	0	0	0	2	2	**0**
Covington County, Alabama	7	2	2	0	5	5	**0**
Crenshaw County, Alabama	4	0	0	0	4	4	**0**
Cullman County, Alabama	15	3	3	0	12	12	**0**
Dale County, Alabama	8	2	2	0	6	6	**0**

	PY 19 Total ED Based on Census	PY 19 State Allocation	PY 18 State Allocations	PY18-PY19 Change	PY 19 National Grantee Allocation	PY 18 National Grantee Allocation	PY18-PY19 Change
Dallas County, Alabama	11	3	3	0	8	8	**0**
DeKalb County, Alabama	14	3	3	0	11	11	**0**
Elmore County, Alabama	7	0	0	0	7	7	**0**
Escambia County, Alabama	8	2	2	0	6	6	**0**
Etowah County, Alabama	20	5	5	0	15	15	**0**
Fayette County, Alabama	3	0	0	0	3	3	**0**
Franklin County, Alabama	5	0	0	0	5	5	**0**
Geneva County, Alabama	6	2	2	0	4	4	**0**
Greene County, Alabama	4	2	2	0	2	2	**0**
Hale County, Alabama	3	0	0	0	3	3	**0**
Henry County, Alabama	5	3	3	0	2	2	**0**
Houston County, Alabama	16	5	5	0	11	11	**0**
Jackson County, Alabama	11	2	2	0	9	9	**0**
Jefferson County, Alabama	98	24	23	1	74	73	**1**

	PY 19 Total ED Based on Census	PY 19 State Allocation	PY 18 State Allocations	PY18-PY19 Change	PY 19 National Grantee Allocation	PY 18 National Grantee Allocation	PY18-PY19 Change
Lamar County, Alabama	4	2	2	0	2	2	**0**
Lauderdale County, Alabama	14	3	3	0	11	11	**0**
Lawrence County, Alabama	6	0	0	0	6	6	**0**
Lee County, Alabama	15	3	3	0	12	12	**0**
Limestone County, Alabama	10	2	2	0	8	8	**0**
Lowndes County, Alabama	3	0	0	0	3	3	**0**
Macon County, Alabama	5	2	2	0	3	3	**0**
Madison County, Alabama	31	5	5	0	26	26	**0**
Marengo County, Alabama	6	2	2	0	4	4	**0**
Marion County, Alabama	6	2	2	0	4	4	**0**
Marshall County, Alabama	15	2	2	0	13	13	**0**
Mobile County, Alabama	66	15	15	0	51	51	**0**
Monroe County, Alabama	7	2	2	0	5	5	**0**
Montgomery County, Alabama	27	0	0	0	27	27	**0**
Morgan	17	5	5	0	12	12	**0**

	PY 19 Total ED Based on Census	PY 19 State Allocation	PY 18 State Allocations	PY18-PY19 Change	PY 19 National Grantee Allocation	PY 18 National Grantee Allocation	PY18-PY19 Change
County, Alabama							
Perry County, Alabama	4	0	0	0	4	4	**0**
Pickens County, Alabama	6	2	2	0	4	4	**0**
Pike County, Alabama	6	0	0	0	6	6	**0**
Randolph County, Alabama	5	0	0	0	5	5	**0**
Russell County, Alabama	12	2	2	0	10	10	**0**
St. Clair County, Alabama	13	2	2	0	11	11	**0**
Shelby County, Alabama	14	3	3	0	11	11	**0**
Sumter County, Alabama	4	2	2	0	2	2	**0**
Talladega County, Alabama	15	2	2	0	13	13	**0**
Tallapoosa County, Alabama	8	0	0	0	8	8	**0**
Tuscaloosa County, Alabama	22	5	5	0	17	17	**0**
Walker County, Alabama	13	3	3	0	10	10	**0**
Washington County, Alabama	3	0	0	0	3	3	**0**
Wilcox County,	4	2	2	0	2	2	**0**

	PY 19 Total ED Based on Census	PY 19 State Allocation	PY 18 State Allocations	PY18-PY19 Change	PY 19 National Grantee Allocation	PY 18 National Grantee Allocation	PY18-PY19 Change
Alabama							
Winston County, Alabama	5	0	0	0	5	5	**0**

3. DESCRIBE CURRENT SLOT IMBALANCES AND PROPOSED STEPS TO CORRECT INEQUITIES TO ACHIEVE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION.

SCSEP staff counsel sub-grantees monthly as to the status of the variance and provide technical assistance to ensure that the sub-grantee will serve the number of authorized positions per county by the end of the program year. SCSEP staff confers with sub-grantees on issues related to service such as: recruiting new host agencies; conducting outreach to attract applicants to the program; and figuring out program operations issues that may be impacting enrollment of new participants.

SCSEP staff look to review both the total variance as well as the "snapshot variance" taken from SPARQ at the end of each quarter.

4. THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING AN EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF SCSEP POSITIONS WITHIN THE STATE THAT:

A. MOVES POSITIONS FROM OVER-SERVED TO UNDERSERVED LOCATIONS WITHIN THE STATE IN COMPLIANCE WITH 20 CFR 641.365.

Section 508 of the Older Americans Act (OAA) Amendments requires grantees to seek an equitable distribution of program resources and participant slots throughout the state. Therefore, equitable distribution (ED) is a cooperative effort, and each grantee in the state participates in the process. Alabama fully embraces the equitable distribution of SCSEP positions and has worked closely with the national grantees to implement a plan that addresses under-served and over-served counties in the state.

ED within each state is based on the latest Census information about the percentage of poor elderly in each county. The data comes from the American Community Service (ACS), which incorporates the 2010 Census for population counts and age. The equitable distribution report of SCSEP positions by grantees in the state provides the information needed to assess the location of the eligible population and the current distribution of people being served in Alabama. The report reflects both under-served and over-served areas and contains information on counties served, distribution factors, equitable shares, current number of positions, and increases or decreases in participant slots.

ADSS serves a coordinating role and ensures equitable distribution of employment through SCSEP with the national grantees and local project directors. ADSS allocates SCSEP funds to Councils of Local Government and Area Agencies on Aging for local SCSEP administration.

With the continued cooperation of the national grantees, ADSS will coordinate any slot transfers necessary to meet equitable distribution and will continue to coordinate this process.

Any county slot adjustments will be made only after approval by DOL. ADSS will continue to work with the national grantees to move slots from over-served to under-served counties. Since there are no excessively over-served or under-served counties in Alabama, equitable distribution will be achieved in the time frame required, with no disruption to participants.

B. EQUITABLY SERVES RURAL AND URBAN AREAS.

The State continues to ensure that in selecting eligible individuals for participation in SCSEP, priority is given to individuals who have one or more of the following characteristics:

(1) Are 65 years of age or older;

(2) Have a disability;

(3) Have limited English proficiency or low literacy skills;

(4) Reside in a rural area;

(5) Are veterans (or, in some cases, spouses of veterans);

(6) Have low employment prospects;

(7) Have failed to find employment after using services provided through the One-Stop delivery system; or

(8) Are homeless or are at risk for homelessness.

C. SERVES INDIVIDUALS AFFORDED PRIORITY FOR SERVICE UNDER 20 CFR 641.520. (20 CFR 641.302(A), 641.365, 641.520)

The stipulated priorities are applied in the following order: (1) Persons who qualify as a veteran or qualified spouse under § 2(a) of the Jobs for Veterans Act, 38 U.S.C. 4215(a), and who possess at least one of the other priority characteristics; (2) Persons who qualify as a veteran or qualified spouse under § 2(a) of the Jobs for Veterans Act, 38 U.S.C. 4215(a), who do not possess any other of the priority characteristics; (3) Persons who do not qualify as a veteran or qualified spouse under § 2(a) of the Jobs for Veterans Act (nonveterans), and who possess at least one of the other priority characteristics.

5. THE RATIO OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS IN EACH SERVICE AREA TO THE TOTAL ELIGIBLE POPULATION IN THE STATE. (20 CFR 641.325(A))

Attachment 1 shows the breakdown of SCSEP slots allocated to each Alabama county as compared to the total population of people over the age of 55 who are at or below the Federal poverty line. The SCSEP eligibility age is 55 years of age and older, and this population represents approximately 28% of Alabama's population.

Attachment 1- County Poverty Levels /SCSEP Slots

	All Grantees	State Grantees	National Grantees	Total 55+ Population(a)	Total 55+ Population Under 100% Poverty Level(a)
Alabama	**745**	**152**	**593**	**1,372,772**	**161,898**
Autauga	6	0	6	14313	1164
Baldwin	22	5	17	66465	6180
Barbour	5	0	5	7489	1279
Bibb	4	0	4	5917	751
Blount	9	2	7	17190	1693
Bullock	2	0	2	2950	519
Butler	5	0	5	6423	1148
Calhoun	21	5	16	34293	4183
Chambers	9	3	6	10897	1425
Cherokee	5	0	5	9340	1432
Chilton	7	2	5	12467	1683
Choctaw	4	2	2	4721	670
Clarke	6	2	4	7758	1354
Clay	3	0	3	4380	632
Cleburne	3	0	3	4652	577
Coffee	8	3	5	14265	1284
Colbert	9	2	7	17710	1767
Conecuh	4	0	4	4562	825
Coosa	2	0	2	4103	501
Covington	7	2	5	12654	1535
Crenshaw	4	0	4	4344	655
Cullman	15	3	12	24967	2983
Dale	8	2	6	13782	1646
Dallas	11	3	8	12247	2507
DeKalb	14	3	11	20041	3093
Elmore	7	0	7	20858	1649
Escambia	8	2	6	10579	1633

	All Grantees	State Grantees	National Grantees	Total 55+ Population(a)	Total 55+ Population Under 100% Poverty Level(a)
Etowah	20	5	15	31908	3721
Fayette	3	0	3	5622	728
Franklin	5	0	5	8681	969
Geneva	6	2	4	8634	1060
Greene	4	2	2	2989	681
Hale	3	0	3	4722	897
Henry	5	3	2	5898	770
Houston	16	5	11	30560	3321
Jackson	11	2	9	17202	2302
Jefferson	98	24	74	180429	22062
Lamar	4	2	2	4839	753
Lauderdale	14	3	11	29419	2938
Lawrence	6	0	6	10273	1383
Lee	15	3	12	32424	3140
Limestone	10	2	8	24107	2553
Lowndes	3	0	3	3217	625
Macon	5	2	3	6001	1076
Madison	31	5	26	94269	7598
Marengo	6	2	4	6278	1278
Marion	6	2	4	9902	1173
Marshall	15	2	13	26916	3327
Mobile	66	15	51	114236	14686
Monroe	7	2	5	7065	1663
Montgomery	27	0	27	58119	6472
Morgan	17	5	12	34577	3896
Perry	4	0	4	2905	863
Pickens	6	2	4	6275	1046
Pike	6	0	6	8205	1088

	All Grantees	State Grantees	National Grantees	Total 55+ Population(a)	Total 55+ Population Under 100% Poverty Level(a)
Randolph	5	0	5	7467	1032
Russell	12	2	10	14461	2221
St. Clair	13	2	11	24578	2806
Shelby	14	3	11	54489	3307
Sumter	4	2	2	3884	948
Talladega	15	2	13	23997	3172
Tallapoosa	8	0	8	13909	1766
Tuscaloosa	22	5	17	47532	4259
Walker	13	3	10	20567	2801
Washington	3	0	3	5230	931
Wilcox	4	2	2	3366	758
Winston	5	0	5	8253	1060

6. THE RELATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO:

A. RESIDE IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS WITHIN THE STATE

About 90% of Alabama's total land surface is considered rural, with 43 of 67 counties counting being classified as rural. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, 41% of the total population lives in these rural areas.

It is the goal of all grantees operating the SCSEP program in Alabama to serve rural and urban areas equitably. While we are managing to provide services in each of the rural counties we serve, it is becoming increasingly more of an issue, due to the economy. More time is required to work with those residing in rural counties, due to the increased travel time needed to reach these participants. We are working to partner with community-based organizations and state agencies in rural areas to provide services that would benefit our seniors.

Because education is a key element to gainful employment, we will encourage partnerships with universities, community colleges, and local communities to work with sub-grantees in rural areas to provide better training mechanisms, including online classes and distance learning. A major focus will include changing the public's negative attitude and stereotypes about older workers through education and best practices programs; and promoting the advantages of hiring older workers, especially in rural areas, to public and private sector employers.

Rural and urban SCSEP participants in Alabama need greater transportation options. Access to transportation has a direct impact on a participant's ability to secure and retain employment.

In a related initiative dealing with rural/urban populations, ADSS is working with the Federal Transportation Administration on the United We Ride (UWR) program, because transportation is a huge barrier for seniors in general and particularly for low income seniors who want to work.

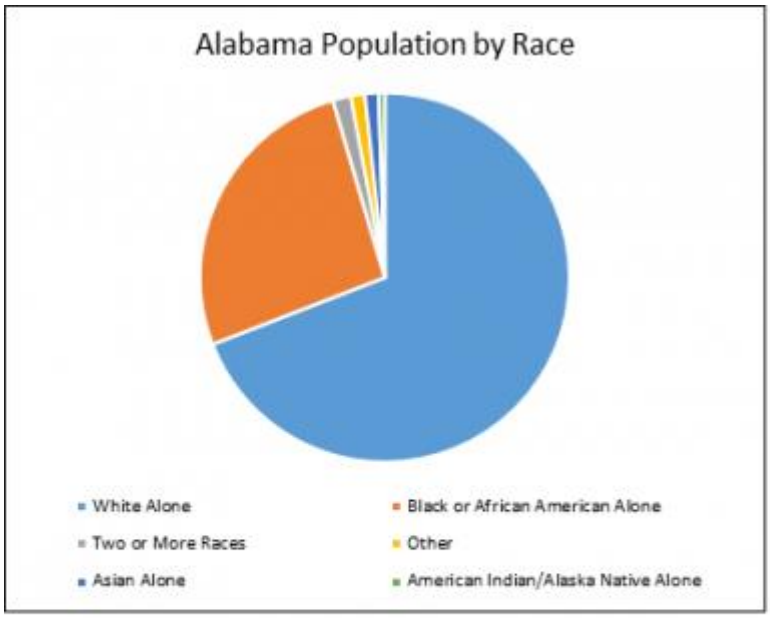
B. HAVE THE GREATEST ECONOMIC NEED

Greatest economic need means the need resulting from an income level at or below the poverty guidelines established by the Department of Health and Human Services and approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). (42 U.S.C. 3002(23).)

- According to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 18.9% of individuals in Alabama were below the federal poverty level, as compared to 15.6% nationally. The average monthly earnings in 2017 for people in Alabama was $3,626 as compared to $4,457 nationally.
- For Alabamians over 55 years of age, the most recent numbers report that 11.4% percent are at or below 100% of the Federal poverty line.

C. ARE MINORITIES

- According to the Resident Population by Race and State 2017 Census Statistics, the race of Alabama residents is broken up by the following:



Alabama Population by Race	
White Alone	3327891
Black or African American Alone	1269808

Alabama Population by Race	
Two or More Races	76428
Other	58618
Asian Alone	58322
American Indian/Alaska Native Alone	25181

*2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, African American's represent 26.5% of the state's population, however the concentration of African Americans in certain counties over others shows the significant differences in geographic distribution of the population by race.

The Asian population in Alabama remains low at 1.2% across the state.

D. ARE LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT

- This population has not been active in SCSEP in Alabama, with 1% of the population currently being served in the state being classified as limited English proficiency.

E. HAVE THE GREATEST SOCIAL NEED. (20 CFR 641.325(B))

The State continues to ensure that in selecting eligible individuals for participation in SCSEP, priority is given to individuals who have one or more of the following characteristics:

(1) Are 65 years of age or older;

(2) Have a disability;

(3) Have limited English proficiency or low literacy skills;

(4) Reside in a rural area;

(5) Are veterans (or, in some cases, spouses of veterans);

(6) Have low employment prospects;

(7) Have failed to find employment after using services provided through the One-Stop delivery system; or

(8) Are homeless or are at risk for homelessness.

The stipulated priorities are applied in the following order: (1) Persons who qualify as a veteran or qualified spouse under § 2(a) of the Jobs for Veterans Act, 38 U.S.C. 4215(a), and who possess at least one of the other priority characteristics; (2) Persons who qualify as a veteran or qualified spouse under § 2(a) of the Jobs for Veterans Act, 38 U.S.C. 4215(a), who do not possess any other of the priority characteristics; (3) Persons who do not qualify as a veteran or qualified spouse under § 2(a) of the Jobs for Veterans Act (nonveterans), and who possess at least one of the other priority characteristics.

Within this criteria, persons with the greatest social needs are served.

7. A DESCRIPTION OF THE STEPS TAKEN TO AVOID DISRUPTIONS TO THE GREATEST EXTENT POSSIBLE, WHEN POSITIONS ARE REDISTRIBUTED, AS PROVIDED IN 20 CFR 641.365; WHEN

NEW CENSUS OR OTHER RELIABLE DATA BECOME AVAILABLE; OR WHEN THERE IS OVER-ENROLLMENT FOR ANY OTHER REASON. (20 CFR 641.325(I), 641.302(B))

Older individuals often feel vulnerable during times of change. SCSEP grantees in Alabama will make every effort to avoid participant disruptions by reassuring participants and their host agencies that a change of grantee in a particular area will not affect participants' SCSEP enrollment. Although the schedule for participants' receipt of their paychecks may vary somewhat from Grantee to Grantee, the mailing and direct deposit of participant paychecks will continue on a regular, dependable schedule.

Changes in Grantee and/or Grantee Service Area

DOL allocates SCSEP-subsidized community service positions to each county using a formula based on the number of individuals ages 55 and older with incomes at or below 125 percent of the federal poverty level in each county. Participants may need to be transferred to a different Grantee if Grantees agree to trade counties to consolidate their service areas and improve the efficiency of their operations.

National Grantee service areas are changed or realigned by DOL. When there is a change of Grantee or Grantee service area, the state will proactively seek to avoid a disruption in service for participants and host agencies.

Changes in the Number of Positions in a County

Other situations may occur where positions in a county may need to be increased or reduced over time, including these situations:

- Census updates on SCSEP-eligible population in counties, such as occurred in 2017, affect the equitable share, or number of positions allocated to a county;
- Grantees seek to improve the equitable balance in counties by shifting enrollments from over-served areas to under-served areas.

Strategies to Avoid Participant Disruption

When there is a change in Grantee and/or Grantee service area, the SCSEP State Coordinator will direct the following actions:

- Host a conference call with the grantees involved to ensure that they develop a transition plan and timetable for:
    - informing participants and host agencies in advance;
    - transferring records;
    - holding orientations for participants and host agencies;
    - and supporting continuity in administrative and programmatic functions.

When positions need to be shifted from over-served to under-served counties, Grantees will carry out the following actions:

- Use a gradual approach to redistribute the slots via attrition; and
- Encourage and work intensively to assist job-ready participants in over-served counties to find unsubsidized employment.

A Transition Plan will be implemented that has proven effective in ensuring minimal disruption to participants, host agencies, and the community. Alabama has experience in exchanging

service areas with national sponsors. We have worked through and enjoyed smooth transitions. The process includes Notification of Change, Right of First Refusal, Notification to Participants, Record of Transfer, and Participant Placement.

Primary consideration is given to participants when decisions must be made about re-distribution of program positions. Unsubsidized employment is the optimum method for avoiding disruptions to participants in the program, and this policy is applied to the greatest extent possible.

No participants will be terminated for purposes of moving positions to coincide with any new census data or change in grantees. Instead, increased efforts will be made to assist participants through other local SCSEP sponsors, and to aggressively work with participants to obtain unsubsidized employment.

The state will follow the Department's recommendation of a "gradual shift that encourages participants in subsidized community service assignments to move into unsubsidized employment to make positions available for eligible individuals in the areas where there has been an increase in the eligible population."

In addition, ADSS will not transfer positions from one geographic area to another without collaboration between all grantees and approval by the Department of Labor.

This collaboration between ADSS and national grantees allows for smooth transitions for SCSEP participants, with minimal disruption of service.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR APPENDIX

ALL WIOA CORE PROGRAMS

ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES - ADULT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	77.0%	77.0%	78.0%	78.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	74.0%	74.0%	74.8%	74.8%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$5,900.00	6,364.00	$5,950.00	6,364.00
Credential Attainment Rate	65.0%	70.0%	65.5%	72.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	60.0%	62.5%	60.5%	65.5%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES - DISLOCATED PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	75.0%	76.8%	75.3%	76.8%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	77.0%	79.9%	78.0%	79.9%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$7,500.00	8,174.00	$7,550.00	8,174.00
Credential Attainment Rate	75.0%	77.0%	75.3%	78.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	60.0%	60.0%	60.5%	60.5%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES - YOUTH PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	67.0%	67.0%	67.3%	67.3%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	67.0%	67.0%	67.8%	67.8%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$2,850.00	2,987.00	$2,900.00	2,987.00
Credential Attainment Rate	49.0%	50.0%	49.3%	50.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	49.0%	50.0	49.5%	50.0

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

WAGNER-PEYSER ACT - WAGNER PEYSER PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	65.9%	68.7%	65.9%	68.7%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	64.5%	64.5%	64.5%	64.5%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$4771.10	$4771.10	$4771.10	$4771.10
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM - ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	41.0%	41.0%	42.0%	42.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	42.0%	42.0%	43.0%	43.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$3,845.00	3,845.00	$3,850.00	3,850.00

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Credential Attainment Rate	32.0%	33.0%	33.0%	34.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	36.0%	37.0%	37.0%	38.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM (COMBINED OR GENERAL) - VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	58.0%	58.0%	59.0%	59.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	56.0%	56.0%	57.0%	57.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$3900	$3900	$3950	$3950
Credential Attainment Rate	32.0%	32.0%	33.0%	33.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	43.5%	43.5%	44.0%	44.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]	Not Applicable [1]

1

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being developed and this data will not be entered in the 2022 State Plan modifications.

ADDITIONAL INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE

Additional Indicators of Performance
Not Applicable

Additional Indicators of Performance

OTHER APPENDICES

B. Success Plus Goals by State and Workforce Council Region

Career Cluster	2016	2026	Change	Annual Growth	Annual Growth Openings	Annual Exit Openings	Annual Total Openings	Goal 2019 - 2020
Information Technology	38,240	42,720	4,479	1.11%	450	685	1,130	1,212
Science, Technology, Engineer & Mathematics	34,410	39,300	4,889	1.34%	485	830	1,315	1,204
Health Science	190,320	216,030	25,736	1.28%	2,575	7,345	9,920	6,977
Manufacturing	272,130	298,680	26,551	0.94%	2,655	11,150	13.805	7,735
Architecture & Construction	144,630	155,680	10,747	0.72%	1,075	5,260	6,330	3,536
Finance	68,440	72,100	3,655	0.52%	365	2,340	2,705	1,452
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	188,220	203,010	14,792	0.76%	1,475	8,775	10,250	4,747
Government & Public Administration	16,500	17,430	926	0.55%	90	605	695	308
Human Services	83,110	93,160	10,044	1.15%	1,000	5,495	6,495	2,726
Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security	67,070	69,580	2,511	0.37%	250	2,750	3,000	1,185
Education & Training	140,630	148,830	8,201	0.57%	815	6,345	7,160	2,688
Hospitality & Tourism	239,910	263,070	23,161	0.93%	2,315	18,055	20,370	6,904
Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources	79,940	81,460	1,519	0.19%	150	3,750	3,900	1,105
Business Management & Administration	311,200	315,180	3,981	0.13%	400	14,630	15,030	4,158

Career Cluster	2016	2026	Change	Annual Growth	Annual Growth Openings	Annual Exit Openings	Annual Total Openings	Goal 2019 - 2020
Marketing	242,010	249,310	7,304	0.30%	735	14,840	15,570	3,907
Arts, Audio/Video Technology & Communications	22,550	21,780	-779	-0.35%	0	835	755	155
Career Cluster	2016	2026	Change	Annual Growth	Annual Growth Openings	Annual Exit Openings	Annual Total Openings	Goal 2019 - 2020
Information Technology	14,080	16,300	2,225	1.48%	225	250	470	515
Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics	20,460	23,340	2,885	1.33%	285	490	780	689
Health Science	39,150	44,680	5,529	1.33%	545	1,530	2,075	1,313
Manufacturing	80,530	90,790	10,254	1.21%	1,020	3,345	4,365	2,536
Architecture & Construction	31,800	34,360	2,558	0.78%	255	1,160	1,410	761
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	44,710	47,800	3,083	0.67%	305	2,060	2,365	989
Business Management & Administration	74,890	77,760	2,864	0.38%	285	3,450	3,740	1,298
Human Services	17,470	19,700	2,230	1.21%	225	1,175	1,395	553
Finance	13,380	14,230	855	0.62%	85	470	550	283
Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security	11,580	12,050	463	0.39%	45	495	535	199
Education & Training	27,010	28,530	1,526	0.55%	150	1,185	1,335	544
Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources	27,000	28,060	1,068	0.39%	105	1,290	1,395	469
Hospitality & Tourism	53,930	58,760	4,835	0.86%	485	4,100	4,580	1,377
Arts, Audio/Video	5,150	5,100	-51	-0.10%	0	190	185	50

Career Cluster	2016	2026	Change	Annual Growth	Annual Growth Openings	Annual Exit Openings	Annual Total Openings	Goal 2019 - 2020
Technology & Communications								
Marketing	52,080	53,860	1,784	0.34%	180	3,260	3,440	871
Government & Public Administration	2,810	2,950	139	0.48%	15	105	120	54

Region 2 SUCCESS + Goal 33,000

Career Cluster	2016	2026	Change	Annual Growth	Annual Growth Openings	Annual Exit Openings	Annual Total Openings	Goal 2019-2020
Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics	980	1,150	172	1.63%	15	25	40	49
Information Technology	810	850	42	0.51%	5	15	20	19
Health Science	13,120	14,770	1,647	1.19%	155	525	685	544
Manufacturing	29,850	32,050	2,201	0.71%	220	1,250	1,470	885
Architecture & Construction	7,490	7,860	367	0.48%	35	270	305	172
Business Management & Administration	18,160	18,160	-5	0.00%	0	865	860	196
Education & Training	8,400	8,770	370	0.43%	30	350	380	172
Human Services	6,300	6,900	596	0.91%	55	405	460	210
Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security	4,080	4,240	155	0.37%	15	150	165	81
Government & Public Administration	940	970	35	0.37%	0	35	35	16
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	12,710	13,330	613	0.47%	60	600	655	288
Hospitality & Tourism	15,500	16,280	779	0.49%	80	1,135	1,215	369

Career Cluster	2016	2026	Change	Annual Growth	Annual Growth Openings	Annual Exit Openings	Annual Total Openings	Goal 2019-2020
Arts, Audio/Video Technology & Communications	1,460	1,320	-146	-1.05%	0	55	55	15
Finance	2,700	2,790	96	0.35%	10	100	110	55
Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources	6,460	6,450	-15	-0.02%	0	300	300	66
Marketing	13,260	13,350	90	0.07%	5	845	850	165

Region 3 SUCCESS+ Goal 32,000

Career Cluster	2016	2026	Change	Annual Growth	Annual Growth Openings	Annual Exit Openings	Annual Total Openings	Goal 2019-2020
Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics	1,140	1,440	298	2.35%	25	30	55	54
Information Technology	1,150	1,240	95	0.80%	5	20	25	24
Manufacturing	21,080	25,320	4,244	1.85%	420	925	1,340	897
Health Science	12,970	14,220	1,247	0.92%	120	525	645	333
Architecture & Construction	11,190	11,850	662	0.58%	60	405	465	217
Education & Training	10,110	10,860	746	0.71%	70	435	510	224
Business Management & Administration	17,980	18,220	237	0.13%	25	865	890	233
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	11,620	12,440	824	0.69%	80	550	630	253
Finance	3,020	3,210	193	0.62%	20	105	120	61
Human Services	5,580	6,220	644	1.10%	65	365	430	162
Government & Public Administration	780	820	36	0.45%	0	30	30	10

Career Cluster	2016	2026	Change	Annual Growth	Annual Growth Openings	Annual Exit Openings	Annual Total Openings	Goal 2019-2020
Hospitality & Tourism	17,010	18,530	1,514	0.86%	150	1,290	1,440	422
Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security	3,670	3,830	159	0.43%	15	145	160	65
Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources	6,330	6,400	61	0.10%	5	290	295	75
Marketing	13,370	13,500	139	0.10%	15	835	850	164
Arts, Audio/Video Technology & Communications	1,120	1,090	-28	-0.25%	0	40	35	6

Region 4 SUCCESS+ Goal 132,000

Career Cluster	2016	2026	Change	Annual Growth	Annual Growth Openings	Annual Exit Openings	Annual Total Openings	Goal 2019-2020
Information Technology	13,130	14,140	1,009	0.74%	100	235	330	357
Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics	5,100	5,570	473	0.89%	45	115	160	153
Health Science	58,520	66,940	8,417	1.35%	840	2,195	3,035	2,436
Architecture & Construction	38,690	41,290	2,601	0.65%	260	1,400	1,655	989
Finance	26,180	27,520	1,342	0.50%	130	870	1,005	578
Business Management & Administration	89,370	89,300	-71	-0.01%	0	4,180	4,170	1,006
Manufacturing	45,520	47,760	2,245	0.48%	220	1,765	1,985	988
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	49,550	53,330	3,778	0.74%	380	2,330	2,705	1,364
Government & Public Administration	4,460	4,660	199	0.44%	20	160	180	93

Career Cluster	2016	2026	Change	Annual Growth	Annual Growth Openings	Annual Exit Openings	Annual Total Openings	Goal 2019-2020
Human Services	20,630	23,290	2,652	1.22%	260	1,380	1,640	789
Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security	20,200	21,020	824	0.40%	80	855	940	404
Hospitality & Tourism	57,750	63,360	5,613	0.93%	560	4,335	4,900	1,845
Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources	8,310	8,580	268	0.32%	30	385	415	154
Marketing	68,160	70,270	2,113	0.31%	210	3,945	4,155	1,228
Education & Training	29,840	31,920	2,077	0.68%	205	1,270	1,475	774
Arts, Audio/Video Technology & Communications	6,970	6,800	-163	-0.24%	0	260	245	42

Region 5 SUCCESS+ Goal 65,000

Career Cluster	2016	2026	Change	Annual Growth	Annual Growth Openings	Annual Exit Openings	Annual Total Openings	Goal 2019-2020
Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics	2,940	3,420	479	1.52%	45	70	115	103
Information Technology	5,580	5,950	372	0.65%	40	105	140	116
Health Science	25,480	28,990	3,506	1.30%	350	1,020	1,370	816
Manufacturing	44,100	48,980	4,883	1.06%	495	1,845	2,335	1,228
Architecture & Construction	19,130	20,610	1,482	0.75%	145	695	840	421
Business Management & Administration	44,790	45,070	282	0.06%	30	2,115	2,140	481
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	24,860	26,920	2,052	0.80%	200	1,200	1,400	569
Education &	23,070	24,350	1,276	0.54%	120	990	1,105	416

Career Cluster	2016	2026	Change	Annual Growth	Annual Growth Openings	Annual Exit Openings	Annual Total Openings	Goal 2019-2020
Training								
Human Services	13,050	14,290	1,243	0.91%	120	840	960	325
Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security	12,420	12,740	327	0.26%	30	485	515	169
Hospitality & Tourism	37,950	41,870	3,912	0.99%	395	2,855	3,245	1,006
Finance	10,200	10,690	489	0.47%	50	350	395	177
Marketing	34,000	35,070	1,070	0.31%	105	2,150	2,255	502
Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources	9,850	9,870	19	0.02%	0	450	450	94
Arts, Audio/Video Technology & Communications	3,410	3,320	-88	-0.26%	0	135	125	17
Government & Public Administration	3,180	3,360	180	0.55%	20	115	135	60

Region 6 SUCCESS+ Goal 32,000

Career Cluster	2016	2026	Change	Annual Growth	Annual Growth Openings	Annual Exit Openings	Annual Total Openings	Goal 2019-2020
Information Technology	1,220	1,360	139	1.09%	15	20	35	44
Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics	1,190	1,340	153	1.22%	15	25	40	44
Health Science	13,880	15,410	1,527	1.05%	150	545	695	509
Manufacturing	19,540	21,170	1,628	0.80%	165	825	990	595
Architecture & Construction	8,450	8,950	499	0.58%	45	300	345	196
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	17,870	18,920	1,050	0.57%	105	770	875	432

Career Cluster	2016	2026	Change	Annual Growth	Annual Growth Openings	Annual Exit Openings	Annual Total Openings	Goal 2019-2020
Human Services	5,370	5,980	608	1.08%	60	355	410	196
Business Management & Administration	20,540	20,320	-216	-0.11%	0	960	935	148
Education & Training	9,460	9,920	456	0.47%	40	410	450	194
Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security	4,850	4,960	107	0.22%	10	185	195	71
Hospitality & Tourism	16,510	17,380	872	0.52%	85	1,220	1,305	374
Arts, Audio/Video Technology & Communications	1,180	1,110	-75	-0.65%	0	40	40	11
Marketing	16,850	17,080	224	0.13%	20	1,060	1,080	221
Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources	9,870	9,770	-98	-0.10%	0	455	445	73
Finance	3,650	3,770	118	0.32%	10	130	140	64
Government & Public Administration	1,570	1,630	63	0.39%	5	60	65	28

Region 7 SUCCESS+ Goal 81,000

Career Cluster	2016	2026	Change	Annual Growth	Annual Growth Openings	Annual Exit Openings	Annual Total Openings	Goal 2019-2020
Information Technology	3,390	3,940	553	1.52%	55	65	120	137
Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics	2,990	3,430	436	1.37%	45	70	110	111
Health Science	27,000	31,040	4,039	1.40%	400	1,035	1,435	1,026
Education & Training	17,880	18,760	886	0.48%	85	765	855	363
Architecture &	28,820	31,350	2,534	0.85%	250	1,050	1,300	781

Career Cluster	2016	2026	Change	Annual Growth	Annual Growth Openings	Annual Exit Openings	Annual Total Openings	Goal 2019-2020
Construction								
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	28,440	31,370	2,928	0.98%	290	1,335	1,625	852
Manufacturing	30,180	31,550	1,365	0.44%	140	1,135	1,280	607
Human Services	13,240	15,150	1,908	1.36%	190	855	1,045	492
Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security	9,980	10,470	486	0.48%	45	415	460	196
Finance	9,020	9,770	748	0.80%	70	315	385	234
Hospitality & Tourism	42,100	47,850	5,752	1.29%	575	3,255	3,830	1,511
Business Management & Administration	46,950	48,350	1,404	0.30%	135	2,275	2,415	797
Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources	12,180	12,360	180	0.15%	15	565	585	174
Marketing	40,720	42,290	1,577	0.38%	155	2,525	2,680	757
Arts, Audio/Video Technology & Communications	2,770	2,650	-116	-0.43%	0	100	90	15
Government & Public Administration	2,310	2,440	133	0.56%	10	85	95	47

SUCCESS+ Goal = 500,000

Alabama

Annual LFP Goal = 40,000

Special Population Groups	Population Estimates	Share of Aggregate of Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Labor Force Participation Goal

Special Population Groups	Population Estimates	Share of Aggregate of Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Labor Force Participation Goal
Displaced Home maker	280,438	24,026	2,403	2,303
Caregiver	154,574	25,651	2,565	2,465
Adults with Aging Dependents	134,990	10,038	1,004	1,004
Unemployed	83,565	66,240	6,624	0
Low-Income	849,699	114,508	11,451	10,807
Indians, Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians	27,311	789	79	69
People with Disabilities	291,771	82,688	8,270	8,230
Older Individuals	516,713	29,907	2,993	2,893
Ex-Offenders	15,224	10,691	1,069	1,069
Homeless Individuals	17,546	3,845	382	372
Youth Who Aged Out of Foster System	572	208	23	23
English Language Learners	20,725	7,023	702	580
Individuals with Low Levels of Literacy	48,998	28,664	2,860	2,436
Individuals with Substantial Cultural Barriers	106,217	22,076	2,209	2,209
Migrant & Seasonal Farmworkers	18,266	3,796	380	380
Individuals Nearing TANF Exhaustion	8,565	3,429	343	343
Single Parents	178,243	46,216	4,622	3,990
Long-Term Unemployed	15,960	11,939	1,195	0
Individuals Preparing for Nontraditional Fields	N/A	3,708	370	370

Special Population Groups	Population Estimates	Share of Aggregate of Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Labor Force Participation Goal
Youth with Parents in Active Duty Military	8,750	4,558	4,566	456

Sources for population estimates include US Census Bureau (ACS), AL Dept. of Public Health (ADPH),

AL Dept. of Human Resources (DHR), AL Dept. of Corrections (DOC), The Annie E Casey Foundation, and AL Dept. of Labor (ADOL).

SUCCESS+ Goal = 125,000

Region 1

Annual LFP Goal = 10,000

Special Population Groups	Population Estimates	Share of Aggregate of Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Labor Force Participation Goal
Displaced Home maker	44,866	7,448	745	745
Caregiver	36,679	8,441	844	844
Adults with Aging Dependents	13,025	1,853	185	185
Unemployed	16,824	14,330	1,433	0
Low-Income	104,860	28,609	2,861	2,261
Indians, Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians	819	211	21	11
People with Disabilities	62,902	14,190	1,419	1,419
Older Individuals	122,848	8,498	850	850
Ex-Offenders	3,470	2,893	289	289
Homeless Individuals	3,969	1,022	102	102
Youth Who Aged Out of Foster System	71	51	5	5
English Language Learners	14,505	3,733	373	261
Individuals with Low Levels of Literacy	59,361	7,279	728	623

Special Population Groups	Population Estimates	Share of Aggregate of Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Labor Force Participation Goal
Individuals with Substantial Cultural Barriers	32,504	8,366	837	837
Migrant & Seasonal Farmworkers	7,672	1,975	197	197
Individuals Nearing TANF Exhaustion	1,089	780	78	78
Single Parents	40,087	10,318	1,032	967
Long-Term Unemployed	2,902	1,747	175	0
Individuals Preparing for Nontraditional Fields	N/A	2,000	200	200
Youth with Parents in Active Duty Military	1,772	1,256	126	126

Sources for population estimates include US Census Bureau (ACS), AL Dept. of Public Health (ADPH),

AL Dept. of Human Resources (DHR), AL Dept. of Corrections (DOC), The Annie E Casey Foundation, and AL Dept. of Labor (ADOL).

SUCCESS+ Goal = 33,000

Region 2

Annual LFP Goal = 2,600

Special Population Groups	Population Estimates	Share of Aggregate of Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Labor Force Participation Goal
Displaced Home maker	11,731	797	79	79
Caregiver	13,699	1,150	115	115
Adults with Aging Dependents	4,246	659	66	66
Unemployed	5,935	5,061	506	0
Low-Income	38,704	7,921	792	748
Indians, Alaskan Natives, Native	259	46	5	5

Special Population Groups	Population Estimates	Share of Aggregate of Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Labor Force Participation Goal
Hawaiians				
People with Disabilities	27,963	6,581	658	658
Older Individuals	47,358	2,727	273	273
Ex-Offenders	1,916	1,143	114	114
Homeless Individuals	1,897	339	34	24
Youth Who Aged Out of Foster System	34	30	3	3
English Language Learners	2,480	443	44	34
Individuals with Low Levels of Literacy	22,630	723	72	52
Individuals with Substantial Cultural Barriers	5,350	757	76	76
Migrant & Seasonal Farmworkers	1,096	146	15	15
Individuals Nearing TANF Exhaustion	524	94	9	9
Single Parents	16,323	1,769	177	167
Long-Term Unemployed	1,101	997	100	0
Individuals Preparing for Nontraditional Fields	N/A	800	80	80
Youth with Parents in Active Duty Military	1,772	817	82	82

Sources for population estimates include US Census Bureau (ACS), AL Dept. of Public Health (ADPH),

AL Dept. of Human Resources (DHR), AL Dept. of Corrections (DOC), The Annie E Casey Foundation, and AL Dept. of Labor (ADOL).

SUCCESS+ Goal = 32,000

Region 3

Annual LFP Goal = 2,600

Special Population Groups	Population Estimates	Share of Aggregate of Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Labor Force Participation Goal
Displaced Home maker	6,240	1,006	101	101
Caregiver	9,707	1,554	155	155
Adults with Aging Dependents	4,029	743	74	74
Unemployed	5,113	4,480	448	0
Low-Income	39,320	8,227	823	823
Indians, Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians	261	55	5	5
People with Disabilities	19,992	6,036	604	564
Older Individuals	33,516	1,407	141	141
Ex-Offenders	795	466	47	47
Homeless Individuals	773	162	16	16
Youth Who Aged Out of Foster System	14	3	3	3
English Language Learners	1,931	203	20	20
Individuals with Low Levels of Literacy	20,115	2,208	218	218
Individuals with Substantial Cultural Barriers	6,620	1,085	109	109
Migrant & Seasonal Farmworkers	1,096	179	18	18
Individuals Nearing TANF Exhaustion	731	153	15	15
Single Parents	14,581	2,901	290	242
Long-Term Unemployed	826	640	64	0
Individuals Preparing for	N/A	300	30	30

Special Population Groups	Population Estimates	Share of Aggregate of Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Labor Force Participation Goal
Nontraditional Fields				
Youth with Parents in Active Duty Military	438	192	19	19

Sources for population estimates include US Census Bureau (ACS), AL Dept. of Public Health (ADPH),

AL Dept. of Human Resources (DHR), AL Dept. of Corrections (DOC), The Annie E Casey Foundation, and AL Dept. of Labor (ADOL).

SUCCESS+ Goal = 132,000

Region 4

Annual LFP Goal = 10,500

Special Population Groups	Population Estimates	Share of Aggregate of Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Labor Force Participation Goal
Displaced Home maker	37,548	7,759	776	676
Caregiver	34,956	7,051	705	605
Adults with Aging Dependents	13,137	3,589	359	359
Unemployed	16,492	14,506	1,451	0
Low-Income	99,958	27,311	2,731	2,731
Indians, Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians	811	222	22	22
People with Disabilities	59,726	25,709	2,571	2,571
Older Individuals	111,313	8,956	896	796
Ex-Offenders	2,791	2,263	226	226
Homeless Individuals	3,340	913	91	91
Youth Who Aged Out of Foster System	75	20	2	2
English Language Learners	11,592	1,567	157	157

Special Population Groups	Population Estimates	Share of Aggregate of Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Labor Force Participation Goal
Individuals with Low Levels of Literacy	46,557	7,721	771	472
Individuals with Substantial Cultural Barriers	29,856	7,157	716	716
Migrant & Seasonal Farmworkers	1,096	249	25	25
Individuals Nearing TANF Exhaustion	2,121	580	58	58
Single Parents	48,048	13,128	1,313	947
Long-Term Unemployed	3,068	2,838	284	0
Individuals Preparing for Nontraditional Fields	N/A	191	19	19
Youth with Parents in Active Duty Military	438	270	27	27

Sources for population estimates include US Census Bureau (ACS), AL Dept. of Public Health (ADPH),

AL Dept. of Human Resources (DHR), AL Dept. of Corrections (DOC), The Annie E Casey Foundation, and AL Dept. of Labor (ADOL).

SUCCESS+ Goal = 65,000

Region 5

Annual LFP Goal = 5,200

Special Population Groups	Population Estimates	Share of Aggregate of Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Labor Force Participation Goal
Displaced Home maker	15,402	1,831	183	183
Caregiver	23,547	2,829	283	283
Adults with Aging Dependents	7,119	809	81	81
Unemployed	11,812	10,671	1,067	0

Special Population Groups	Population Estimates	Share of Aggregate of Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Labor Force Participation Goal
Low-Income	89,462	16,447	1,645	1,645
Indians, Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians	711	131	13	13
People with Disabilities	44,563	10,558	1,056	1,056
Older Individuals	72,247	3,137	314	314
Ex-Offenders	2,000	1,568	157	157
Homeless Individuals	2,570	472	47	47
Youth Who Aged Out of Foster System	37	17	2	2
English Language Learners	5,443	501	50	50
Individuals with Low Levels of Literacy	42,371	3,789	378	378
Individuals with Substantial Cultural Barriers	16,764	2,082	208	208
Migrant & Seasonal Farmworkers	1,096	201	20	20
Individuals Nearing TANF Exhaustion	1,999	367	37	37
Single Parents	39,433	7,250	724	683
Long-Term Unemployed	2,299	1,923	192	0
Individuals Preparing for Nontraditional Fields	N/A	92	9	9
Youth with Parents in Active Duty Military	1,772	326	33	33

Sources for population estimates include US Census Bureau (ACS), AL Dept. of Public Health (ADPH),

AL Dept. of Human Resources (DHR), AL Dept. of Corrections (DOC), The Annie E Casey Foundation, and AL Dept. of Labor (ADOL).

SUCCESS+ Goal = 32,000

Region 6

Annual LFP Goal = 2,600

Special Population Groups	Population Estimates	Share of Aggregate of Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Labor Force Participation Goal
Displaced Home maker	4,986	756	76	76
Caregiver	13,336	790	79	79
Adults with Aging Dependents	5,511	746	75	75
Unemployed	5,837	4,900	490	0
Low-Income	41,052	7,152	715	715
Indians, Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians	226	39	4	4
People with Disabilities	24,806	5,408	541	541
Older Individuals	42,147	1,166	117	117
Ex-Offenders	1,488	756	76	76
Homeless Individuals	1,758	192	19	19
Youth Who Aged Out of Foster System	87	25	2	2
English Language Learners	2,375	208	21	21
Individuals with Low Levels of Literacy	21,612	1,712	170	170
Individuals with Substantial Cultural Barriers	5,062	769	77	77
Migrant & Seasonal Farmworkers	5,114	778	78	78
Individuals Nearing TANF Exhaustion	7,799	1,139	114	114
Single Parents	16,948	2,910	291	291
Long-Term Unemployed	1,152	1,098	110	0

Special Population Groups	Population Estimates	Share of Aggregate of Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Labor Force Participation Goal
Individuals Preparing for Nontraditional Fields	N/A	252	25	25
Youth with Parents in Active Duty Military	1,772	1,204	120	120

Sources for population estimates include US Census Bureau (ACS), AL Dept. of Public Health (ADPH),

AL Dept. of Human Resources (DHR), AL Dept. of Corrections (DOC), The Annie E Casey Foundation, and AL Dept. of Labor (ADOL).

SUCCESS+ Goal = 81,000

Region 7

Annual LFP Goal = 6,500

Special Population Groups	Population Estimates	Share of Aggregate of Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Labor Force Participation Goal
Displaced Home maker	25,069	4,429	443	443
Caregiver	22,650	3,837	384	384
Adults with Aging Dependents	10,796	1,639	164	164
Unemployed	13,465	12,292	1,229	0
Low-Income	77,071	18,841	1,884	1,884
Indians, Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians	349	85	9	9
People with Disabilities	40,465	14,206	1,421	1,421
Older Individuals	87,205	4,016	402	402
Ex-Offenders	2,464	1,602	160	160
Homeless Individuals	5,090	745	73	73
Youth Who Aged Out of Foster System	253	62	6	6

Special Population Groups	Population Estimates	Share of Aggregate of Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Attainment Goal	2019-2020 Annual Labor Force Participation Goal
English Language Learners	2,731	368	37	37
Individuals with Low Levels of Literacy	41,854	5,232	523	523
Individuals with Substantial Cultural Barriers	10,061	1,860	186	186
Migrant & Seasonal Farmworkers	1,096	268	27	27
Individuals Nearing TANF Exhaustion	1,294	316	32	32
Single Parents	32,480	7,940	794	693
Long-Term Unemployed	2,849	2,696	270	0
Individuals Preparing for Nontraditional Fields	N/A	73	7	7
Youth with Parents in Active Duty Military	788	493	49	49

Sources for population estimates include US Census Bureau (ACS), AL Dept. of Public Health (ADPH),

AL Dept. of Human Resources (DHR), AL Dept. of Corrections (DOC), The Annie E Casey Foundation, and AL Dept. of Labor (ADOL)

Carl D. Perkins Act

U.S. Department of Education

Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education

Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) State Plan

I. COVER PAGE

A. State Name: Alabama

B. Eligible Agency (State Board) Submitting Plan on Behalf of State:

Alabama State Board of Education

C. Person at, or officially designated by, the eligible agency, identified in Item B above, who is responsible for answering questions regarding this plan. This is also the person designated as the "authorized representative" for the agency.

3.

a. Name: Jennifer J. Burt

b. Official Position Title: Administrator of Standards and Accountability

c. Agency: Alabama State Board of Education

d. Telephone: (334) 694-4763 6. Email: jburt@alsde.edu D.Individual serving as the State Director for Career and Technical Education:

☐ **Check here if this individual is the same person identified in Item C above and then proceed to Item E below.**

4.

a. Name: Daniel Boyd

b. Official Position Title: Deputy State Superintendent of Education

c. Agency: Alabama State Board of Education

d. Telephone: (334) 694-4907 5. Email: dboyd@alsde.edu E. Type of Perkins V State Plan Submission - FY 2019 (*Check one*):

- 1-Year Transition Plan (FY2019 only) – *if an eligible agency selects this option, it will then complete Items G and J*

F. Type of Perkins V State Plan Submission - *Subsequent Years* (C*heck one*):4

X State Plan (FY 2020-23) - *if an eligible agency selects this option, it will then complete Items H, I, and J*

- State Plan Revisions (Please indicate year of *submission:* _____) - *if an eligible agency selects this option, it will then complete Items H and J*

G. Submitting Perkins V State Plan as Part of a Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) Combined State Plan – FY 2019 (*Check one*):

- Yes

X No

H. Submitting Perkins V State Plan as Part of a Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) Combined State Plan – *Subsequent Years* (*Check one*):5

X Yes (*If yes, please indicate year of submission: FY2020-2023)*

- No

I. Governor's Joint Signatory Authority of the Perkins V State Plan (*Fill in text box and then check one box below):6*

Date Governor was sent State Plan for signature: February 3, 2020

X The Governor has provided a letter that he or she is jointly signing the State plan for submission to the Department.

- The Governor has not provided a letter that he or she is jointly signing the State plan for submission to the Department.

4 Item F will only appear to the user in the Perkins V State Plan Portal in subsequent years (FY 2020-23).

5 Item H will only appear to the user in the Perkins V State Plan Portal in subsequent years (FY 2020-23).

6 Item I is required in FY 2019 only for States that choose to submit a full Perkins V State plan, covering FY 2019-23.

J. By signing this document, the eligible entity, through its authorized representative, agrees:

1. To the assurances, certifications, and other forms enclosed in its State plan submission; and
2. That, to the best of my knowledge and belief, all information and data included in this State plan submission are true and correct.

Authorized Representative Identified in Item C Above (Printed Name)	Telephone:
Jennifer J. Burt	334-694-4763
Signature of Authorized Representative	Date:
Jennifer J Burt	2-3-2020

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

KAY IVEY
GOVERNOR

STATE CAPITOL
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130

(334) 242-7100
FAX: (334) 242-3282

STATE OF ALABAMA

February 3, 2020

The Honorable Betsy DeVos
Office of the Secretary
United States Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary DeVos:

Over the past year, my Administration has collaborated with the Alabama State Department of Education, the Alabama Community College System, stakeholders within Alabama's public workforce system, and members of business and industry to develop a state plan for the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) that will serve as a vision for unifying our education and workforce programs to meet the needs of both students and employers.

By this letter, I am exercising my joint signature authority, as authorized by Perkins V, in support of Alabama's Perkins V State Plan. I am pleased that the Perkins V State Plan is being submitted as a component of Alabama's 2020 Combined State WIOA Plan.

Thank you for your support and consideration of Alabama's Perkins V State Plan.

Sincerely,

Kay Ivey

Kay Ivey
Governor

Governor's Workforce Innovation Directives

ALABAMA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT SYSTEM

April 24, 2015 Department of Economic and Community Affairs Workforce Development Division 401Adams Avenue Post Office 5690 Montgomery,Alabama 36103-5690 GOVERNOR' S WORKFORCE INNOVATION DIRECTIVE NO. PY2014-10

SUBJECT:

1. Purpose. Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Program Transition This transmits the following TEGL:

Number Date 23-14 03/26/15 Subject Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Program Transition

2. Discussion. The purpose of TEGL No. 23-14 is to provide guidance and planning information to states, local workforce areas, and other recipients of Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title I youth formula funds on the activities associated with the implementation of WIOA.

In order to continue implementation prior to the final rule, a series of WIOA Operational Guidance documents that provide the needed implementation information will be issued in the form of Training and Employment Guidance Letters (TEGLs). These Operational Guidance TEGLs will inform the system about how to begin the important planning and reorganization necessary to comply with new WIOA statutory requirements for the upcoming Program Year (PY) 2015 (beginning July 1, 2015). The Operating Guidance TEGLs will provide a framework for program activities until the regulations are finalized. TEGL 23-14 is one in the ongoing series of Guidance.

Regarding the implementation of youth programs, TEGL 23-14 states that while previously issued TEGL No. 19-14 (discussed in GWID PY2014-07) says "States will receive their first WIOA allotment for the youth programs in April 2015 and will begin full implementation of WIOA for the Youth Program at that time," this was imprecise. Operational implementation of the WIOA youth program begins on July 1, 2015, with all provisions taking effect July 1,2016. The PY 2015 WIOA youth allotment that is distributed in April 2015 is for preparation and programmatic activities for WIOA youth program implementation on July 1, 2015. In addition, states and local workforce areas are encouraged to use allowable transition funds to prepare for implementation of the WIOA Youth program. Page 2 Directive No. PY2014-10

TEGL 23-14 further discusses youth program planning and provides operational guidance for WIOA. This includes discussion on the transition from the required minimum thirty (30) percent expenditure rate for youth formula-funded programs on out-of-school youth under WIA to the new required minimum seventy-five (75) percent expenditure rate for youth formula-funded programs on out-of-school youth under WIOA and how the percentage is calculated. Other topics include Youth Standing Committees, transitioning in-school youth programs, changes to the youth program elements, the new eligibility criteria, and many other programmatic changes. Examples of successful out-of-school youth programs currently meeting the seventy-five (75) percent expenditure rate are provided for research as well as a list of resources to help states and local areas successfully transition.

3. Action. This Directive should be distributed accordingly to local areas, workforce staff, and partners. Local area staff should review TEGL 23-14, and use presented strategies and resources to transition their youth programs to the WIOA.

---------- ALABAMA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT SYSTEM Department of Commerce Workforce Development Division 401 Adams Avenue Post Office Box 5690 Montgomery,

Alabama 36103-5690 September 11, 2015 GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE INNOVATION DIRECTIVE NO. PY2015-03

SUBJECT: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Eligible Training Providers Policy

1. Purpose. This directive transmits the State's policy regarding the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Eligible Training Providers List in order to continue eligibility and to provide the procedures for potentially new training providers.

2. Discussion. Under WIOA, States shall establish initial eligibility for WIOA eligible training provider and certified training programs in order to continue to be eligible to provide training services until December 31, 2015. WIOA initial eligibility (for all current training providers on the ETPL) expires on December 31,2015. All current training providers and their current programs are grandfathered in as eligible training providers. Procedures are included in this policy for current training providers to seek continued eligibility. Under WIOA, the State shall also establish a procedure to determine the eligibility of new training providers. The criteria and procedures for new training providers are included in the attached policy. It is the responsibility of the Workforce Development Division to collect the required information from all Eligible Training Providers, who provide services to WIOA participants in Alabama . This Directive supersedes all previous directives regarding policies, collection of performance, costs and other information on the ETPL including GWDD No. PY2002-03 through PY2011-23, change 2.

3. Action. It is the responsibility of the local workforce development areas and the training providers to review the attached policy and instructions and adhere to the established procedures.

Attached are the policy and forms to use in the continued eligibility process and/or the application process for new training providers. The required information is to be submitted to the Workforce Development Division and information updated on the website, www.ETPL.alabama.gov, for each current program by December 31, 2015. Training providers are required to enter the information on the Eligible Training Provider List website. Training providers are strongly encouraged to keep the performance information listed on the ETPL website up to date. Training providers' information will be reviewed at least every 24 months for renewal purposes. Training providers, who fail to follow the continued eligibility instructions by December 31, 2015, will be removed from the ETPL without exception.

----------ALABAMA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

Department of Commerce Workforce Development Division 401 Adams Avenue

Post Office Box 304103 Montgomery, Alabama 36130-4103

November 30, 2018

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE INNOVATION DIRECTIVE NO. PY2015-03, Change 3

SUBJECT: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Eligible Training Providers

1. Purpose. This directive transmits the State's revised policy for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Eligible Training Providers. This removed outdated information regarding the transition from Workforce Investment Act (WIA) to WIOA and updates program performance information.

2. Discussion. Under WIOA, States are to establish a procedure to determine eligibility for new training providers and one for continued eligibility of current training providers. It also states that submission of the performance, program costs, and any additional information

required for each individual WIOA-certified program must be submitted every two years to the Workforce Development Division. The revisions to this policy include removing outdated information regarding the transition from WIA to WIOA; simplifies the performance information for initial and continued eligibility; clarifies the dropout rate pertains to the training provider and not an individual program. The policy also encourages training providers to include soft or employability skills for students in the programs and to award any certificates/certifications or credentials to the students when attained and to refrain from holding those until the end of the program. The policy reduces the minimum completion and employment rates to 50% for WIOA participants for the continued eligibility for current providers. The current standard of 70% was not being met by programs due to current economic conditions and other factors. After reviewing the current performance and minimum standards, it was determined that it is in the best interest to reduce the minimum standards. Another major change to the policy is the addition of required information on all students being served in the ETPL approved programs. This information is required by the U.S. Department of Labor for the ETA-9171 Eligible Training Provider performance report. Please note that this information must be reported for the approved programs even if WIOA participants were not served during the reporting period.

3. Action. It is the responsibility of the local workforce development areas and the training providers to review the attached policy. This revised policy will also be posted on the website, www.madeinalabama.com, under the Governor's Workforce Innovation Directives.

Training providers are required to enter performance information on the Eligible Training Provider List website. Training providers are strongly encouraged to keep the performance information listed on the ETPL website up-to-date. Training providers' information will be reviewed at least every 24 months to ensure that it remains current and meets establish performance goals for continued eligibility. The minimum 50% completion and employment rate for WIOA participants is required for continued eligibility.

4. Contact. Any questions regarding this Directive should be addressed to Jessica Dent, Workforce Development Division, at (334) 353-3256 or at Jessica.Dent@commerce.alabama.gov.

---------- Alabama Workforce Investment System

Department of Economic and Community Affairs

Workforce Development Division

401 Adams Avenue

Post Office 5690

Montgomery, Alabama 36103-5690

February 26, 2015

GOVERNOR’S WORKFORCE INNOVATION DIRECTIVE NO. PY2014-05

SUBJECT: Local Area Designation Policy

1. Purpose. To transmit the State’s local area designation request form.

2. Discussion. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires the Governor to designate local workforce development areas within the state through consultation with the State Workforce Development Board and after consultation with the chief elected officials and

comments from the general public. Factors impacting these designations are listed in Section 106(b) of the WIOA. It is anticipated that supplemental instructions may be issued at a later date to address the requirements of Section 106(a) Regions, which must be addressed before the second full year program, e.g. prior to July 1, 2016. If there are any inconsistencies with the issuance of the final WIOA Implementing Regulations in calendar year 2016, this policy will be revised to comply with the Implementing Regulations.

3. Action.All local area designation requests must be submitted using the attached form. The effective date of this policy is the date of issuance of this Directive. The local Chief Elected Official (CEO) must submit the completed application to the Workforce Development Division no later than 5:00 p.m., March 31, 2015 for consideration of initial designation.

4. Contact. Questions regarding this information should be directed to Bill Hornsby, Supervisor, State Programs, Planning, and Divisional Budget Management Section at (334) 242-5847 or bill.hornsby@adeca.alabama.gov.

---------- Alabama Workforce Investment System

Alabama Department of Commerce

Workforce Development Division

401 Adams Avenue

Post Office 304106

Montgomery, Alabama 36130-4106

December 9, 2015

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE INNOVATION DIRECTIVE NO. PY2014-05, Change 01

SUBJECT: Local Area Designation Policy

1. Purpose. To transmit a revision to the State's Local Area Designation Policy pursuant to correspondence of September 22, 2015 from the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Employment and Training as well as update information relative to the transfer of the Workforce Development Division of the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs to the Alabama Department of Commerce per Act 2015-450.

2. Discussion. Subsequent to the issuance of the initial Local Area Designation Policy on February 26, 2015, the U.S Department of Labor (USDOL), Employment and Training Administration (ETA) issued Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) Number 27-14 on April 15, 2015. Among other requirements, this TEGL required the states to include not only a definition of "Performed Successfully," which was in the initially issued state policy, but also definitions for the terms "met or exceeded" and "failure" consistent with how those terms were defined at the time the performance levels were negotiated. TEGL Number 25-13, dated May 15, 2014, is the relevant guidance in regard to the guidance used for the definition of the Workforce Investment Act performance measure parameters to define exceeds, met, or failed to meet. Per the Secretary of Labor's correspondence, as well as the guidance provided in TEGL Number 27-14, the applicable attachments to the State's Local Area Designation Policy have been revised to include the required additional definitions as stated in TEGL Number 25-13.

3. Action. Local area designation requests were received from three (3) entities pursuant to the initially-issued (February 26, 2015) Local Area Designation Policy. Two of the applications were approved by the Governor subsequent to recommendation by the State Workforce Development

Board, so no action is required for those two entities (Mobile Works, Inc. and the Alabama Workforce Investment Area). However, the application for the Jefferson County Commission was not recommended by the State Workforce Development Board for approval by the Governor nor was it approved by the Governor.

Per the Assistant Secretary of Labor's requirement stated in her September 22, 2015 correspondence, the State is required to "allow the Jefferson County Commission to request initial designation under WIOA Section 106(b)(2) and review such request if submitted, and afford the local area the right to a State-level appeal under WIOA Section 106(b)(5) if the State rejects the local area's request for initial designation."

In compliance with this requirement, the local Chief Elected Official (CEO) for the Jefferson County Commission may submit the completed application to the Workforce Development Division no later than 5:00 p.m., December 31, 2015 for consideration of initial designation per Section 106(b)(2) of the WIOA.

4. Contact. Questions regarding this information should be directed to Kivondra Rivers, Supervisor, State Programs, Planning, and Divisional Budget Management Section at (334) 242-5847 or kivondra.rivers@commerce.alabama.gov.

---------- ALABAMA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT SYSTEM

Alabama Department of Commerce Workforce Development Division 401 Adams Avenue

Post Office 304106 Montgomery, Alabama 36130-4106

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE INNOVATION DIRECTIVE NO. PY2015-09

SUBJECT: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Program Requirements and Procurement of Youth Workforce Investment Activities

1. Purpose.

This Directive identifies the State-developed criteria to be used by local boards in awarding grants (contracts) for youth workforce investment activities.

2. Discussion.

The State Workforce Development Board supports cost-efficient, collaborative efforts that result in comprehensive and innovative services that lead youth to academic improvement, high school graduation or High School Equivalency attainment, employment, military services, advanced or apprenticeship training, paid and unpaid internships, and/or post-secondary education. Local programs must link academic and occupational learning and develop measures of successful outcomes. Effective programs require the involvement of local groups providing input on the proposed program design, and coordinating the delivery of the youth services with local employers, One-Stop Career Centers and other youth services already available in the community.

Local programs have the discretion to determine what specific program services will be provided to a youth participant, based on each participant's objective assessment and individual service strategy. Critical to the success is integrating a youth development strategy that focuses on a young person's assets, provides a variety of interventions and supports allowing the youth to grow, learn and mature-successfully transitioning to careers and productive adulthood. Youth development activities include leadership development opportunities that encourage responsibility, employability, and other positive social behaviors. It is expected that each youth will participate in more than one of the fourteen program elements required as part of any local youth program. The overall goal of the youth program is to help youth complete a high school

diploma or equivalent and to prepare for a career pathway that will transition into skilled employment and/or postsecondary education.

Youth program outcomes should prepare youth for post-secondary educational opportunities, provide better linkages between academic and occupational learning, prepare youth for employment; and offer effective connections to intermediary organizations that provide strong links to the job market and employers. All youth must receive some form of follow-up services for a minimum period of 12 months, following the completion of participation in the program.

Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) will follow the procurement procedures established by each local area to ensure proper competition and transparency. Procurement of WIOA funded Youth Services requires the selection of youth providers through a competitive selection process (Section 123(a)). Each LWDA, is afforded the opportunity to identify providers of youth services that effectively address the needs of local youth.

Per WIOA Section 123(b), a local board may award grants or contracts on a sole-source basis if such board determines there is an insufficient number of eligible providers of youth workforce investment activities in the local area involved (such as a rural area) for grants and contracts to be awarded on a competitive basis under Section 123(a). Failed competitive competition would be necessary to make such determination for sole-source procurement.

The local boards will fund youth providers based on performance and program cost data provided by potential providers and based on criteria that may include those youth activities and providers that:

- Develop relationships between youth and caring adults
- Involve family members
- Build youth responsibility
- Develop youth citizenship and leadership skills
- Place high expectations on youth and staff
- Provide appropriate services based on age and needs of each youth
- Demonstrate involvement of the business/employer community
- Provide accessible facilities and provide accommodations for special needs populations, including individuals with disabilities
- Demonstrate prior successes in providing employment and training services to youth
- Prepare youth for success in employment
- Advocate for the youth perspective
- Demonstrate the connection between work and learning
- Provide comprehensive guidance and counseling

The criteria to solicit competitive proposals (per WIOA Section 123(a)) for the operation of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I, Public Law 113-128 youth purposes and activities, will ensure that Youth Programs are competitively procured and solicited for comprehensive year-round Youth Programs for out-of-school youth between the ages 16-24, and in-school youth between the ages of 14 and 21. Local Areas' youth program design must offer a unique opportunity to provide a creative and innovative mix of services designed to address the academic, vocational, and employment needs of at-risk youth.

Targeted activities include:

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized postsecondary credential;

2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate;

3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have as a component, academic and occupational education, which may include:

a. summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year;

b. pre-apprenticeship programs;

c. internships and job shadowing; and

d. on-the-job training opportunities;

4. Occupational skill training, which shall include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that are aligned with in demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area involved, if the local board determines that the programs meet the quality criteria described in WIOA Section 123;

5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;

6. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors, as appropriate;

7. Supportive services;

8. Adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months;

9. Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate;

10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate;

11. Financial literacy education;

12. Entrepreneurial skills training;

13. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services; and

14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.

State policy for "requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment" is a low income individual who has at least one of the following criteria:

Indian, Alaska Native, or Hawaiian Native. Individuals who are English language learners. Individuals with low levels of literacy.

Individuals facing substantial cultural barriers. Eligible migrant and seasonal farm workers.

Low academic performance (a grade point C or below or basic academic skills in the bottom quartile of the class).

A past record of excessive absences as verified by school officials.

Has been suspended, expelled, or put on probation during high school.

Has dropped out of school previously.

Limited English proficiency.

Family environment is not conducive to education or career goals.

Has documented alcohol and/or substance abuse. Has a record of violent behavior.

Lacks motivation or maturity to pursue education or career goals.

Emotional disorder which impairs education or career goals. Health problems which impair education or career goals.

Eligible for free lunch under the National School Lunch Programs.

Has inadequate or no work experience.

Lacks marketable, occupational skills that are in demand in the local labor market.

The State understands and provides guidance that in each local area, not more than five percent (5%) of the in-school youth assisted may be made eligible using WIOA Section 129(a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII) as follows:

(VII) An individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.

The five percent (5%) "Limitation" is calculated based on all in-school youth served in the WIOA local youth program in a given program year. For example, if you serve a total of 40 in-school youth, only 2 may be eligible using clause (VII) "requires additional assistance" (40 X .05 = 2).

Local Areas/ Local Boards must follow a procurement process that ensures compliance with the prescribed rules and regulations. At a minimum, the procurement process must ensure:

1. Solicitation methods that promote fair and open competition;

2. A written code of conduct that includes specific conflict of interest provisions to ensure that those who develop or issue a proposal are separate and distinct from those who are involved in the selection process;

3. A clear and accurate description of the services being procured; and

4. A specific contract time frame with the option to extend the contract for a specified period based on a provider's compliance with the terms of the contract. (Note: This option (to be valid) must be included in the Request for Proposals (RFPs) as well as in the subsequent contracts resulting from the RFPs).

In addition, each Local Area/LWDB must use the following criteria in awarding contracts for youth services:

1. Ability to measure and attain youth-related core performance levels; participant and employer (customer) satisfaction levels (Note: the State calculates and tracks official standards and performance.)

2. Coordination with local secondary and post-secondary institutions;

3. Prior experience working with disadvantaged, special populations, and in operating education, training, and employment programs;

4. Leveraging funds with other funding sources;

5. Fiscal accountability; and

6. Program design that includes the following components:

a. An objective assessment for each participant;

b. Individual Service Strategies (155); and

c. Services that prepare youth for post-secondary education opportunities, link academic and occupational learning, prepare youth for employment, and provide connections to intermediary organizations linked to the job market and employers.

WIOA has established core performance indicators (See Table 1 on Next Page) to ensure that Federal investments in employment and training programs are accountable to job seekers, employers, customers, and taxpayers. This is a renewed system, which will ensure access for all individuals, of every skill level, the opportunity to pursue the skills, training, and education they need to obtain employment that will lead to financial stability and economic security for themselves and their families. Employers will also have the assurance that trained and qualified workers will be available to fill their current and future openings. Specifically related to this Youth Policy are the Youth Measures and Descriptions.

State WIOA Performance Indicators		
Category	**Measure**	**Description**
Adults/ Dislocated Workers	**Entered Employment Rate**	The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the 2nd quarter after exit.
	Employment Retention Rate	The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the 4th quarter after exit.
	Median Earnings	The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the 2nd quarter after exit.
	Credential Rate	The percentage of participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, during participation or within 1 year after exit.
	Measureable Skills Gain	The percentage of 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 measureable skill gains toward such a credential or employment.
Youth	**Placement in Employment/ Education / Training**	The percentage of participants who are in education or training services, or in unsubsidized employment during the 2nd quarter after exit.
	Retention in Employment/ Education/ Training	The percentage of participants who are in education or training services, or in subsidized employment during the 4th quarter after exit.
	Earnings	The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the 2nd quarter after exit.
	Credential Rate	The percentage of participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, during participation or within 1 year after exit.
	In-Program Skills Gain	The percentage of 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 measureable skill gains toward such a credential or employment.
Employers	**Indicators of Effectiveness**	To Be Determined

3. Action.

Local Workforce Development Areas/ Local Workforce Development Boards will follow this policy in regard to the selection of Youth Program Service Providers beginning with the procurement of Youth Services and Activities for WIOA programs beginning on or after April 1, 2016.

4. Contact.

Questions regarding this Directive should be referred to Bill Hornsby, Supervisor, Workforce Development Division, State Programs, Planning and Divisional Budget Management Section at (334) 242- 5847 or bill.hornsby@commerce.alabama.gov.

ALABAMA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT SYSTEM

Department of Commerce Workforce Development Division 401 Adams Avenue

Post Office Box 304103 Montgomery, Alabama 36103-4103

---------- GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE INNOVATION DIRECTIVE NO. PY 2016-01

SUBJECT: Priority of Service for Basic Skills Deficient, Recipient of Public Assistance, Other Low-Income

1. Purpose.

To establish a policy for determining priority of services for adults receiving direct monetary services such as support services or training under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

2. Discussion.

WIOA section 134(c)(3)(E) establishes the need for the local Workforce Development Areas to have a system of priority for services to adults:

"With respect to funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities... priority shall be given to recipients of public assistance, other low income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient for receipt of career services...and training services. The appropriate local board and the Governor shall direct the one-stop operators in the local area with regard to making determinations related to such priority."

WIOA Implementing Regulations 680.600(b) requires States and local areas to establish criteria for providing priority to individualized career services and training with WIOA adult funds under Title I. The criteria may include other resources and funds for providing career and training-related services in the local workforce development area (LWDA), as well as other factors the LWDA determines appropriate.

WIOA 680.600(c) clarifies that while priority must be given under WIOA adult funds to low-income individuals, public assistance recipients, or individuals, who are basic skills deficient for individualized career services and training services, the Local Board and Governor my establish a process that also gives priority to other individuals.

A. Background

The Adult Program under Title I of WIOA provides workforce development services to adults to increase their employment, retention in employment and earnings and also support their occupational skill attainment and career advancement. Local workforce development boards are charged with strategic planning and oversight activities in support of workforce and economic development.

WIOA specifies that services for adults will be provided through One-Stop Career Centers. Service such as career guidance and workforce information may also be provided virtually. WIOA authorizes two types of service that are potentially available to job seekers:

1. Career Services - includes outreach, job search and placement assistance, provision of labor market information, comprehensive assessments, development of individual

employment plans, counseling and career planning, and other services specified in Section 134(c)(2)(A).

2. Training Services - includes Occupational Skills Training, One-the-Job Training activities, Customized, Training, Individual Training Accounts, and other training services specified in Section 134(c)(3)(D).

Priority for both career and training services must be given recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient in accordance with the federal requirement specified above.

Funds allocated for WIOA Dislocated Worker eligible individuals are not subject to this Policy.

B. Compliance with the Jobs for Veterans Act

The Alabama Workforce Development System will provide priority of services to veterans and eligible spouses, as specified in the Jobs for Veterans Act and its implementing regulations at 20CFR Part

101. When Veterans Priority is applied in conjunction with Priority of Services for WIOA Adult Program Participants, veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skill deficient will receive first priority. The second priority would be recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient who are not veterans or eligible spouses.

C. Local Board Requirements

Local Workforce Development Boards are required to develop and include in their local plan, policies that implement Priority of Services for WIOA Adult Program Participants for the One Stop Center and service delivery plan for the local training providers.

3. Action.

Each LWDA should take the appropriate measures to ensure compliance with the above-stated policy and amend local area plans to address the Priority of Services policy. The State Program Integrity Section is tasked with monitoring the LWDAs to ensure that Priority of Services policies are established and approved by local boards, as well as sample testing participant files for adherence to stated policies.

4. Contact.

Any questions should be referred to Melody Koorangi, Supervisor, Program Integrity Section, at (334) 242-5175 or by email at melody.koorangi@commerce.alabama.gov.

----------ALABAMA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT SYSTEM

Alabama Department of Commerce Workforce Development Division 401 Adams Avenue

Post Office 304106 Montgomery, Alabama 36130-4106

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE INNOVATION DIRECTIVE NO. PY2015-08

SUBJECT: One-Stop Career Center Systems and One-Stop Delivery System Certification

1. Purpose.

To provide guidance, process and deadlines for the certification of One-Stop Career Centers and the One-Stop delivery system that is to be conducted by local workforce development boards, and to set criteria for the development of a local policy for one-stop certification.

2. Discussion.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Section 121(e)(2)(A) states that each area must operate at least one comprehensive One-Stop Career Center. WIOA Section 134(c)(1)(i), states the State is responsible "to establish a One-Stop deliver system."

For Alabama to remain competitive in today's knowledge-based economy, its workforce system is critical. Workforce development and training systems must offer current workers and the emerging workforce opportunities to acquire world-class skills that meet employer demands, while increasing productivity. The workforce system must be comprehensive, flexible, innovative, employer-driven, customer-focused and performance-based. The workforce system must also respond to customer needs, and be adaptable to the rapid changes in the global economy. Technology will be used in the delivery of services to the extent it is feasible.

In an effort to ensure that the One-Stop system meets minimum quality standards, including the effective integration of services, pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity act (WIOA) Section 121(b)(1)(A) and

(B) each entity that carries out a program or activities described at WIOA Section 121(b)(1)(B) (programs authorized under WIOA Title I-B; programs authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.); adult education and literacy activities authorized under title 11; programs authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.) (other than section 112 or part C of title I of such Act (29 U.S.C. 732, 741); activities authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.); career and technical education programs at the postsecondary level authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.); activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.); activities authorized under chapter 41 of title 38, United States Code; employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.); employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development; programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws (in accordance with applicable Federal law); programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532 et seq.); and (unless the

Governor notifies the Secretary of Labor) programs authorized under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)), shall provide access through the One-Stop delivery system to such program or activities carried out by the entity.

Also as required at WIOA Section 121(e)(3) and consistent with Section 3(d) of the Wagner-Peyser Act and in order to improve service delivery, avoid duplication of services, and enhance coordination of services, including location of staff to ensure access to services in underserved areas, the Employment Service Offices in each state shall be co-located with One-Stop Career Centers established under the WIOA.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) specifies in Section 101(d)(6) and 121(g)(l) that the Governor (with assistance from the State WIOA Board) shall establish the minimum criteria for certification of One- Stop Career Centers and the One-Stop delivery system. Certification is required to be done by local boards at least once every three (3) years in order for One-Stop Career Centers and the One-Stop delivery system to receive infrastructure funding pursuant to WIOA Section 121(h).

Certification Criteria - In order to be certified, One-Stop Career Centers and the One-Stop delivery system must meet or exceed the standards established for each of the following areas:

	Focus Area	Criteria to be Used	Standards to Meet
1	Effectiveness	-Performance accountability as outlined in grant agreements and expenditure authorizations -Local Performance Measures -Sector Partnerships -Career Pathways -Enrollment objectives for targeted populations -Alignment of services with needs of the area -Fiscal Responsibility	a. Outcomes defined in grant agreements and expenditure authorizations b. Thresholds related to negotiated performance targets c. Coordination of goal setting across programs exists d. Active involvement in initiatives and discretionary grants and expected outcomes for initiatives and discretionary grants are met e. Demonstrate that strategies are based on an analysis of the area f. Satisfaction of employers with services provided g. Expenditure rate exceeds the minimum requirement to maintain compliance
2	Physical and programmatic accessibility	Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101, et seq and Section 188 of the WIOA if applicable	In compliance as shown by an inspection, audit, or review within last three (3) years
3	Continuous improvement of One-Stop Career Centers and the One-Stop delivery system	Goals established for the services provided by each One-Stop Career Center and the One-Stop delivery system	Stand.a.rds are connected to goals and may shift as goals change a. Business Services activities in compliance with annual goals b. Re-employment and Youth activities in compliance with annual goals c. Level of Services for each One-Stop Career Center justifies its annual operational costs
4	Integration of available services	Service Coordination Agreements	At a Minimum: a. An MOU is in place b. The MOU includes all required partners c. Co-enrollment is addressed d. A referral procedure for all programs is in place e. Demonstrate that the level of integration has improved in the past three (3) years

On an annual basis, the required partners in each local workforce area will work with the Commerce - Workforce Development Division to reach agreed upon levels of performance that apply to Focus Area 1 and with the Commerce - Workforce Development Division to reach agreed upon continuous improvement goals that apply to Focus Area 3.

The chair of the local board shall be copied on all local plan quarterly and annual reports provided to Commerce - Workforce Development Division so that the Commerce - Workforce Development Division can maintain data on an ongoing basis. At the request of a local board, when it engages in the certification process for the One-Stop Career Centers and the One-Stop delivery system, the Commerce -Workforce Development Division will provide to the local board a summary of the performance data that has been provided to the Commerce - Workforce Development Division on the above criteria. The state agencies of required partners shall forward quarterly or annual reports to the Commerce - Workforce Development Division so that data on partner programs can be maintained and shared with local boards during the

assessment process. Local boards should contact Commerce - Workforce Development Division to obtain information on WIOA performance measurements.

Local boards are responsible for assessing the One-Stop Career Centers and the One-Stop delivery system with these criteria and submitting a record of the assessment and certification determination to Commerce - Workforce Development Division within 10 days of completing the certification determination.

Local boards are required to have policies and procedures in place for assessing the One-Stop Career Centers and the One-Stop delivery system. This Directive requires local workforce boards to develop policies and procedures by May 1, 2016. The policies and procedures:

Must include the criteria outlined within this Directive;

May include additional criteria beyond the items outlined in this policy;

Must be submitted to the Commerce - Workforce Development Division for review prior to approval by the local board;

Will be incorporated into the compliance review procedures conducted by the State Program Integrity Unit.

3. Action.

Certification should be completed by the local board prior to the beginning of the second program year under WIOA, which is July 1, 2016, and at least every three (3) years thereafter.

A statement of certification must be submitted as a component of the local plan. If certification is not completed within the required timeframes, the One-Stop Career Centers and the One-Stop delivery system become ineligible to receive infrastructure funding from partners or the state funds for those areas that utilize the state infrastructure funding mechanism. When the Commerce - Workforce Development Division receives the record of the certification determination, it will be reviewed and a statement will be issued that acknowledges that a local board has certified the One-Stop operator and that the operator is eligible to receive infrastructure funding.

4. Contact.

Questions regarding this Directive should be referred to Bill Hornsby, Supervisor, Workforce Development Division, State Programs, Planning and Divisional Budget Management Section at {334} 242-5847 or bill.hornsby@commerce.alabama.gov.

----------ALABAMA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT SYSTEM

Alabama Department of Commerce Workforce Development Division 401 Adams Avenue

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Montgomery, Alabama 36130-4106

April 2, 2020

GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE INNOVATION DIRECTIVE NO. PY2015-08, Change 01

SUBJECT: One-Stop Career Center Systems and One-Stop Delivery System Certification

1. Purpose.

To provide guidance and the deadline for the certification of One-Stop Career Centers and the One-Stop delivery system that is to be conducted by local workforce development boards for the Program Year 2019 through Program Year 2021three-year period.

2. Discussion.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Section 121(e)(2)(A) states that each area must operate at least one comprehensive One-Stop Career Center. Additional comprehensive One-Stop Career Centers and affiliate Career Centers are also allowed. WIOA Section 134(c)(l)(i), states the State is responsible "to establish a One-Stop delivery system." Certification of One-Stop Career Centers and the One-Stop Delivery System is required to be done by local boards at least once every three (3) years in order for them to receive infrastructure funding pursuant to WIOA Section 12l(h).

During Program Year (PY) 2016, each local workforce development board developed certification standards based on the Certification Criteria issued in Governor's Workforce Innovation Directive (GWID) PY2015-08 and received approval from the Alabama Department of Commerce Workforce Development Division, to use the standards they developed. Local areas certified One-Stop Career Centers and their One-Stop Delivery Systems for the PY 2016 through PY 2018 three-year period. Each local workforce development area must recertify its respective One-Stop Career Centers and One-Stop Delivery System for the PY 2019 through PY 2021three-year period.

Local Workforce Development Areas should use their current Certification Processes and Procedures previously approved by the Alabama Department of Commerce Workforce Development Division to certify their One-Stop Career Centers and One-Stop Delivery System. If certain criteria on the certification form does not apply to an affiliate site, include a notation (N/A) on the form. Please note that every Career Center location, including both comprehensive and affiliate (satellite and itinerant) sites, must be certified in accordance with TEGL NO. 16-16.

3. Action.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 cr1s1s, the time period to complete certifications is being extended past the ending date of PY19 (June 30, 2020), which is when they currently are due. Certifications should now be completed by the local board and submitted to the State Program Integrity Section no later than October 30, 2020.

Statements of certification must be submitted as a component of the local area plan in PY 2021. If the certifications are not completed within the required timeframes, the local area becomes ineligible to receive infrastructure funding from partners or state set-aside funds for those areas that utilize the state infrastructure funding mechanism. When the State Program Integrity Section receives statements of certification, they will be reviewed, and a letter will be issued that acknowledges a local board has certified its Career Centers and is eligible to receive infrastructure funding.

4. Contact.

Questions regarding this Directive should be referred to Jan Dame, Workforce Development Division, State Program Integrity Section at (334) 242-5175 or jan.dame@commerce.alabama.gov.

5. References.

- Governor's Workforce Innovation Directive No. PY 2015-08, January 21, 2016.
- Training and Employment Guidance Letter One-Stop Operating Guidance for WIOA No. 16-16, January 18, 2017.