LOUISIANA 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)

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)))

Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers programs (activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))

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

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

Community Services Block Grant (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.))

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

A. ECONOMIC, WORKFORCE, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

1. ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

II. a. 1. A. Economic Analysis

The economic situation in Louisianais recovering from the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. Compared to May 2020, the seasonally adjusted civilian labor force increased from 2,039,684 to 2,070,056 in May 2021, and the seasonally adjusted employment increased from 1,771,746 to 1,923,359. The labor force participation rate increased from 57.0% to 57.9%, and the unemployment rate decreased from 13.1% to 7.1%. The initial unemployment insurance claims decreased from 50,941 to 5,573 in, and the continued unemployment insurance claims decreased from 310,013 to 47,680.

The average weekly wage in Louisiana increased by $47, from $922 in the third quarter 2019 to $969 in the third quarter 2020. Utilities, management of companies and enterprises, mining, professional, scientific, and technical services, and manufacturing are the five highest-paying industries in Louisiana with the average hourly wages of $33.06, $32.03, $30.90, $30.71, and $28.43, respectively.

Our employment forecasts indicate that Louisiana is expected to add 99,962 jobs (6% increase) by 2022. More specifically, every region in the state is expected to add 3% - 10% jobs with an exception of the Lake Charles region. The New Orleans area is projected to add 24,760 jobs, the Baton Rouge area is projected to add 31,097 jobs, the Houma area is projected to add 8,384 jobs, the Lafayette area is projected to add 15,692 jobs, the Lake Charles area is projected to lose 2,097 jobs, the Alexandria area is projected to add 4,985 jobs, the Shreveport area is projected to add 12,573 jobs, and the Monroe area is projected to add 6,756 jobs.

Our forecasts also indicate that Accommodation and Food Services (24,821 jobs), Manufacturing (18,536 jobs), Health Care and Social Assistance (15,638 jobs), Retail Trade (11,734 jobs), and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (8,663 jobs) are the five industries that are expected to grow the most.

In an effort to keep up with the increasing labor demand, the Louisiana Workforce Commission has focused on workforce training and economic development efforts to diversify the state's economy and labor market, as well as attracting new professional and technical employers, which promotes skilled workforce with high wages.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission's Louisiana Occupational Information System (LOIS), is the state's Virtual Labor Market Information Web Portal. This interactive site provides users with access to the latest Louisiana labor force, wages, population, industry employment, training schools, training programs, report for completion rates, projections, demographics, nonfarm employment, employer database, unemployment claimants, industry staffing patterns, licensed occupations, demand occupations, and career products. The LMI tables and charts and figures that follow provide projections for Louisiana's long-term industry growth.

Sources: The preceding section cited data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the Current Employment Statistics Program, the Local Area Unemployment Statistics Program, and LWC Long Term Industry Projections.

(i) EXISTING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS[1]

Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, Accommodation and Food Services, Educational Services, Other Services (Except Public Admin.), Government, Manufacturing, Construction, Administrative and Waste Services, and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services are the largest employers / major industry sectors in Louisiana.

- 2020 Total Employment by Region

Area	2020 Employment
Statewide	1,789,618
New Orleans	508,755
Baton Rouge	429,196
Houma	84,826
Lafayette	238,584
Lake Charles	129,114
Alexandria	85,886
Shreveport	211,850
Monroe	101,539

- Major Industries: Louisiana

Industry	2020 Employment
Health Care and Social Assistance	284,453
Retail Trade	213,096
Accommodation and Food Services	157,115
Educational Services	142,849
Other Services, Except Public Admin.	139,808

Industry	2020 Employment
Government	136,168
Manufacturing	124,730
Construction	112,191
Administrative and Waste Services	88,273
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	81,807

Louisiana has eight Regional Labor Market Areas (RLMAs).

RLMA1 New Orleans Region: Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, and St. Tammany parishes

RLMA2 Baton Rouge Region: Ascension, East Feliciana, East Baton Rouge, Iberville, Livingston, Pointe Coupee, St. Helena, Tangipahoa, Washington, West Baton Rouge, and West Feliciana parishes

RLMA3 Houma Region: Assumption, Lafourche, and Terrebonne parishes

RLMA4 Lafayette Region: Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, and Vermilion parishes

RLMA5 Lake Charles Region: Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis, and Vernon parishes

RLMA6 Alexandria Region: Avoyelles, Catahoula, Concordia, Grant, LaSalle, Rapides, and Winn parishes

RLMA7 Shreveport Region: Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Claiborne, DeSoto, Lincoln, Natchitoches, Red River, Sabine, and Webster parishes

RLMA8 Monroe Region: Caldwell, East Carroll, Franklin, Jackson, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland, Tensas, Union, and West Carroll parishes

- Major Industries: New Orleans

Industry	2020 Employment
Health Care and Social Assistance	78,496
Retail Trade	55,883
Accommodation and Food Services	49,070
Other Services, except Public Administration	41,427
Educational Services	41,256
Government	35,364
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	30,132
Manufacturing	28,513
Administrative and Waste Services	27,970
Construction	25,706

- Major Industries: Baton Rouge

Industry	2020 Employment
Health Care and Social Assistance	58,263
Retail Trade	47,731
Construction	39,061
Educational Services	38,837
Government	35,655
Other Services, except Public Administration	34,789
Accommodation and Food Services	33,851
Manufacturing	31,783
Administrative and Waste Services	22,212
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	20,834

- Major Industries: Houma

Industry	2020 Employment
Health Care and Social Assistance	11,465
Retail Trade	10,550
Transportation and Warehousing	8,695
Manufacturing	7,078
Accommodation and Food Services	7,011
Other Services, except Public Administration	6,547
Educational Services	5,472
Mining	4,770
Construction	4,708
Government	4,688

- Major Industries: Lafayette

Industry	2020 Employment
Health Care and Social Assistance	40,671
Retail Trade	32,484
Accommodation and Food Services	19,786
Manufacturing	18,407
Other Services, except Public Administration	17,309
Educational Services	16,668

Industry	2020 Employment
Government	13,566
Mining	11,352
Construction	10,961
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	10,409

- Major Industries: Lake Charles

Industry	2020 Employment
Health Care and Social Assistance	17,131
Retail Trade	14,916
Construction	14,021
Accommodation and Food Services	12,636
Government	12,423
Manufacturing	12,066
Educational Services	10,199
Other Services, except Public Administration	9,693
Administrative and Waste Services	5,698
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	5,447

- Major Industries: Alexandria

Industry	2020 Employment
Health Care and Social Assistance	17,953
Retail Trade	11,136
Government	10,718
Educational Services	7,346
Accommodation and Food Services	6,109
Other Services, Except Public Administration	5,959
Manufacturing	4,667
Construction	4,255
Administrative and Waste Services	3,708
Finance and Insurance	2,273

- Major Industries: Shreveport

Industry	2020 Employment

Industry	2020 Employment
Health Care and Social Assistance	38,564
Retail Trade	27,086
Accommodation and Food Services	20,400
Educational Services	19,207
Government	15,817
Other Services, except Public Administration	15,073
Manufacturing	14,325
Administrative and Waste Services	9,831
Construction	9,098
Transportation and Warehousing	7,262

- Major Industries: Monroe

Industry	2020 Employment
Health Care and Social Assistance	21,908
Retail Trade	13,313
Accommodation and Food Services	8,253
Government	7,936
Manufacturing	7,893
Other Services, except Public Administration	6,955
Educational Services	6,050
Administrative and Waste Services	5,357
Construction	4,377
Finance and Insurance	3,669

Source: Short-term Industry Employment Projections to 2022

- Major Occupations in Louisiana

Registered Nurses; General and Operations Managers; First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers; First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers; Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers; Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive; Customer Service Representatives; Construction Laborers; Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education; and Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand are the major occupations in Louisiana.

SOC_Code	Occupation	Base 2020
29-1141	Registered Nurses	41,723
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	25,757

SOC_Code	Occupation	Base 2020
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	22,030
43-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	20,631
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	20,213
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	26,062
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	21,819
47-2061	Construction Laborers	20,575
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	19,738
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	39,845

- Major Occupations in RLMA 1 New Orleans

SOC_Code	Occupation	2020 # jobs
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	16,132
29-1141	Registered Nurses	15,003
41-2011	Cashiers	14,865
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	9,949
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	9,848
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	7,748
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	7,581
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	7,558
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	7,389
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers	7,068

- Major Occupations in RLMA 2 Baton Rouge

SOC_Code	Occupation	2020 # jobs
41-2011	Cashiers	12298
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	11668
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and	9990

SOC_Code	Occupation	2020 # jobs
	Material Movers, Hand	
31-1120	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	8341
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	8007
29-1141	Registered Nurses	7534
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers	6846
47-2061	Construction Laborers	6449
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	6426
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	5984

- Major Occupations in RLMA 3 Houma

SOC_Code	Occupation	2020 # jobs
41-2011	Cashiers	2714
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	2654
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	1975
53-5011	Sailors and Marine Oilers	1966
53-5021	Captains, Mates, and Pilots of Water Vessels	1730
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	1661
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1659
29-1141	Registered Nurses	1654
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	1540
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	1527

- Major Occupations in RLMA 4 Lafayette

SOC_Code	Occupation	2020 # jobs
41-2011	Cashiers	9901
31-1120	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	7314
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	6401
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	5184
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and	5181

SOC_Code	Occupation	2020 # jobs
	Material Movers, Hand	
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers	4923
29-1141	Registered Nurses	4429
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	4190
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	4030
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	3383

- Major Occupations in RLMA 5 Lake Charles

SOC_Code	Occupation	2020 # jobs
41-2011	Cashiers	4403
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	3261
47-2061	Construction Laborers	2955
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	2888
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	2467
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers	2434
29-1141	Registered Nurses	2259
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	2085
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	2045
31-1120	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	1826

- Major Occupations in RLMA 6 Alexandria

SOC_Code	Occupation	2020 # jobs
41-2011	Cashiers	3664
31-1120	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	2637
29-1141	Registered Nurses	2577
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	1945
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	1844
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and	1821

SOC_Code	Occupation	2020 # jobs
	Material Movers, Hand	
31-1131	Nursing Assistants	1612
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	1502
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	1462
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	1372

- Major Occupations in RLMA 7 Shreveport

SOC_Code	Occupation	2020 # jobs
41-2011	Cashiers	7466
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	6869
29-1141	Registered Nurses	6037
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	5558
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers	4679
31-1120	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	4151
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	3807
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	3710
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	3470
31-1131	Nursing Assistants	3423

- Major Occupations in RLMA 8 Monroe

SOC_Code	Occupation	2020 # jobs
31-1120	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	4925
41-2011	Cashiers	4189
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	3568
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	2955
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	2356
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers	2336
29-1141	Registered Nurses	2176

SOC_Code	Occupation	2020 # jobs
31-1131	Nursing Assistants	1902
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	1849
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	1693

Source: LWC Short-term Occupational Projections for All Occupations to 2022

(ii) EMERGING DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS AND OCCUPATIONS [2]

Our employment forecasts indicate that Louisiana is expected to add 99,962 jobs (6% increase) by 2022. More specifically, every region in the state is expected to add 3% - 10% jobs with an exception of the Lake Charles region. The New Orleans area is projected to add 24,760 jobs, the Baton Rouge area is projected to add 31,097 jobs, the Houma area is projected to add 8,384 jobs, the Lafayette area is projected to add 15,692 jobs, the Lake Charles area is projected to lose 2,097 jobs, the Alexandria area is projected to add 4,985 jobs, the Shreveport area is projected to add 12,573 jobs, and the Monroe area is projected to add 6,756 jobs.

Area	Base 2020 Employment	Projected 2022 Employment	Difference	Percent Change
Statewide	1,789,618	1,889,580	99,962	6%
New Orleans	508,755	533,515	24,760	5%
Baton Rouge	429,196	460,293	31,097	7%
Houma	84,826	93,210	8,384	10%
Lafayette	238,584	254,276	15,692	7%
Lake Charles	129,114	127,017	-2,097	-2%
Alexandria	83,701	86,510	2,809	3%
Shreveport	211,850	224,423	12,573	6%
Monroe	101,539	108,295	6,756	7%

- Industry Forecast: Total, All Industries
- Major Industries in Louisiana

Industry	Base 2020 Employment	Projected 2022 Employment	Difference	Percent Change
Health Care and Social Assistance	284,453	300,091	15,638	5%
Retail Trade	213,096	224,830	11,734	6%
Accommodation and Food Services	157,115	181,936	24,821	16%
Educational Services	142,849	142,440	-409	0%

Industry	Base 2020 Employment	Projected 2022 Employment	Difference	Percent Change
Other Services, Except Public Admin.	139,808	143,065	3,257	2%
Government	136,168	138,774	2,606	2%
Manufacturing	124,730	143,266	18,536	15%
Construction	112,191	114,277	2,086	2%
Administrative and Waste Services	88,273	91,467	3,194	4%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	81,807	90,470	8,663	11%

- Top 5 Growing Industries in Louisiana

Industry	Base 2020 Employment	Projected 2022 Employment	Difference	Percent Change
Accommodation & Food Services	157,115	181,936	24,821	16%
Manufacturing	124,730	143,266	18,536	15%
Health Care and Social Assistance	284,453	300,091	15,638	6%
Retail Trade	213,096	224,830	11,734	6%
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	81,807	90,470	8,663	11%

- Major Industries: New Orleans

Industry	Base 2020 Employment	Projected 2022 Employment	Difference	Percent Change
Health Care and Social Assistance	78,496	83,401	4,905	6%
Retail Trade	55,883	59,061	3,178	6%
Accommodation and Food Services	49,070	52,210	3,140	6%
Other Services, except Public Administration	41,427	42,465	1,038	3%
Educational Services	41,256	40,882	-374	-1%
Government	35,364	36,419	1,055	3%
Professional, Scientific, and	30,132	34,523	4,391	15%

Industry	Base 2020 Employment	Projected 2022 Employment	Difference	Percent Change
Technical Services				
Manufacturing	28,513	32,926	4,413	15%
Administrative and Waste Services	27,970	28,274	304	1%
Construction	25,706	27,305	1,599	6%

- Major Industries: Baton Rouge

Industry	Base 2020 Employment	Projected 2022 Employment	Difference	Percent Change
Health Care and Social Assistance	58,263	61,974	3,711	6%
Retail Trade	47,731	50,570	2,839	6%
Construction	39,061	39,082	21	0%
Educational Services	38,837	39,963	1,126	3%
Government	35,655	36,384	729	2%
Other Services, except Public Administration	34,789	35,978	1,189	3%
Accommodation and Food Services	33,851	41,473	7,622	23%
Manufacturing	31,783	37,421	5,638	18%
Administrative and Waste Services	22,212	24,289	2,077	9%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	20,834	22,943	2,109	10%

- Major Industries: Houma

Industry	Base 2020 Employment	Projected 2022 Employment	Difference	Percent Change
Health Care and Social Assistance	11,465	12,754	1,289	11%
Retail Trade	10,550	11,307	757	7%
Transportation and Warehousing	8,695	9,171	476	5%
Manufacturing	7,078	9,212	2,134	30%
Accommodation and Food Services	7,011	8,964	1,953	28%

Industry	Base 2020 Employment	Projected 2022 Employment	Difference	Percent Change
Other Services, except Public Administration	6,547	6,766	219	3%
Educational Services	5,472	5,336	-136	-2%
Mining	4,770	4,990	220	5%
Construction	4,708	4,726	18	0%
Government	4,688	4,821	133	3%

- Major Industries: Lafayette

Industry	Base 2020 Employment	Projected 2022 Employment	Difference	Percent Change
Health Care and Social Assistance	40,671	43,786	3,115	8%
Retail Trade	32,484	34,514	2,030	6%
Accommodation and Food Services	19,786	23,869	4,083	21%
Manufacturing	18,407	20,399	1,992	11%
Other Services, except Public Administration	17,309	17,853	544	3%
Educational Services	16,668	16,813	145	1%
Government	13,566	13,771	205	2%
Mining	11,352	13,256	1,904	17%
Construction	10,961	11,222	261	2%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	10,409	11,169	760	7%

- Major Industries: Lake Charles

Industry	Base 2020 Employment	Projected 2022 Employment	Difference	Percent Change
Health Care and Social Assistance	17,131	15,681	-1,450	-8%
Retail Trade	14,916	14,300	-616	-4%
Construction	14,021	13,290	-731	-5%
Accommodation and Food Services	12,636	13,869	1,233	10%
Government	12,423	11,812	-611	-5%

Industry	Base 2020 Employment	Projected 2022 Employment	Difference	Percent Change
Manufacturing	12,066	13,538	1,472	12%
Educational Services	10,199	10,438	239	2%
Other Services, except Public Administration	9,693	9,066	-627	-6%
Administrative and Waste Services	5,698	5,357	-341	-6%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	5,447	5,579	132	2%

- Major Industries: Alexandria

Industry	Base 2020 Employment	Projected 2022 Employment	Difference	Percent Change
Health Care and Social Assistance	17,953	18,716	763	4%
Retail Trade	11,136	11,969	833	7%
Government	10,718	10,870	152	1%
Accommodation and Food Services	6,109	7,375	1,266	21%
Other Services, except Public Administration	5,959	6,141	182	3%
Educational Services	7,346	7,143	-203	-3%
Manufacturing	4,667	5,419	752	16%
Construction	4,255	4,353	98	2%
Administrative and Waste Services	3,708	4,086	378	10%
Finance and Insurance	2,273	2,232	-41	-2%

- Major Industries: Shreveport

Industry	Base 2020 Employment	Projected 2022 Employment	Difference	Percent Change
Health Care and Social Assistance	38,564	40,466	1,902	5%
Retail Trade	27,086	29,048	1,962	7%
Accommodation and Food Services	20,400	24,165	3,765	18%
Educational Services	19,207	19,728	521	3%

Industry	Base 2020 Employment	Projected 2022 Employment	Difference	Percent Change
Government	15,817	16,587	770	5%
Other Services, except Public Administration	15,073	15,571	498	3%
Manufacturing	14,325	15,485	1,160	8%
Administrative and Waste Services	9,831	9,308	-523	-5%
Construction	9,098	9,630	532	6%
Transportation and Warehousing	7,262	7,884	622	9%

- Major Industries: Monroe

Industry	Base 2020 Employment	Projected 2022 Employment	Difference	Percent Change
Health Care and Social Assistance	21,908	23,313	1,405	6%
Retail Trade	13,313	14,058	745	6%
Accommodation and Food Services	8,253	10,023	1,770	21%
Government	7,936	8,127	191	2%
Manufacturing	7,893	8,922	1,029	13%
Other Services, except Public Administration	6,955	7,150	195	3%
Educational Services	6,050	6,456	406	7%
Administrative and Waste Services	5,357	5,868	511	10%
Construction	4,377	4,656	279	6%
Finance and Insurance	3,669	3,550	-119	-3%

Source: LWC Short-term Industry Employment Projections to 2022

- Major Occupations in Louisiana

Occupation	SOC Code	Base 2020	Projected 2022	Difference	Percent Change
Registered Nurses	29-1141	41,723	43,855	2,132	5%
General and Operations Managers	11-1021	25,757	27,417	1,660	6%
First-Line Supervisors of Retail	41-1011	22,030	22,895	865	4%

Occupation	SOC Code	Base 2020	Projected 2022	Difference	Percent Change
Sales Workers					
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	43-1011	20,631	21,466	835	4%
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	53-3032	20,213	21,451	1,238	6%
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	43-6014	26,062	26,381	319	1%
Customer Service Representatives	43-4051	21,819	22,371	552	3%
Construction Laborers	47-2061	20,575	21,249	674	3%
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	25-2021	19,738	19,668	-70	0%
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	53-7062	39,845	42,607	2,762	7%

- RLMA 1 Major Occupations

Occupation	SOC Code	Base 2020	Projected 2022	Difference	Percent Change
Retail Salespersons	41-2031	16,132	16,714	582	4%
Registered Nurses	29-1141	15,003	15,707	704	5%
Cashiers	41-2011	14,865	15,503	638	4%
Waiters and Waitresses	35-3031	9,949	10,336	387	4%
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	53-7062	9,848	10,525	677	7%
General and Operations Managers	11-1021	7,748	8,243	495	6%
Fast Food and Counter Workers	35-3023	7,581	7,976	395	5%

Occupation	SOC Code	Base 2020	Projected 2022	Difference	Percent Change
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	43-6014	7,558	7,612	54	1%
Office Clerks, General	43-9061	7,389	7,542	153	2%
Food Preparation Workers	35-2021	7,068	7,412	344	5%

- RLMA 2 Major Occupations

Occupation	SOC Code	Base 2020	Projected 2022	Difference	Percent Change
Cashiers	41-2011	12,298	13,169	871	7%
Retail Salespersons	41-2031	11,668	12,116	448	4%
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	53-7062	9,990	10,961	971	10%
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	31-1120	8,341	8,984	643	8%
Office Clerks, General	43-9061	8,007	8,315	308	4%
Registered Nurses	29-1141	7,534	7,975	441	6%
Food Preparation Workers	35-2021	6,846	8,093	1,247	18%
Construction Laborers	47-2061	6,449	6,559	110	2%
Waiters and Waitresses	35-3031	6,426	7,801	1,375	21%
General and Operations Managers	11-1021	5,984	6,518	534	9%

- RLMA 3 Major Occupations

Occupation	SOC Code	Base 2020	Projected 2022	Difference	Percent Change
Cashiers	41-2011	2,714	2,927	213	8%
Retail Salespersons	41-2031	2,654	2,857	203	8%

Occupation	SOC Code	Base 2020	Projected 2022	Difference	Percent Change
Office Clerks, General	43-9061	1,975	2,086	111	6%
Sailors and Marine Oilers	53-5011	1,966	1,990	24	1%
Captains, Mates, and Pilots of Water Vessels	53-5021	1,730	1,780	50	3%
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	53-7062	1,661	1,854	193	12%
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	53-3032	1,659	1,757	98	6%
Registered Nurses	29-1141	1,654	1,913	259	16%
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	51-4121	1,540	1,890	350	23%
Fast Food and Counter Workers	35-3023	1,527	1,965	438	29%

- RLMA 4 Major Occupations

Occupation	SOC Code	Base 2020	Projected 2022	Difference	Percent Change
Cashiers	41-2011	9,901	10,567	666	7%
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	31-1120	7,314	8,087	773	11%
Retail Salespersons	41-2031	6,401	6,729	328	5%
Office Clerks, General	43-9061	5,184	5,370	186	4%
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	53-7062	5,181	5,493	312	6%
Food Preparation Workers	35-2021	4,923	5,692	769	16%
Registered Nurses	29-1141	4,429	4,707	278	6%
General and Operations Managers	11-1021	4,190	4,379	189	5%

Occupation	SOC Code	Base 2020	Projected 2022	Difference	Percent Change
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	43-6014	4,030	4,088	58	1%
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	29-2061	3,383	3,641	258	8%

- RLMA 5 Major Occupations

Occupation	SOC Code	Base 2020	Projected 2022	Difference	Percent Change
Cashiers	41-2011	4,403	4,117	-286	-7%
Retail Salespersons	41-2031	3,261	3,120	-141	-4%
Construction Laborers	47-2061	2,955	2,868	-87	-3%
Office Clerks, General	43-9061	2,888	2,678	-210	-7%
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	53-7062	2,467	2,386	-81	-3%
Food Preparation Workers	35-2021	2,434	2,241	-193	-8%
Registered Nurses	29-1141	2,259	2,239	-20	-1%
Waiters and Waitresses	35-3031	2,085	2,063	-22	-1%
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	43-6014	2,045	1,950	-95	-5%
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	31-1120	1,826	1,606	-220	-12%

- RLMA 6 Major Occupations

Occupation	SOC Code	Base 2020	Projected 2022	Difference	Percent Change
Cashiers	41-2011	3,664	3,975	311	9%
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	31-1120	2,637	2,725	88	3%

Occupation	SOC Code	Base 2020	Projected 2022	Difference	Percent Change
Registered Nurses	29-1141	2,577	2,706	129	5%
Office Clerks, General	43-9061	1,945	1,995	50	3%
Retail Salespersons	41-2031	1,844	1,961	117	6%
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	53-7062	1,821	1,956	135	7%
Nursing Assistants	31-1131	1,612	1,695	83	5%
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	43-6014	1,502	1,458	-44	-3%
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	41-1011	1,462	1,575	113	8%
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	29-2061	1,372	1,439	67	5%

- RLMA 7 Major Occupations

Occupation	SOC Code	Base 2020	Projected 2022	Difference	Percent Change
Cashiers	41-2011	7,466	7,905	439	6%
Retail Salespersons	41-2031	6,869	7,309	440	6%
Registered Nurses	29-1141	6,037	6,322	285	5%
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	53-7062	5,558	5,848	290	5%
Food Preparation Workers	35-2021	4,679	5,271	592	13%
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	31-1120	4,151	4,373	222	5%
Customer Service Representatives	43-4051	3,807	3,734	-73	-2%
Office Clerks, General	43-9061	3,710	3,809	99	3%
Fast Food and Counter Workers	35-3023	3,470	4,066	596	17%

Occupation	SOC Code	Base 2020	Projected 2022	Difference	Percent Change
Nursing Assistants	31-1131	3,423	3,693	270	8%

- RLMA 8 Major Occupations

Occupation	SOC Code	Base 2020	Projected 2022	Difference	Percent Change
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	31-1120	4,925	5,401	476	10%
Cashiers	41-2011	4,189	4,529	340	8%
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	53-7062	3,568	3,874	306	9%
Retail Salespersons	41-2031	2,955	3,052	97	3%
Office Clerks, General	43-9061	2,356	2,399	43	2%
Food Preparation Workers	35-2021	2,336	2,704	368	16%
Registered Nurses	29-1141	2,176	2,233	57	3%
Nursing Assistants	31-1131	1,902	2,088	186	10%
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	37-2011	1,849	2,007	158	9%
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	29-2061	1,693	1,816	123	7%

Source: LWC Short-term Occupational Projections for All Occupations to 2022

(iii) EMPLOYERS' EMPLOYMENT NEEDS

Star rating is a metrics Louisiana has developed to identify high-demand and high-wage occupations. Five-star indicates the most desirable (high-demand and high-wage), and one-star indicates the least desirable (low-demand and low-wage). There are 189,129 five-star jobs (12%), 454,098 four-star jobs (28%), 281,337 three-star jobs (17%), 225,725 two-star jobs (14%), and 478,978 one-star jobs (29%) in Louisiana. The complete list of star ratings is available at:
https://www2.laworks.net/LaborMarketInfo/LMI_OccAllProj_short.asp?years=20202022.

- Five-star occupations in Louisiana

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-2021	Marketing Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-2022	Sales Managers	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	
11-3021	Computer and Information Systems Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-3031	Financial Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-3051	Industrial Production Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-3121	Human Resources Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-9021	Construction Managers	Bachelor's degree	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
11-9041	Architectural and Engineering Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-9051	Food Service Managers	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	License Required
13-1081	Logisticians	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
13-1161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
15-1211	Computer Systems Analysts	Bachelor's degree	None	None	

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
15-1212	Information Security Analysts	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	
15-1244	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
15-1251	Computer Programmers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
15-1256	Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2041	Chemical Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2051	Civil Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2071	Electrical Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2081	Environmental Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2112	Industrial Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2141	Mechanical Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2171	Petroleum Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-3026	Industrial Engineering Technicians	Associate's degree	None	None	
19-2031	Chemists	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
23-1011	Lawyers	Doctoral or professional degree	None	None	License Required
29-1051	Pharmacists	Doctoral or professional degree	None	None	License Required

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
29-1071	Physician Assistants	Master's degree	None	None	License Required
29-1122	Occupational Therapists	Master's degree	None	None	License Required
29-1123	Physical Therapists	Doctoral or professional degree	None	None	License Required
29-1141	Registered Nurses	Bachelor's degree	None	None	License Required
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	Master's degree	None	None	
47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship	License Required
49-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
51-8091	Chemical Plant and System Operators	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
53-2012	Commercial Pilots	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
53-5021	Captains, Mates, and Pilots of Water Vessels	Postsecondary non-degree award	Less than 5 years	None	License Required

- Five-star occupations in RLMA 1

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-2021	Marketing Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-2022	Sales Managers	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	
11-3021	Computer and Information Systems Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-3031	Financial Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-3051	Industrial Production Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-3121	Human Resources Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-9021	Construction Managers	Bachelor's degree	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
11-9041	Architectural and Engineering Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	License Required
13-1111	Management Analysts	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	Bachelor's degree	None	None	License Required
15-1211	Computer Systems Analysts	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
15-1212	Information Security Analysts	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	
15-1244	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
15-1251	Computer	Bachelor's	None	None	

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
	Programmers	degree			
15-1256	Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2041	Chemical Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2051	Civil Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2071	Electrical Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2081	Environmental Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2112	Industrial Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2141	Mechanical Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2171	Petroleum Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-3023	Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technicians	Associate's degree	None	None	
19-2041	Environmental Scientists and Specialists, Including Health	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
19-4031	Chemical Technicians	Associate's degree	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
23-1011	Lawyers	Doctoral or professional degree	None	None	License Required
29-1051	Pharmacists	Doctoral or professional degree	None	None	License Required
29-1071	Physician	Master's	None	None	License

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
	Assistants	degree			Required
29-1122	Occupational Therapists	Master's degree	None	None	License Required
29-1123	Physical Therapists	Doctoral or professional degree	None	None	License Required
29-1127	Speech-Language Pathologists	Master's degree	None	Internship/residency	Certificate Available with License
29-1141	Registered Nurses	Bachelor's degree	None	None	License Required
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	Master's degree	None	None	
29-1228	Physicians, All Other; and Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric	Doctoral or professional degree	None	Internship/residency	
47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	High school diploma or equivalent	5 years or more	None	
47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship	License Required
49-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
51-8091	Chemical Plant and System Operators	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
53-5031	Ship Engineers	Postsecondary non-degree award	Less than 5 years	None	
53-7021	Crane and Tower Operators	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	Moderate-term on-the-job training	

- Five-star occupations in RLMA 2

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-2021	Marketing Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-2022	Sales Managers	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	
11-3021	Computer and Information Systems Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-3031	Financial Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-3051	Industrial Production Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-3071	Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	High school diploma or equivalent	5 years or more	None	License Required
11-9021	Construction Managers	Bachelor's degree	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
11-9041	Architectural and Engineering	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
	Managers				
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	
11-9121	Natural Sciences Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
13-1081	Logisticians	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
13-1111	Management Analysts	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	Bachelor's degree	None	None	License Required
15-1211	Computer Systems Analysts	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
15-1244	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
15-1251	Computer Programmers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
15-1256	Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2041	Chemical Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2051	Civil Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2071	Electrical Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2081	Environmental Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2111	Health and Safety Engineers, Except Mining Safety Engineers and Inspectors	Bachelor's degree	None	None	

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
17-2112	Industrial Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2141	Mechanical Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-3023	Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technicians	Associate's degree	None	None	
17-3026	Industrial Engineering Technicians	Associate's degree	None	None	
19-2031	Chemists	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
19-4031	Chemical Technicians	Associate's degree	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
29-1051	Pharmacists	Doctoral or professional degree	None	None	License Required
29-1071	Physician Assistants	Master's degree	None	None	License Required
29-1122	Occupational Therapists	Master's degree	None	None	License Required
29-1123	Physical Therapists	Doctoral or professional degree	None	None	License Required
29-1141	Registered Nurses	Bachelor's degree	None	None	License Required
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	Master's degree	None	None	
29-1228	Physicians, All Other; and Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric	Doctoral or professional degree	None	Internship/residency	
41-4011	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Technical and	Bachelor's degree	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
	Scientific Products				
49-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	
49-2094	Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Commercial and Industrial Equipment	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	Long-term on-the-job training	
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training	
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	
51-4041	Machinists	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training	
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
51-8091	Chemical Plant and System Operators	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
51-9011	Chemical Equipment Operators and Tenders	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
53-1047	FirstLine Supervisors of Transportation & Material Moving Workers, Exc Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisor	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	

- Five-star occupations in RLMA 3

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Traing	Occupational License Required
11-1011	Chief Executives	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-2022	Sales Managers	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	
11-3031	Financial Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-3051	Industrial Production Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-9021	Construction Managers	Bachelor's degree	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
11-9041	Architectural and Engineering Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-9051	Food Service Managers	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	License Required
13-1041	Compliance Officers	Bachelor's degree	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
29-1071	Physician Assistants	Master's degree	None	None	License Required
29-1123	Physical Therapists	Doctoral or professional degree	None	None	License Required
29-1127	Speech-Language Pathologists	Master's degree	None	Internship/residency	Certificate Available with License
29-1141	Registered Nurses	Bachelor's degree	None	None	License Required
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	Master's degree	None	None	

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Traing	Occupational License Required
47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	High school diploma or equivalent	5 years or more	None	
47-2111	Electricians	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship	
49-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	
51-2041	Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
51-4192	Layout Workers, Metal and Plastic	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
51-8093	Petroleum Pump System Operators, Refinery Operators, and Gaugers	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
53-1047	FirstLine Supervisors of Transportation & Material Moving Workers, Exc Aircraft Cargo Handling	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Traing	Occupational License Required
	Supervisor				
53-2011	Airline Pilots, Copilots, and Flight Engineers	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
53-2012	Commercial Pilots	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
53-5011	Sailors and Marine Oilers	No formal educational credential	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	License Required
53-5021	Captains, Mates, and Pilots of Water Vessels	Postsecondary non-degree award	Less than 5 years	None	License Required

- Five-star occupations in RLMA 4

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-2022	Sales Managers	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	
11-3031	Financial Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-3051	Industrial Production Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-9021	Construction Managers	Bachelor's degree	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
11-9051	Food Service Managers	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	License Required
13-1111	Management Analysts	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	Bachelor's degree	None	None	License Required
15-1256	Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2051	Civil Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2081	Environmental Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2112	Industrial Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2141	Mechanical Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2171	Petroleum Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
19-2042	Geoscientists, Except Hydrologists and Geographers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
29-1051	Pharmacists	Doctoral or professional degree	None	None	License Required
29-1071	Physician Assistants	Master's degree	None	None	License Required
29-1123	Physical Therapists	Doctoral or professional degree	None	None	License Required
29-1141	Registered Nurses	Bachelor's degree	None	None	License Required
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	Master's degree	None	None	
47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	High school diploma or equivalent	5 years or more	None	

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
47-5097	Earth Drillers, Except Oil and Gas; and Explosives Workers, Ordnance Handling Experts, and Blasters	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	Long-term on-the-job training	
49-2091	Avionics Technicians	Associate's degree	None	None	
49-2094	Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Commercial and Industrial Equipment	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	Long-term on-the-job training	
49-3011	Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	None	
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training	
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	
53-2011	Airline Pilots, Copilots, and Flight Engineers	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
53-2012	Commercial Pilots	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	

- Five-star occupations in RLMA 5

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
11-1021	General and Operations	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
	Managers				
11-3031	Financial Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-3051	Industrial Production Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-3061	Purchasing Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-3121	Human Resources Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-9021	Construction Managers	Bachelor's degree	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
11-9033	Education Administrators, Postsecondary	Master's degree	Less than 5 years	None	
11-9041	Architectural and Engineering Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	License Required
11-9121	Natural Sciences Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
13-1081	Logisticians	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
13-1111	Management Analysts	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	Bachelor's degree	None	None	License Required
15-1244	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2041	Chemical Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2051	Civil Engineers	Bachelor's	None	None	

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
		degree			
17-2071	Electrical Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2081	Environmental Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2111	Health and Safety Engineers, Except Mining Safety Engineers and Inspectors	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2112	Industrial Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2131	Materials Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2141	Mechanical Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-3023	Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technicians	Associate's degree	None	None	
17-3026	Industrial Engineering Technicians	Associate's degree	None	None	
19-2031	Chemists	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
19-4042	Environmental Science and Protection Technicians, Including Health	Associate's degree	None	None	
29-1051	Pharmacists	Doctoral or professional degree	None	None	License Required
29-1141	Registered Nurses	Bachelor's degree	None	None	License Required
47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction	High school diploma or equivalent	5 years or more	None	

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
	Workers				
47-2031	Carpenters	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship	
47-2051	Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers	No formal educational credential	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
47-2073	Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
49-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	
49-2094	Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Commercial and Industrial Equipment	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	Long-term on-the-job training	
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training	
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	
51-4041	Machinists	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training	
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
51-8091	Chemical Plant and System Operators	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
51-8092	Gas Plant Operators	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training	
51-9123	Painting, Coating, and Decorating Workers	No formal educational credential	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
53-7021	Crane and Tower Operators	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	Moderate-term on-the-job training	

- Five-star occupations in RLMA 6

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-2022	Sales Managers	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	
11-3031	Financial Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-3051	Industrial Production Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-9021	Construction Managers	Bachelor's degree	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
11-9033	Education Administrators, Postsecondary	Master's degree	Less than 5 years	None	
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	License Required
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	Bachelor's degree	None	None	License Required
15-1244	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	Bachelor's degree	None	None	

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
17-2051	Civil Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2071	Electrical Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2112	Industrial Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2141	Mechanical Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
21-2011	Clergy	Bachelor's degree	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
29-1126	Respiratory Therapists	Associate's degree	None	None	License Required
29-1127	Speech-Language Pathologists	Master's degree	None	Internship/residency	Certificate Available with License
29-1141	Registered Nurses	Bachelor's degree	None	None	License Required
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	Master's degree	None	None	
47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	High school diploma or equivalent	5 years or more	None	
47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship	License Required
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	
51-8091	Chemical Plant and System Operators	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	

- Five-star occupations in RLMA 7

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupation License Required
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-2021	Marketing Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-2022	Sales Managers	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	
11-3010	Administrative Services and Facilities Managers	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	
11-3021	Computer and Information Systems Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-3031	Financial Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-3051	Industrial Production Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-3121	Human Resources Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-9051	Food Service Managers	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	License Required
13-1111	Management Analysts	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	Bachelor's degree	None	None	License Required
15-1211	Computer Systems Analysts	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
15-1212	Information Security Analysts	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	
15-1244	Network and Computer Systems	Bachelor's degree	None	None	

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupation License Required
	Administrators				
15-1256	Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-2051	Civil Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
17-3023	Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technicians	Associate's degree	None	None	
19-2042	Geoscientists, Except Hydrologists and Geographers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
23-1011	Lawyers	Doctoral or professional degree	None	None	License Required
29-1051	Pharmacists	Doctoral or professional degree	None	None	License Required
29-1071	Physician Assistants	Master's degree	None	None	License Required
29-1122	Occupational Therapists	Master's degree	None	None	License Required
29-1123	Physical Therapists	Doctoral or professional degree	None	None	License Required
29-1127	Speech-Language Pathologists	Master's degree	None	Internship/residency	Certificate Available with License
29-1141	Registered Nurses	Bachelor's degree	None	None	License Required
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	Master's degree	None	None	
35-1011	Chefs and Head Cooks	High school diploma or	5 years or more	None	

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupation License Required
		equivalent			
41-4011	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Technical and Scientific Products	Bachelor's degree	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	High school diploma or equivalent	5 years or more	None	
47-2111	Electricians	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Apprenticeship	
49-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	
49-2094	Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Commercial and Industrial Equipment	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	Long-term on-the-job training	
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training	
51-8092	Gas Plant Operators	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training	

- Five-star occupations in RLMA 8

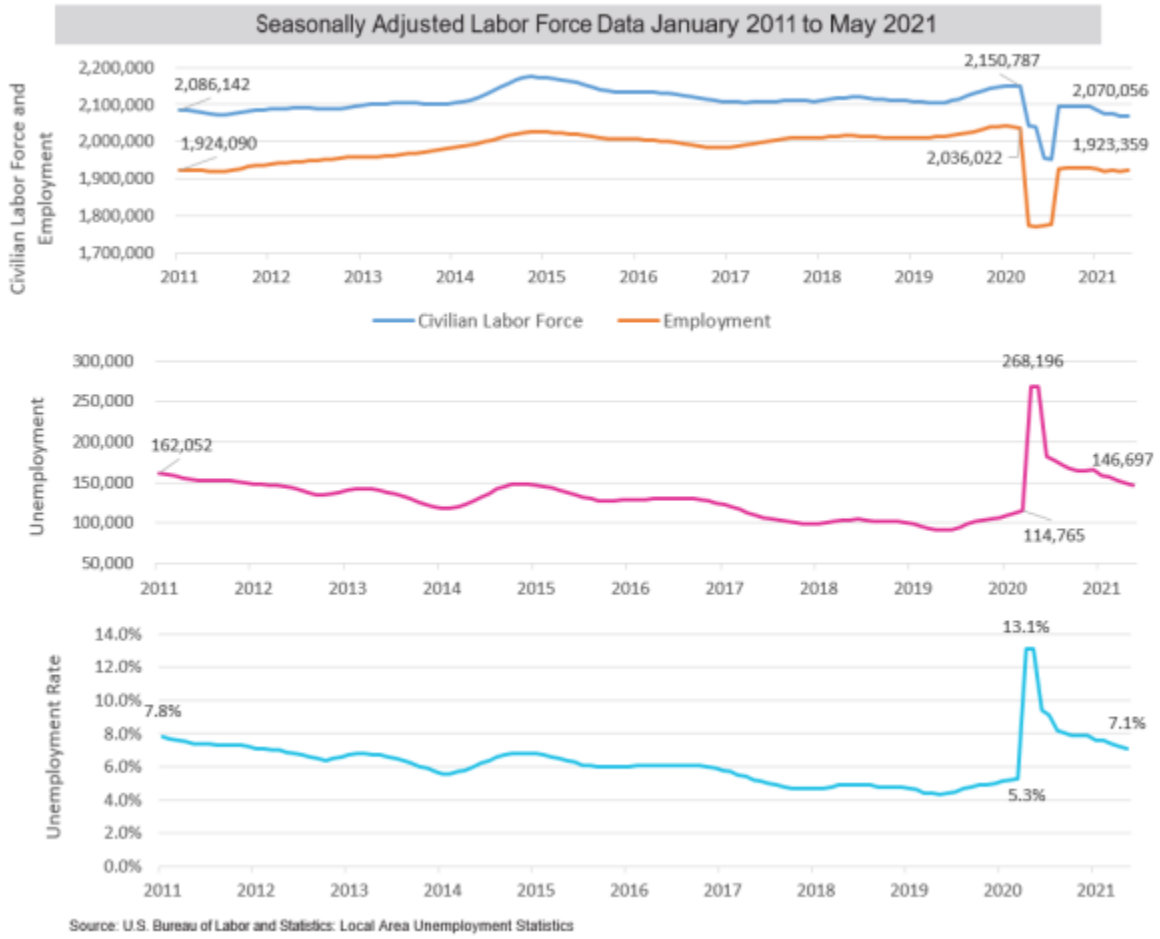
SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
11-1021	General and Operations	Bachelor's	5 years or	None	

SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
	Managers	degree	more		
11-3051	Industrial Production Managers	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	
11-9021	Construction Managers	Bachelor's degree	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
11-9051	Food Service Managers	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	License Required
11-9151	Social and Community Service Managers	Bachelor's degree	Less than 5 years	None	
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	Bachelor's degree	None	None	License Required
17-2112	Industrial Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	
29-1051	Pharmacists	Doctoral or professional degree	None	None	License Required
29-1141	Registered Nurses	Bachelor's degree	None	None	License Required
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	Master's degree	None	None	
41-4011	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Technical and Scientific Products	Bachelor's degree	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
41-9031	Sales Engineers	Bachelor's degree	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training	
47-2111	Electricians	High school diploma or	None	Apprenticeship	

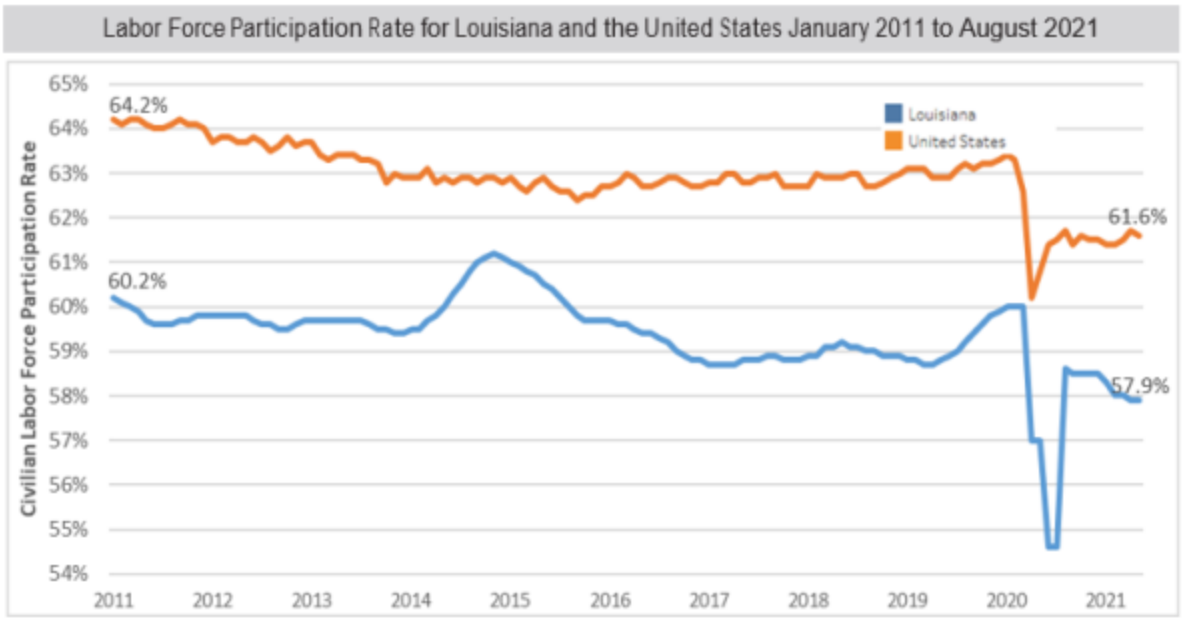
SOC_Code	Occupational Title	Most Significant Source of Education or Training	Work Experience	Job Training	Occupational License Required
		equivalent			
49-9043	Maintenance Workers, Machinery	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training	
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	
51-4041	Machinists	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Long-term on-the-job training	

(i) Employment and Unemployment

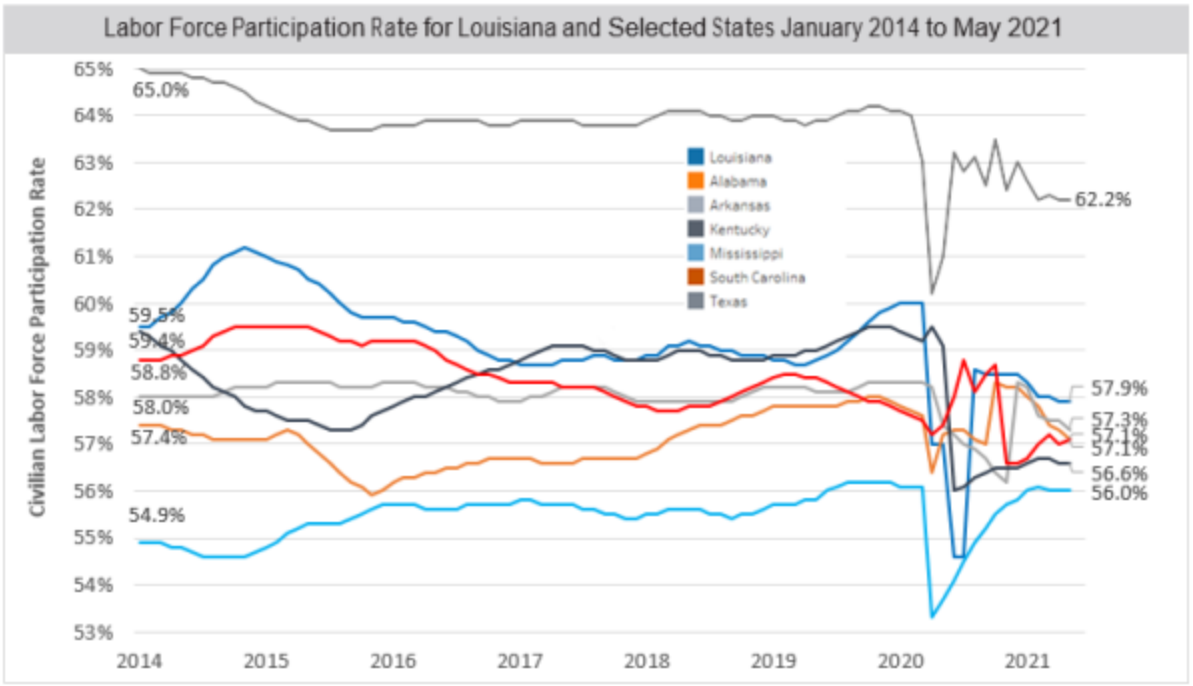
- Civilian labor force had grown to 2,150,787 before the pandemic began and was at 2,070,056 as of May 2021.
- Employment grew to 2,036,022 prior to the pandemic and has recovered to 1,923,359 as of May 2021.
- Unemployment has decreased overall since 2011 and experienced a large spike due to the beginning of the pandemic in 2020.



- In January 2011, Louisiana's Labor Force participation rate was 4.0 percentage points below the national average. In May 2021, the state participation rate was 3.7 percentage points below the national average after suffering a large decline from the COVID-19 pandemic.

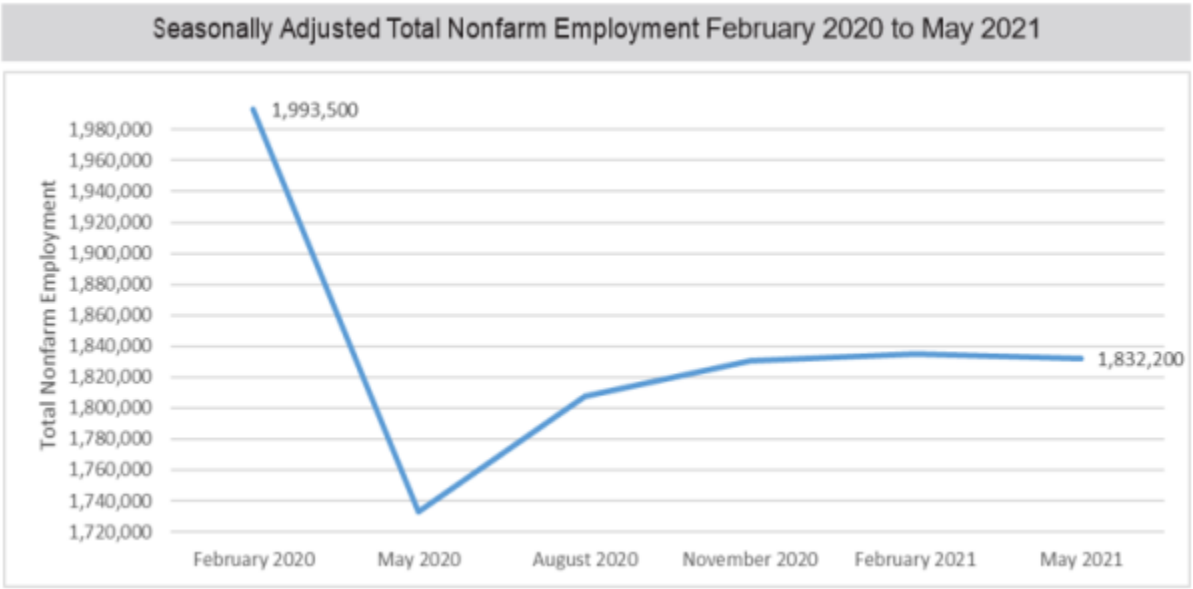


- This chart shows the percent change in the size of the labor force for southern states since 2014. Louisiana's labor force has decreased by 2.7 percent during that time, while many other southern states have seen similar reductions.



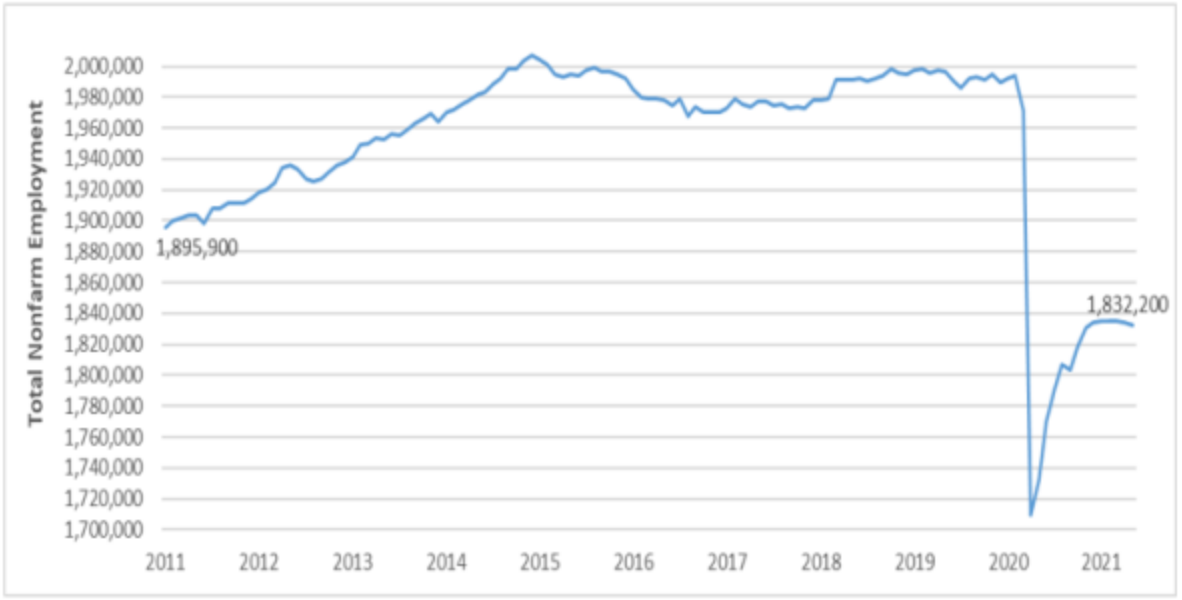
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, .www.bls.gov/lau/rdscnp19.htm

- According to the Current Employment Statistics survey, Louisiana nonfarm employment decreased from 1,993,500 in February 2020 to 1,832,200 in May 2021, which is 8.1 percent decrease. However, it has increased from 1,732,800 in March 2020, which is 5.7 percent increase.



- Due to the pandemic, Louisiana's total nonfarm employment fell in 2020 but is recovering in 2021.

Seasonally Adjusted Total Nonfarm Employment January 2011 to May 2021



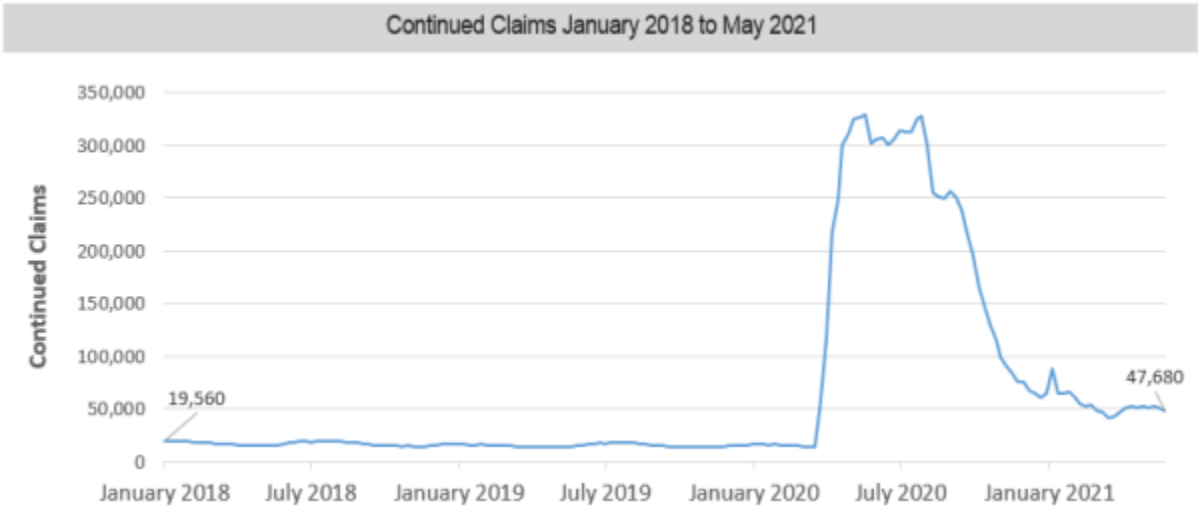
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics: Local Area Unemployment Statistics: Current Employment Statistics

- The chart presents initial unemployment insurance claims by each week from January 2018 to May 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic led to historic levels of claims in April 2020, but the levels have decreased to 5,573 in May 2021.

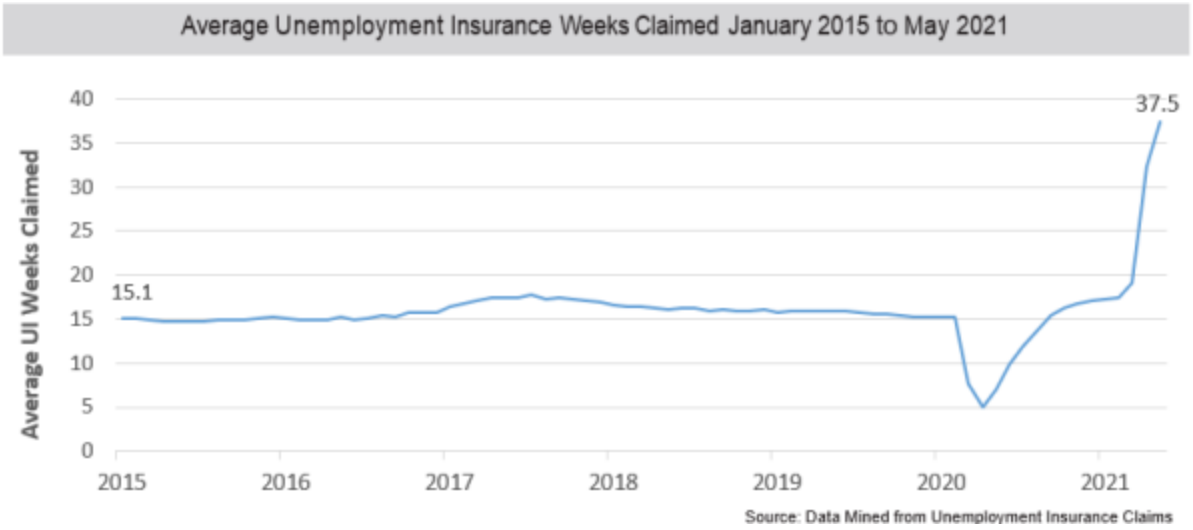
Weekly Initial Claims January 2018 to May 2021



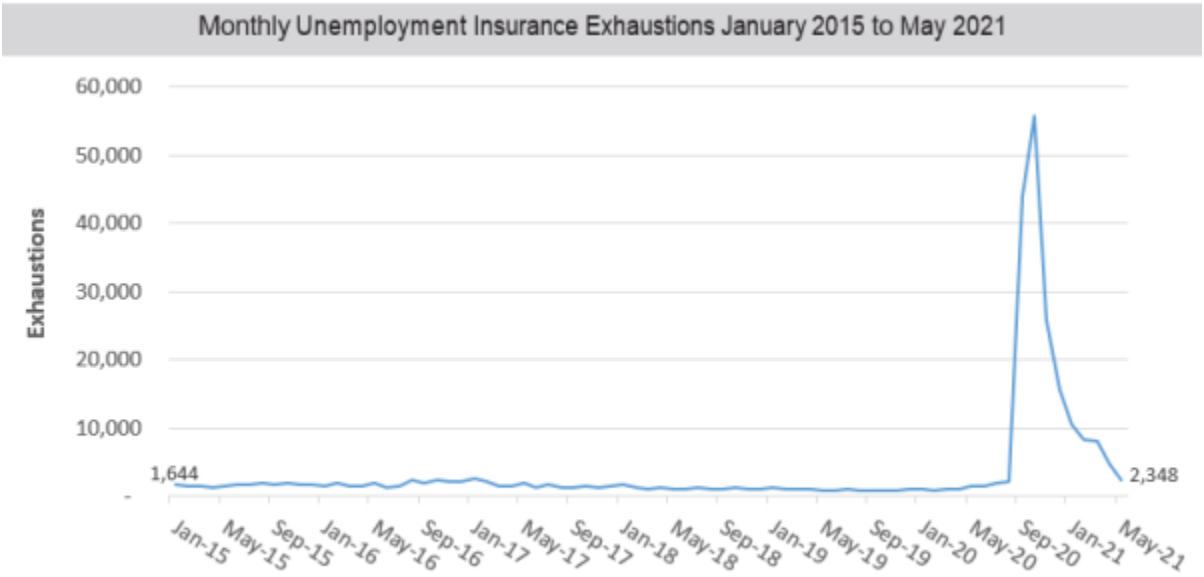
- Louisiana's number of continued claimants showed a downward trend between January 2017 and March 2020. However, claims have spiked to historically high levels in April 2020 and subsequent months. Continued claims began to decrease after the summer of 2020 but have not yet reached pre-pandemic levels.



- The chart below shows the average number of weeks of benefits claimed by unemployment insurance claimants. The average weeks claimed was 37.5 weeks in May 2021.



- Monthly unemployment insurance exhaustions data further emphasizes the weakness of the labor market because of the pandemic. Claim exhaustions were highest in October 2020 with 55,831 claimants using up their UI benefits. Exhaustions have since decreased in frequency and continue to follow this downward trend.



Source: Data Mined from Unemployment Insurance Claims

Orleans	121,579	**East Baton Rouge**	115,038	**Jefferson**	111,198
Lafayette	55,039	**Caddo**	53,360	**Calcasieu**	50,535
Saint Tammany	48,723	**Tangipahoa**	32,845	**Ouachita**	29,843
Livingston	26,500	**Ascension**	24,133	**Terrebonne**	23,123
Rapides	22,920	**Bossier**	20,585	**Saint Landry**	16,593
Iberia	15,034	**Lafourche**	14,954	**St John The Baptist**	11,294
Saint Bernard	11,270	**Saint Mary**	10,301	**Acadia**	10,283
Vermilion	10,235	**Saint Charles**	9,757	**Saint Martin**	9,186
Washington	8,202	**Lincoln**	7,655	**Avoyelles**	7,072
Iberville	6,551	**Natchitoches**	6,133	**Webster**	6,090
Vernon	5,789	**Beauregard**	5,537	**Jefferson Davis**	5,396
West Baton Rouge	5,316	**Evangeline**	5,056	**Morehouse**	4,836
Plaquemines	4,339	**Saint James**	4,176	**De Soto**	4,014
Pointe Coupee	4,009	**Allen**	3,936	**Assumption**	3,655
Union	3,152	**Richland**	3,046	**East Feliciana**	3,042
Franklin	2,864	**Concordia**	2,859	**Grant**	2,625
Sabine	2,554	**Bienville**	2,087	**Jackson**	2,066

La Salle	1,721	**Winn**	1,661	**West Feliciana**	1,529
Claiborne	1,474	**Saint Helena**	1,391	**Catahoula**	1,373
Madison	1,363	**West Carroll**	1,294	**Caldwell**	1,282
East Carroll	1,067	**Red River**	1,057	**Cameron**	672
Tensas	510				

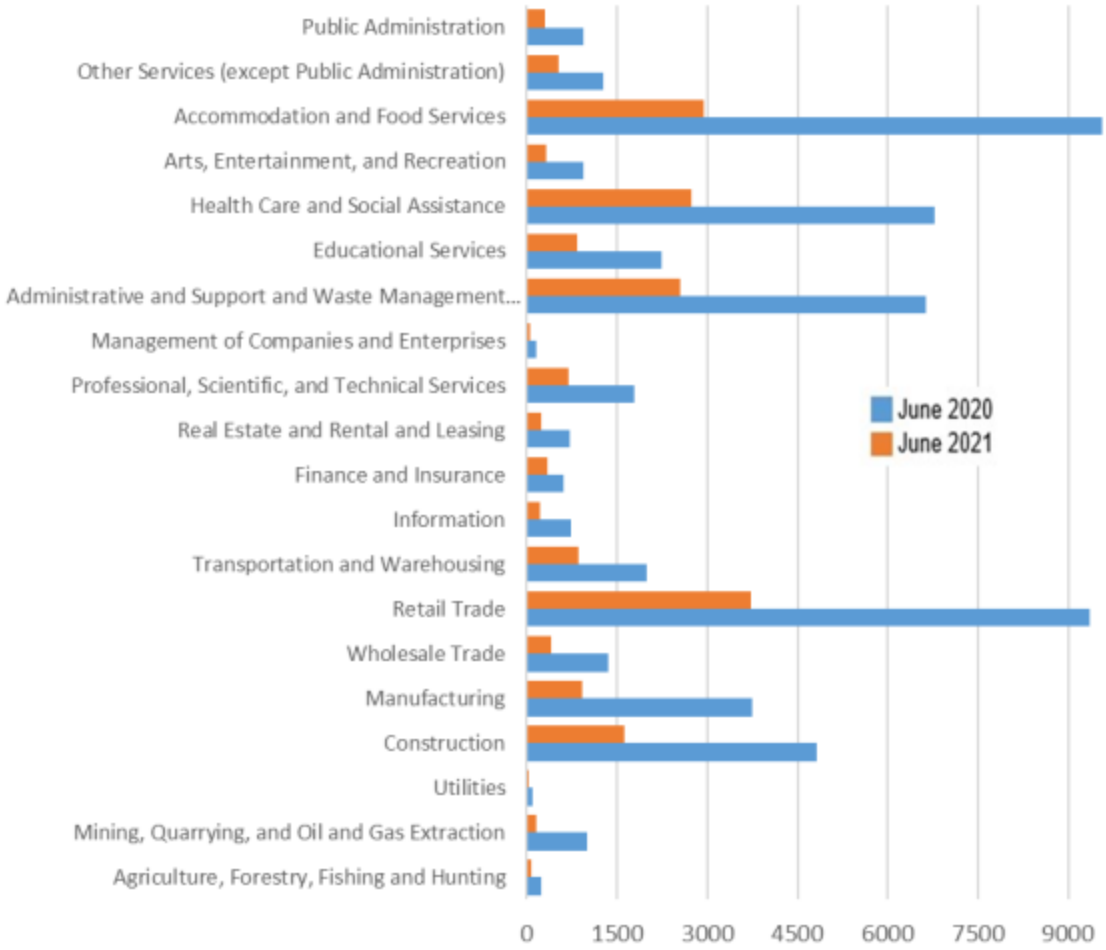
- The table above shows the number of unemployment insurance claims filed in each parish for the period between March 2020 and June 2021. Parishes that contain metropolitan areas and larger populations have a higher concentration of claims filed. Parishes with more rural areas and lower populations have a lower concentration of claims filed.

Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS) Model

Changes to the U.S. economy—including the contraction of entire industries as a result of changes in technology and overseas competition—have led to increases in the length of unemployment. Unemployed workers are now less likely to be rehired by their previous employers and are at a greater risk of long-term unemployment than in the past. As a result, the Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS) system was established nationwide following the 1993 enactment of PL 103-152. Profiling is designed to identify UI claimants who are most likely to exhaust their regular benefits, so that they may receive reemployment services that will help them find a job more quickly.

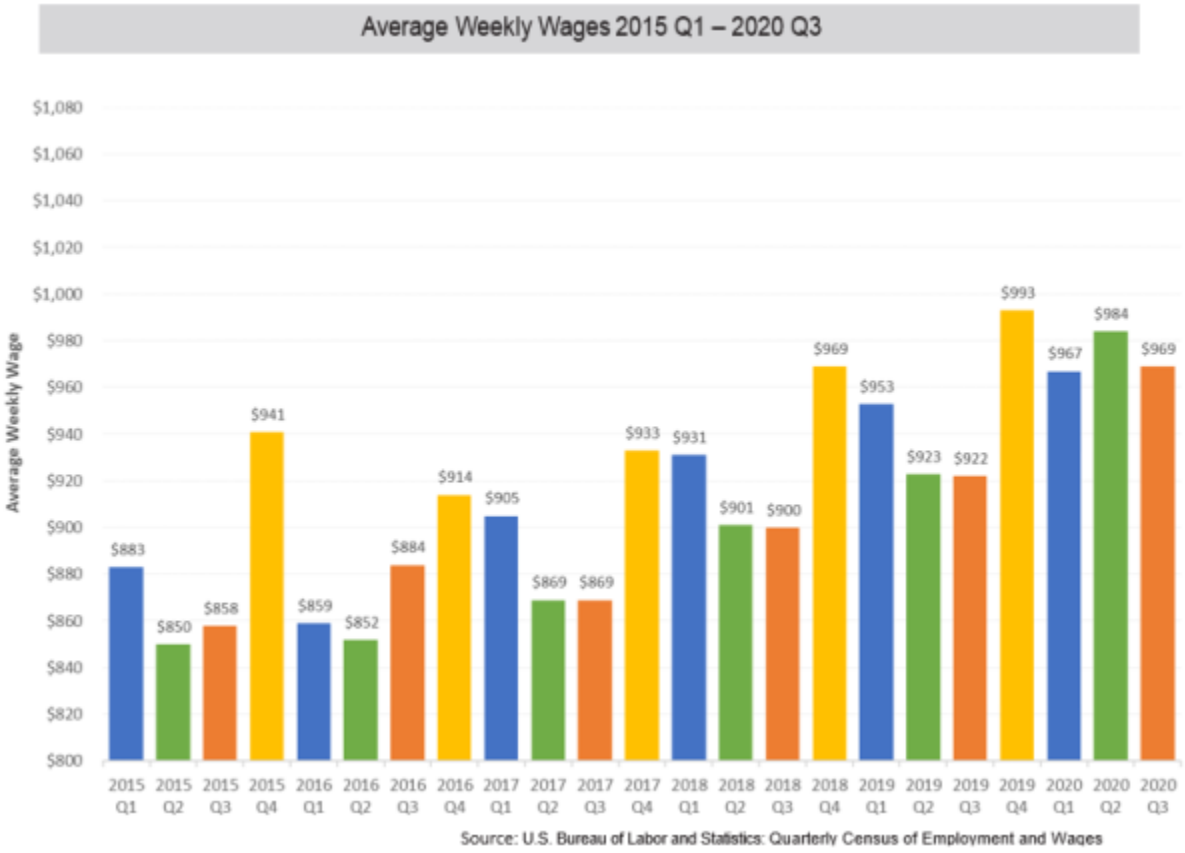
Louisiana Workforce Commission's Labor Market Information developed a model for profiling all new claimants for regular UI benefits. The WPRS system strengthens the link between Unemployment insurance and Employment Services for those most likely to exhaust benefits. The worker profiling model for Louisiana helps us achieve the objectives of reducing the weeks of UI benefits, reducing UI benefits per beneficiary, increasing earnings per beneficiary, and providing a management tool for targeting resources and aiding staff in understanding the customers they serve.

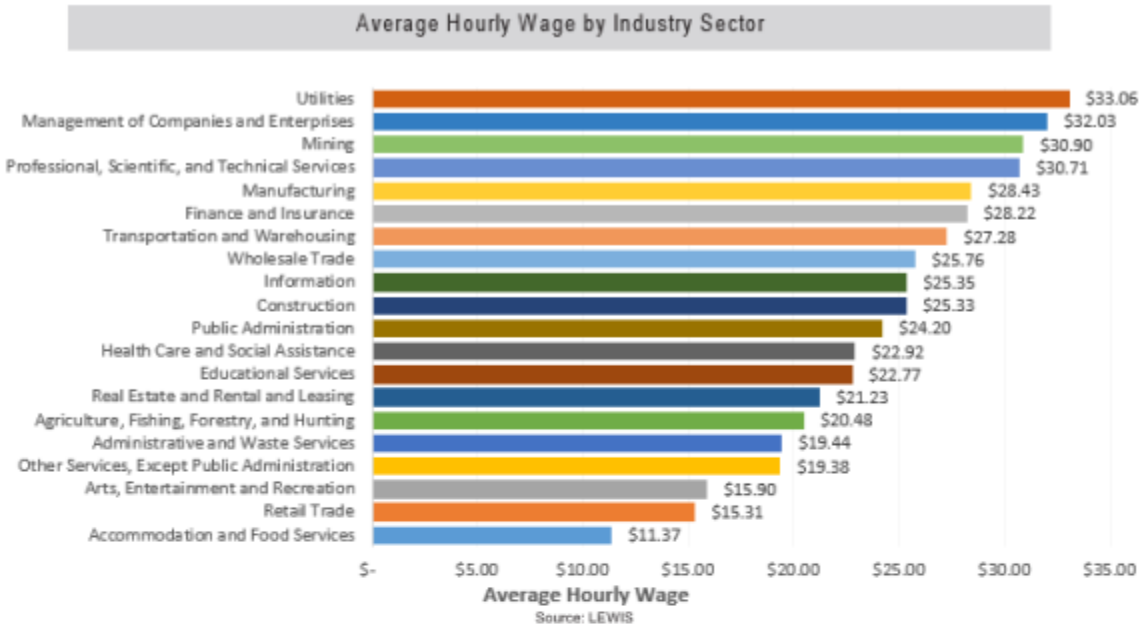
- This chart shows the contribution of each industry sector to continued claims in June 2020 and June 2021. **Accommodation and Food Services** had the most claims in June 2020 with 9,565 continued claims filed. Retail trade had the second largest number of claims filed in June 2020 with 9,368 claims. **Retail Trade** had the highest amount of claims filed in June 2021 with 3,733 claims filed. Accommodation and Food Services had the second highest number of claims filed in June 2021 with 2,950. These sectors have borne the worst of the COVID-19 related pandemic effects on industry and labor force. All industries experienced some higher levels of unemployment claims in June 2020 due to the pandemic.

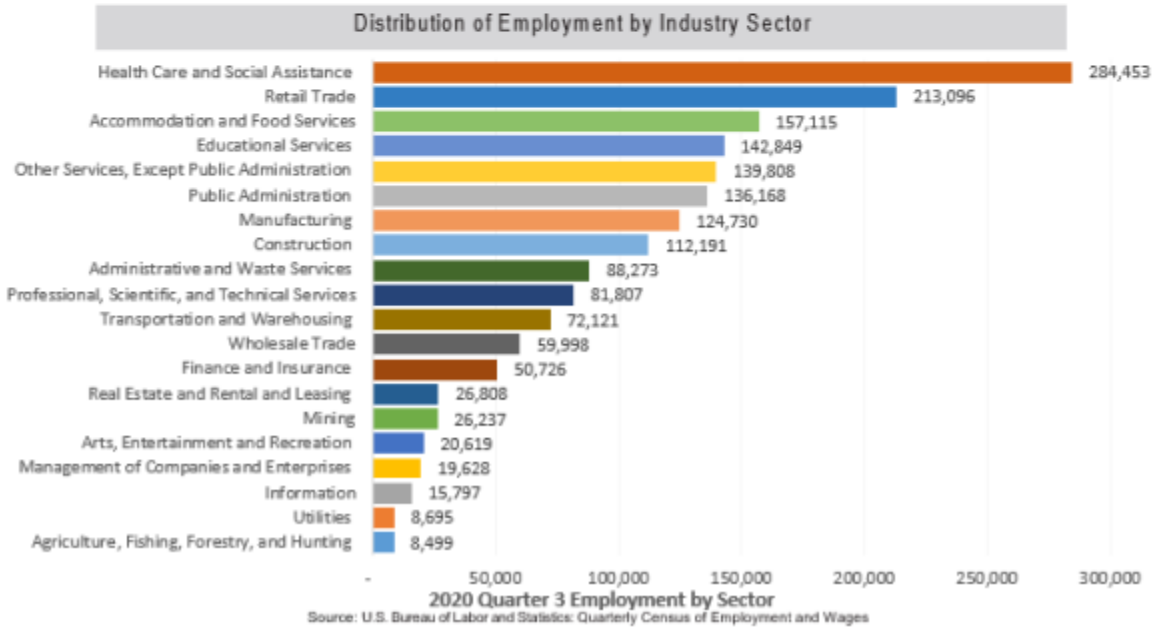


(ii) Labor Market Trends

- The average weekly wage in Louisiana has continued to increase since 2015 and weekly wages tend to be highest in Quarter 4 of each year. Workforce composition and changes in distribution will change the average weekly wage value as well as changes in average hours worked by hourly employees. This is why we see seasonal changes in the average weekly wage.
- The Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) provides information on industries, which support Louisiana's economy. The charts on the following pages represent industry sector information as of the third quarter of 2020. The first chart represents the average hourly wage earned in each industry sector. The second chart represents the distribution of state employment by industry sector.
- Accommodation and Food Services is the fourth largest industry sector employer (157,504 employees) in the state and pays the lowest average hourly wage of $11.37 an hour. Retail trade (212,900 employees) is the second largest employer in the state and pays the second lowest average hourly wage of $15.31 an hour. The largest industry employer is Healthcare and Social Assistance (262,120 employees) and pays an average hourly wage of $22.92


Average Weekly Wages 2015 Q1 – 2020 Q3
Average Weekly Wage
$1,080
$1,060
$1,040
$1,020
$1,000
$980
$960
$940
$920
$900
$880
$860
$840
$820
$800
$883
$850
$858
$941
$859
$852
$884
$914
$905
$869
$869
$933
$931
$901
$900
$969
$953
$923
$922
$993
$967
$984
$969
2015 Q1
2015 Q2
2015 Q3
2015 Q4
2016 Q1
2016 Q2
2016 Q3
2016 Q4
2017 Q1
2017 Q2
2017 Q3
2017 Q4
2018 Q1
2018 Q2
2018 Q3
2018 Q4
2019 Q1
2019 Q2
2019 Q3
2019 Q4
2020 Q1
2020 Q2
2020 Q3
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages





(iii) Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce

- Table below highlights the educational achievements of Louisiana's population. Table below looks at a younger cohort, aged 18 to 24, who may still be in postsecondary education. Their relative age likely accounts for the low percentage of Bachelor's degree or higher completers, and the high percentage of 'some college or associate's degree' completers.

Population 18 to 24 years	Percent
Less than high school graduate	15.8%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	35.1%
Some college or Associate's degree	40.6%

Population 18 to 24 years	Percent
Bachelor's degree or higher	8.5%

Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2019 1-year estimates, Table S1501

- Table belowpresents the population above age 24, which is more likely to have left the educational system. More than half of Louisiana's adult population has completed some college coursework or graduated from a secondary institution.

Population 25 years and over	Percent
Less than high school graduate	14.0%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	33.9%
Some college, no degree	20.6%
Associate's degree	6.4%
Bachelor's degree	16.0%
Graduate or professional degree	8.9%

Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2019 1-year estimates, Table S1501

- Table below breaks out the labor force status of Louisiana veterans aged 18 to 64. Veterans in Louisiana have a fairly high labor force participation rate, with 72.5 percent of those aged 18 to 64 are in the labor force. Veterans account for 4.1 percent of Louisiana's population and only 5.1 percent of veterans are unemployed.

Labor Force Status	Percent
Population	4.1%
Labor Force Participation Rate	72.5%
Employed	94.9%
Unemployed	5.1%
Not in Labor Force	27.5%

Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2019 1-year estimates, Table C21005

- Table below compares incarceration rates statewide and nationally. Louisiana has the highest incarceration rate in the nation, with 680 of every 100,000 residents behind bars in 2019. 99.9 percent of those incarcerated have sentences in excess of one year. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, Louisiana had the highest imprisonment rate among the 50 states but the total prison population in Louisiana was only 2.2 percent of the nation's entire prison population.

Jurisdiction	**Imprisonment Rate**	**Total Prison Population**
National Statistics (US Total)	385	1,215,821
Louisiana	581	26,964

Source: U.S. Department of Justice - Bureau of Justice Statistics: Prisoners in 2020, Table 7

- In Louisiana, 7.0 percent of the employed population aged 18-64 years lives with one or more disabilities. Individuals with disabilities account for 16 percent of the unemployed and 31 percent of those not in the labor force in Louisiana.

Disability Characteristic	Employed	Unemployed	Not in Labor Force
With a Hearing Difficulty	23.7%	14.4%	14.4%
With a Vision Difficulty	32.0%	21.6%	21.8%
With a Cognitive Difficulty	32.0%	51.3%	48.5%
With an Ambulatory Difficulty	30.4%	33.5%	54.7%
With a Self-Care Difficulty	8.0%	13.2%	22.7%
With an Independent Living Difficulty	15.2%	29.2%	46.9%

*Disabilities are not mutually exclusive

Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2019 1-year estimates

	Disability			No Disability		
Parish	**Total**	**Employed**	**%**[1]	**Total**	**Employed**	**%**[2]
Louisiana	371,186	123,894	33.4%	2,408,880	1,772,989	73.6%
Acadia	6,286	1,788	28.4%	30,197	22,107	73.2%
Allen	1,980	559	28.2%	10,133	7,495	74.0%
Ascension	8,490	3,396	40.0%	66,773	53,013	79.4%
Assumption	2,508	972	38.8%	10,961	7,834	71.5%
Avoyelles	4,508	1,419	31.5%	16,717	12,481	74.7%
Beauregard	4,164	1,197	28.7%	17,475	12,244	70.1%
Bienville	1,579	278	17.6%	5,961	3,870	64.9%
Bossier	7,542	2,834	37.6%	64,613	48,274	74.7%
Caddo	18,611	5,823	31.3%	125,283	89,640	71.6%
Calcasieu	15,753	5,412	34.4%	104,707	78,864	75.3%
Caldwell	703	136	19.3%	4,772	3,006	63.0%
Cameron	322	167	51.9%	3,901	2,727	69.9%
Catahoula	547	175	32.0%	4,244	3,032	71.4%
Claiborne	1,020	290	28.4%	7,136	4,397	61.6%
Concordia	1,233	330	26.8%	8,613	5,676	65.9%
De Soto	2,417	650	26.9%	13,334	9,377	70.3%

	Disability			No Disability		
East Baton Rouge	35,805	15,859	44.3%	244,282	187,191	76.6%
East Carroll	250	58	23.2%	1,932	1,128	58.4%
East Feliciana	1,275	352	27.6%	8,105	5,652	69.7%
Evangeline	4,388	1,162	26.5%	14,403	9,781	67.9%
Franklin	1,689	362	21.4%	8,914	5,710	64.1%
Grant	1,793	421	23.5%	9,667	6,637	68.7%
Iberia	6,542	1,961	30.0%	35,617	25,855	72.6%
Iberville	3,294	952	28.9%	14,722	11,269	76.5%
Jackson	1,608	422	26.2%	6,570	4,543	69.1%
Jefferson	32,151	12,445	38.7%	232,324	181,300	78.0%
Jefferson Davis	2,918	974	33.4%	15,261	10,576	69.3%
LaSalle	1,086	203	18.7%	6,644	4,622	69.6%
Lafayette	15,877	5,476	34.5%	136,653	106,865	78.2%
Lafourche	8,877	2,859	32.2%	51,043	37,754	74.0%
Lincoln	3,343	975	29.2%	27,630	18,861	68.3%
Livingston	9,692	3,255	33.6%	74,585	57,029	76.5%
Madison	927	303	32.7%	4,282	2,831	66.1%
Morehouse	1,722	394	22.9%	12,404	8,138	65.6%
Natchitoches	2,453	520	21.2%	20,229	10,662	52.7%
Orleans	30,915	9,558	30.9%	221,059	160,918	72.8%
Ouachita	10,098	3,012	29.8%	80,162	56,556	70.6%
Plaquemines	1,572	600	38.2%	11,558	8,516	73.7%
Pointe Coupee	3,240	1,168	36.0%	9,408	6,910	73.4%
Rapides	11,298	3,239	28.7%	64,412	47,315	73.5%
Red River	929	284	30.6%	3,857	2,726	70.7%
Richland	1,289	459	35.6%	10,042	6,684	66.6%
Sabine	1,702	338	19.9%	11,638	7,091	60.9%
St. Bernard	5,175	1,105	21.4%	23,292	16,592	71.2%
St. Charles	3,227	1,247	38.6%	29,030	21,896	75.4%
St. Helena	926	247	26.7%	5,114	3,362	65.7%

	Disability			No Disability		
St. James	1,319	396	30.0%	11,435	8,236	72.0%
St. John the Baptist	2,844	773	27.2%	23,203	17,110	73.7%
St. Landry	4,723	1,285	27.2%	42,496	27,716	65.2%
St. Martin	4,308	1,084	25.2%	28,354	20,129	71.0%
St. Mary	4,919	1,562	31.8%	24,919	16,257	65.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 2019 5-year estimates

[1]Percentage of individuals with disabilities employed

[2]Percentage of individuals without disabilities employed.

(iv) Skill Gaps

- Table below presents employment in 2020, projected employment in 2022, and growth by education level. As of 2020, 24% of the workforce had no formal educational credential, 40% had high school diploma or equivalent, 2% had associate's degree, 2% had some college experience but no degree, 19% had bachelor's degree, 2% had master's degree, and 2% had doctoral or professional degree. The majority of the projected employment growth (71.7%) is for occupations that require no formal educational credential or high school diploma or equivalent in Louisiana.

	2020 Jobs		Projected 2022 Jobs		Growth	
No formal educational credential	433,407	24.2%	467,461	24.7%	34,054	34.1%
High school diploma or equivalent	722,899	40.4%	760,506	40.3%	37,607	37.6%
Postsecondary non-degree award	135,570	7.6%	141,841	7.5%	6,271	6.3%
Associate's degree	39,853	2.2%	42,707	2.3%	2,854	2.9%
Some college, no degree	40,265	2.3%	41,331	2.2%	1,066	1.1%
Bachelor's degree	346,577	19.4%	361,824	19.2%	15,247	15.3%
Master's degree	31,905	1.8%	33,074	1.8%	1,169	1.2%
Doctoral or professional degree	38,470	2.2%	40,116	2.1%	1,646	1.6%
Total	1,788,946	100.0%	1,888,860	100.0%	99,914	100.0%

- The first column of the table below presents the education level of the population, and the second column presents the education level of jobs in Louisiana. The third column

presents a proxy for "skill gaps" by subtracting the second column from the first column. The table shows that Louisiana has 4.9% excess of highly-skilled workforce with graduate or professional degrees, 3.37% shortage of workforce with bachelor's degrees, 4.17% excess of workforce with associate's degrees, 18.35% excess of workforce with some college (no degree), and 16.74% shortage of workforce with high school or less education.

	% Population	% Jobs	Skill Gap
Less than high school graduate	14.00%	24.2%	-10.23%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	33.90%	40.4%	-6.51%
Some college, no degree	20.60%	2.3%	18.35%
Associate's degree	6.40%	2.2%	4.17%
Bachelor's degree	16.00%	19.4%	-3.37%
Graduate or professional degree	8.90%	4.0%	4.90%

2. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

A. The State's Workforce Development Activities

Each Comprehensive One-Stop Center (includes the presence of all partners) offers an extensive array of services which include for job seekers:

- Outreach, common intake and assessment, orientation and referral to other services.
- Initial and Comprehensive assessment of skills, aptitudes, interests and abilities, both in a self-service and staff assisted service context, based on the specific needs of the job seeker.
- Career Counseling, job search and placement assistance.
- Provision of Labor Market Information by location, region, and national areas – job vacancy listings, information on skills relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings and skill requirements for those occupations.
- Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible training providers. Provision of information relating to the availability of supportive services such as child care and transportation.

Comprehensive One-Stop Centers offer employers:

- Screening and referral of qualified job candidates.
- Outreach and assistance in developing effective recruiting job orders.
- Access to the State's "talent bank".
- Coordination of job fairs and recruitment events.

- Connection with community service organizations and tax credit opportunities.
- Training for Incumbent Workers.
- Connections to Registered Apprenticeship programs.
- Provision of information regarding the availability of OJT and Customized Training, including referral of employers to sources of funding for worker training.
- Coordination with economic development and other programs that assist business.
- Assistance with layoff aversion.

Due to the global pandemic, we have expanded upon the service delivery model to incorporate a more equitable and accessible platform. This expansion of service delivery has included virtual services, enhanced customer interaction via multimedia sources, and video conferencing.

Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth

The WIOA Title I Adult program provides workforce activities that increase, (*particularly for individuals with barriers to employment*), the employment, retention, earnings, and attainment of recognized postsecondary credentials of adults age 18 and older, and as a result, improving the quality of the workforce, reducing dependency on public assistance and increasing economic self-sufficiency.

LWC has formally eliminated the sequence of service provision in Title I programs through development of a new service delivery model. The new model connects all partners to clients at any entry point where assessment occurs. The process is further driven by co-enrollment across all active Partner Programs.

LWC, under WIOA codification, and through its policy guidance, clarifies to all partners that participants are not required to pass through multiple layers of assessments and services before entering into training. The state service delivery model has effectively combined core and intensive services into career services, giving all partner staff in One-Stop Centers the flexibility to provide access to training based on assessed need. The redefined service model:

- Provides more flexible training delivery options to meet the needs of low-income individuals.
- Allows Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) to contract directly with colleges or eligible training providers to supply training for high-demand occupations and/or industry sectors.
- Expands reliance beyond Individual Training Accounts and increases flexibility to help local boards use WIOA funds to a better scale.
- LWDBs continue to develop and refine innovative and effective models for obtaining industry-recognized credentials, including:
    - Integrated education and training approaches; career pathways, industry or sector partnerships, including those pertaining to Registered Apprenticeship programs and opportunities.
    - Cohort-based approaches.
    - Evidence-based approaches that reflect best practices including Registered Apprenticeship programs, and

- Development of interim credentials for longer-term Registered Apprenticeship programs, which Louisiana can do as an "SAA State" (State Apprenticeship Agency).

In addition, LWDBs may use a portion of local funds to fund pay-for-performance contracts as a form of training delivery under Title I, with continuous evaluation of how target populations are chosen, to fairly serve individuals who face barriers to employment and economic success.

LWDBs may consider the full cost of participating in training services, including expenses related to dependent care, transportation and other essential needs for individuals who need additional assistance.

Louisiana uses a broad range of training programs as part of its workforce development strategy. These programs involve collaborating with local boards, companies and education/training providers to improve training.

LWC requires:

Local boards and/or One-Stop operators to specifically report on expenditures for career and training services and on the number of participants who received career and training services. This requirement is specifically designed to make planning and funding decisions more transparent, and to provide better opportunities for public oversight.

Eligible training providers to report results for all of their students for common measures for each program of study, not just participants whose training costs were paid for through the use of WIOA funds, in order to improve transparency of results for programs and for disadvantaged persons.

Adult

The Louisiana Workforce Commission recognizes that for many low-skilled and disadvantaged youth and adults, improved economic opportunity depends on their ability to access education and training necessary to prepare them for college and career success. Evaluation of job training programs for adults finds that postsecondary education, in particular a degree or industry-recognized credential related to in-demand jobs, is the primary determinant of lifetime earnings. Education and training provides opportunities for increasing a family's financial resources, helps parents stay employed and establishes a solid foundation for the next generation (youth).

Emphasis shall be placed on work based learning strategies that align with business needs. Incorporating Registered Apprenticeship into service design and delivery is one way LWC expects LWDBs to address the middle skill jobs that account for over half of Louisiana's labor market as noted in an earlier section, and it likewise addresses the need to focus on in-demand occupations and recognized credentials. One way to accomplish this is by having American Job Center staff involved and engaged in screening and assessment for current registered programs.

LWC operates its Adult Training Program to identify workers who currently need or will need higher levels of education to fare better in the labor market to reduce the incidence and duration of unemployment while supporting higher earnings and job stability. Louisiana honors the Title I Priority of Service requirement by leveraging all available funding streams and partnerships, regardless of state or local funding availability, in providing priority access to higher-intensity career services and training to:

- Public assistance recipients.

- Other low-income individuals.
- Individuals who are deficient in basic skills.
- Individuals with barriers to employment

LWC in its continued implementation of WIOA requires LWDBs to:

- Report the number of individuals with barriers to employment served by each core program, with specific breakdowns by subpopulation.
- Report on the number of individuals with barriers to employment that are served by the Adult and Dislocated Worker program, with specific breakdowns by subpopulation, race, ethnicity, gender, and age.

WIOA establishes a priority requirement with respect to funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities. AJC staff, when using WIOA Adult funds to provide individualized career services, training services, or both, must give priority to ***recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient.*** Under WIOA, priority must be implemented regardless of the amount of funds available to provide services in the local area.

For the purpose of determining eligibility of adult under WIOA, individualized career or training services shall constitute a **minimum** of 51% of adults served meeting the priority target groups. This minimum threshold will ensure that local one-stops are targeting adults in most need of services beyond "basic career services while developing talent pools that meet the short term as well as long term workforce needs of businesses.

DocumentingLow-Income Status for Priority of Service

LWDA staff must properly document low-income status when an adult is enrolled in the WIOA Adult program and meets any one criterion under "*WIOA Adult Priority of Service Criteria*" Section. All attempts to gather this information, including calls, letters, and email messages to the participant must be documented in HiRE Case Notes.

LWDA Priority of Service Policy

LWDAs must develop policies which describe how this priority of service will be applied.

1. This policy may include the:

- Availability of other funds for providing employment and training-related services in the local area;
- Needs of the specific groups in the local area; and
- Other appropriate factors.

2. LWDAs may not establish policies that undermine WIOAs focus on providing services to targeted priority of service populations. LWDAs must not set a percentage of funds that will be used to serve priority populations
3. LWDAs may establish a process that gives priority to other individuals eligible to receive such services, provided that it is consistent with priority of services to veterans and other targeted priority of services groups listed above.
4. Local area policy must clearly state how LWDAs serve adults who do not meet the priority of service criteria and how this information is tracked

Dislocated Worker

Layoffs are always challenging for workers and employers. LWC provides Rapid Response Services designed to help employers proceed in an orderly and legal way by guiding them through the process. LWC works with LWDBs and other partners (training and supportive-service providers) to help both.

Direct services to workers facing a plant shutdown or large-scale lay-off, are focused on preparing them to find suitable new employment, and get them back to work as quickly as possible by helping them overcome such difficult barriers to employment as:

- Transferring and/or upgrading specialized skills to other jobs, occupations or industries.
- A decline in the market demand for certain skills.
- Age or length of work experience.
- Need for formal training or education.
- Lack of jobs with earnings at a level comparable to their previous positions.

Dislocated worker services are custom-tailored to meet an individual worker's specific needs. Working one-on-one with a case manager, workers are guided through the process of developing an Individualized Employment Plan that includes as a minimum:

- Career planning and counseling.
- Job search and placement.
- Approved training, which include Registered Apprenticeship programs.
- Other needed support services.

WIOA Dislocated Worker Verification of Layoff or Termination

Methods to verify layoff include verification from the employer, a WARN notice, a public announcement with a follow-up cross-match with the UI system, or a Rapid Response list showing names of affected employees. When gathering verification documentation becomes a hardship, the LWDA may accept the *WIOA Title I Applicant Statement*

Youth

Louisiana does not have a defined service delivery model for WIOA Youth Services. Each LWDB has the autonomy to develop their local youth service model. However, these models must support the implementation of Career Pathways that support postsecondary education, and address the needs of low-income in school youth as well as out of school youth, and support pre-apprenticeship to Registered Apprenticeship opportunities. LWC encourages each LWDB to competitively procure and provide all fourteen of the program service elements. LWC has committed to assisting the LWDB's through the One Stop partners, to develop and provide age and developmentally appropriate models for out of school youth.

LWC will work with local areas to ensure they:

- Will not require out-of-school youth in high-risk categories to prove low-income status to receive services.
- Will provide services to individuals who have dropped out of high school, have not attended school for at least one calendar quarter of the most recent school year, or are subject to the juvenile or adult justice systems under the out-of-school youth program.
- Will target and provide services to homeless individuals, runaways, current or former foster care youth and individuals who or are pregnant or parenting.
- Will provide services to youth who are not attending school, hold a secondary credential, and are either basic-skills deficient or an English language learner.
- Will consider youth living in a high-poverty area to meet the low-income criterion for youth activities funding and services.

The state will monitor and guide local boards such that at least 75 percent of available statewide funds and 75 percent of funds available to local areas are spent on workforce investment services for out-of-school youth. The state was approved for a waiver to use up to 50 percent of available statewide funds and 50 percent of funds available to local areas for out-of-school youth up through June 30, 2022. The state anticipates requesting a continuation of this waiver for future program years.

Local Boards may directly provide some or all of the youth workforce service activities. If a Local Board serves as the youth service provider and performs other roles such as fiscal agent or AJC Operator, the Local Board must have appropriate firewalls in place between the staff providing services, the staff responsible for oversight and monitoring of services, and the Local Board. The firewalls must conform to *Title 20 CFR Section 679.430* for demonstrating internal controls and preventing conflicts of interest.

Local Workforce Development Areas may follow their local procurement rules provided those rules are not less stringent than the Louisiana State Contract and Procurement Policies, otherwise local areas must adhere to State procurement policies**. (**Louisiana Title 34 Government Contracts, Procurement, and Property Control)

Local Boards must also identify youth service providers based on criteria in the State Plan *(Title 20 CFR Section 681.400)*. The State Plan establishes that Local Boards should select service providers that do the following:

1. Employ proven recruitment strategies of effective outreach, engagement, enrollment, and retention of OSY.
2. Demonstrate meaningful partnerships with eligible training providers, institutions of higher education, and employers from in-demand industries.
3. Offer a continuum of services that allow participants to obtain an alternate high school diploma such as a GED/HiSET, enroll into postsecondary education, and obtain employment within their chosen career path.
4. Utilize career pathways and sector strategy models with a structured sequence of activities, as well as multiple entry and exit points that provide adequate supportive services.
5. Use structured work-based learning, such as paid and unpaid work experiences and career exploration that leads to gainful employment.

6. Provide intensive case management and support services to help youth overcome complex barriers, successfully complete the program, and retain employment.

1. **Competitive Basis**

If a Local Board chooses to award, grant or contract youth service providers for some or all activities, the Local Board must award such grants or contracts through a competitive process that does the following:

1. Takes into consideration the ability of the youth service provider to meet performance accountability measures.
2. Meets the procurement standards specified in Uniform Guidance and the DOL Exceptions.
3. Follows state and local procurement laws.

2. **Sole Source Exception**

The local board may award, grant, or contract on a sole-source basis if such board determines there are an insufficient number of eligible providers of youth workforce investment activities in the local area.

When the Local Board awards a grant or contract to a youth service provider who also fulfills another role in the Local Area, a written agreement with Local Board and the Chief Elected Official must provide clarity on the expectation for those roles and clear methods of tracking execution and accountability for the distinct roles.

Adult Education

In 2010, the Louisiana Legislature finalized the transference of responsibility of Louisiana's adult education delivery system from the Louisiana Department of Education (LADOE) to Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS). This effort was not simply about moving a program's administration from one agency to another. It was about reconsidering completely the goals, outcomes, and direction of adult education in Louisiana. LCTCS developed a new policy framework whose primary focus is putting Louisiana adults to work by providing high-quality basic skills instruction, in addition to wrap-around student services that lead to a seamless transition to postsecondary enrollment, technical skill training, credentialing, and family-sustaining employment. As a symbol of the new vision, the Louisiana Adult Education Progam was re-branded "WorkReady U." Adult education programs have progressively adjusted educational services and delivery models and are well-positioned to provide/deliver/coordinate the required activities under Title II-WIOA.

Adult Education connects with the One-Stop system through the intake and assessment process to identify adults with limited basic skills and use innovative instructional models as necessary to prepare adult learners for transition to postsecondary training or careers. The LCTCS Adult Education and Family Literacy Program (WorkReady U), administers and provides program performance oversight to eligible local entities that provide adult education services. These services include academic instruction and education services that increase the individual's ability to:

- read, write, and speak 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.

The LCTCS provided all of Louisiana's Comprehensive One-Stop Centers with the technological linkage that provides customers with more accessibility to adult education services and information.

Wagner-Peyser

Louisiana meets the WIOA requirement of co-locating Wagner-Peyser Employment Services in its American Job Centers, in particular, the Comprehensive One Stop Centers in each LWDA statewide. Jobseekers, including unemployment insurance claimants and priority populations receive the same services, which include career counseling, labor exchange referrals, and customized labor market information as well as referrals to WIOA mandated partners and community specific resources. Unemployment Insurance claimants also receive unemployment insurance eligibility assessments and general assistance with claims.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) is present in all Comprehensive One-Stop centers and in affiliate locations as necessary to assure effective service to individuals with disabilities through participant's skills training which enhances participant ability to obtain employment in their desired field, in particular "high demand jobs". LRS consistently places clients in high demand jobs.

The LRS Program Coordinator for rehabilitation technology provides consultation to Comprehensive One-Stop Center staff and affiliate locations to improve knowledge regarding assistive technology and address other accessibility issues. In addition, the agency's Rehabilitation Employment Development Specialists (REDS) serve as LRS liaisons for all Comprehensive One-Stop centers and affiliate locations within their region, providing public awareness and services to consumers such as building job-seeking skills and employment development. The State is committed to the success of individuals with disabilities and leads the collaboration effort across all Partner Programs.

LRS continues to renew and revise existing local cooperative agreements, as applicable, with all school districts in Louisiana. The Department of Education (LDOE) and LRS continue to work together to establish regional core teams throughout the state. LRS collaborates with LDOE, the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD), Work Incentive Planning Program, the Office of Community Services, and the Office of Youth Development in an effort to network, share information and utilize comparable benefits to enhance VR services to transitioning students. The primary focus of LRS' collaboration is to identify and address barriers (e.g. policies, eligibility process, resource allocation), assure effective service provision through support of local interagency core teams, provide cross-agency training, outreach, engage in capacity building of young adults and family outreach efforts, provide continued support of innovative models and practices related to transition and provide information and technical assistance.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

TheLouisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is committed to providing cash assistance and supportive services to needy families meeting specific financial criteria and to provide services necessary to accomplish the goals and purposes of Section 401 of the Social Security Act (42 USC 601) in order to:

- Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives.

- End dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.

- Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancy.

- Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

The state continues to administer the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program, which is available to workers who lose their jobs or experience reduced hours or income as a result of increased foreign trade activity. Local boards in areas where TAA petitions exist will actively work with the TAA program to provide the necessary co-enrollment tools to allow Trade participants to reach their future employment goals as they would any dislocated worker.

The Trade Unit is committed to assisting participants and recommending training and services which encourage and respect not only people of different genders, race and ethnicities, abilities and disabilities, religions, cultures and sexual orientations, but also those with diverse backgrounds, experiences, skills and expertise. The Unit adjusted to the challenges wrought by the pandemic by initiating the completion of Trade payment requests and enrollment documentation using DocuSign. Additionally, the Unit provides regularly scheduled trainings to the local areas via Zoom.

Trade services are considered an integral part of the One-Stop Center's service delivery and may involve any and all partners based on the particular needs of individual clients. As such, trade-affected workers may be eligible for:

- Training services.
- Job-search allowances.
- Relocation allowances.
- Re-employment services.
- Funded training.
- On-the-job training.

Like the dislocated worker program, TAA-funded training helps trade-impacted workers obtain the skills necessary to gain suitable employment. TAA will pay tuition, course fees, books and required supplies and equipment, transportation and other items or services deemed necessary for completion of an approved occupational skills training program, including Registered Apprenticeship programs.

Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG)

Louisiana provides employment, training and placement services to all veterans through a network of strategically located American Job Centers, and supported by HiRE. JVSG provides services to veterans and eligible persons according to need, and significant barriers to employment. LWC Jobs for Veterans State Grant-funded activities are co-located within the state's American Job Centers. JVSG staff referred to as Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER) and Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist are essential parts of and fully integrated into the workforce development network. The veterans program is operating a fully functional re-entry program. Due to COVID, we have enhanced our virtual platforms to provide services to include Zoom. Every DVOP and LVER has a laptop/cell phone to ensure service is not hindered virtually.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

The goal of the planning process is to design a long-term strategic view of the senior citizen employment opportunities, inclusive of SCSEP and measurable strategies to achieve the defined goals.

Currently the Louisiana Senior Community Service Employment Program is operated by both the state and national non-profit organizations. The program serves low-income persons who are 55 years of age and older who have poor employment prospects by placing them in part-time community service positions and by assisting them to transition to unsubsidized employment. This does not include individuals who are seeking employment and are not eligible for program services.

Louisiana is committed to bringing SCSEP together with diverse stakeholders (including local boards and One-Stop operators) to develop and expand employment and training opportunities for the state's senior citizens. The goal of the planning process is to design a long-term strategic view of the senior citizen employment opportunities, inclusive of SCSEP and measurable strategies to achieve the defined goals.

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)

Louisiana is committed to providing resources to combat poverty and fostering partnerships within low-income communities that promote self-sufficiency, enhance family stability and encourage communal revitalization. This commitment is the charge of the LWC's CSBG Unit within the Office of Workforce Development. As a partner in the Louisiana Combined Plan, the CSBG Unit collaborates with forty-two (42) public and non-profit Community Action Agencies (CAAs) throughout the State's sixty-four (64) parishes to implement locally designed programs that provide a range of services and activities resulting in measurable outcomes in the reduction of poverty and the increase of self-sufficiency and independence. Programs vary depending on the locally assessed needs and circumstances of each community, but generally include emergency rental/mortgage assistance, emergency shelter, emergency utility assistance, transportation, job training, work uniforms, TWIC cards, food pantries, medical prescriptions, credit counseling, income management, first-time homebuyer education, high school equivalency testing, parenting education, fatherhood initiatives, re-entering citizens and health services. The programs and services of the CSBG Unit and Community Action Agencies are a major component of the Louisiana Workforce continuum of services.

B. The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities

Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth)	
STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES/OPPORTUNITIES**
LWC has developed policy, vision, certification criteria and contracts to assist LWDBs in complying with WIOA's expectations. LWC requires development of a regional plan by respective LWDBs including performance targets.	LWDA leadership continues to face challenges in collaborating through viable regional workforce partnerships with economic development and educational entities due to an inequity of source funding. By capitalizing upon new and developing rule changes for partner agencies to more formally

Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth)	
STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES/OPPORTUNITIES**
	cement relationships with other partners to enhance service delivery to priority populations.
LWC has created a strong foundation on which to build true partnerships through implementation of the basic service delivery model and the Continuous Improvement Process as support strategies to LWDA operations.	Budgetary realities and restrictions requires the Office of Workforce Development (OWD) in particular (and LWC in a broader sense) to take a comprehensive look at how it provides support to service partners.
The existence of at least one comprehensive One Stop Center in each LWDA allows LWDBs to operate "additional affiliate One-Stop Centers with any subset of partners, or specialized centers" to meet the specific needs of the area.	Continue to create opportunities for local workforce development areas to convene current partnerships and establish and strengthen new partnerships.
The plan drives the realignment of funding streams to improve accountability across core programs, support career pathways and sector strategies, and create continuous opportunities to measure performance and identify areas for improvement, resulting in an effective and efficient operation.	This will only work if the LWDAs "buy in" and become more strategic and effective in managing formula-fund dollars. This is an opportunity to guide LWDBs toward a more proactive, strategic, and engaged approach.
Title II (Adult Education)	
STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES/OPPORTUNITIES**
Adult Education has adopted and implemented the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) for Adult Education. Standard alignment with K-12 partners provides rigorous standards that specify what learners should know at each level.	Streamline assessment mandates and reporting results for students. Adult Education has the capability to provide assessment services throughout the workforce training system for One-Stop Centers, including services to OSY under WIOA, as well as post-secondary educational institutions, TANF and SNAP programs.
Title III (Wagner-Peyser)	
STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES/OPPORTUNITIES**
There are no stand-alone Wagner-Peyser (WP) Employment Service offices within Louisiana's one stop system. LWC requires co-enrollment between Title I participants and Title III participants to	While LWDBs may operate additional affiliate one-stop centers with any subset of partners, or specialized center to maximize access to customers, funding for Title III is insufficient to support all

Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth)	
STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES/OPPORTUNITIES**
ensure maximum benefits are provided to individuals.	affiliate sites.
Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation Services)	
STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES/OPPORTUNITIES**
LRS has consistently met the 15% federal budget requirement for the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services.	LRS will provide statewide outreach to reach students with disabilities in every parish to make them aware of the Pre-Employment Transition Services available through LRS.
Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)	
STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES/OPPORTUNITIES**
The Department of Children and Family Services currently has utilized partnerships with other stakeholders to provide Employment and Training Services to TANF recipients.	With an increased emphasis on provision of effective E&T programs that will actually result in moving people off public assistance programs and into life sustaining work, there is an opportunity to expand services provided to priority populations. This will require buy-in from LWDAs and for LWDA leadership in collaboration with DCFS leadership to commit to mutually agreed upon performance numbers through continuous and effective participant assessment, enrollment in training, provision of supportive services, and engaging in meaningful case management strategies.
TANF recipients are connected to local American Job Centers (AJCs), statewide, and are often co-enrolled under WIOA Youth and/or Adult Programs	There is a broad opportunity for LWDAs to partner with Adult Education, DCFS, and LCTCS to collaboratively case manage and share effort and expense in the effort to assist these individuals to raise themselves out of poverty. It will require buy-in and funding by all parties, and can be led by the LWDAs.
Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program	
STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES/OPPORTUNITIES**
Louisiana's Trade Unit works closely with the state's Rapid Response team to ensure dissemination of information related to the Trade Adjustment	Louisiana has an opportunity to increase the number of companies that are aware of the benefits of the TAA program; one such benefit being the employer-based training opportunities available by hiring TAA

Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth)	
STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES/OPPORTUNITIES**
Assistance (TAA) program through the state's early intervention services (orientations) carried out under WIOA. When the state's Rapid Response Coordinator receives a WARN or any other notice of layoff or closure, immediate consideration is given to whether there are potential trade implications in an effort to increase the number of certified petitions and trade certified workers that take advantage of TAA services. It is the vision of Louisiana's Trade Unit to continue to develop innovative ways to increase the number of certified petitions thereby increasing the number of trade certified workers and their awareness of the program's benefits and services.	certified workers. More specifically, the TAA Program allows reimbursement of up to 50 percent of the wage rate, the cost of providing training, and additional supervision related to the training. For OJT approved training for a co-enrolled TAA participant, the TAA Program may reimburse employers up to 50 percent. In addition, Louisiana has an opportunity to increase apprenticeships through coordination of efforts by including the Trade Adjustment Assistance program as an available funding source for workers that qualify for apprenticeship opportunities.
Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)	
STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES/OPPORTUNITIES**
Local CAAs have the autonomy to develop strategies and activities based on their own community needs assessment that address and support the specific needs of their low-income citizens to secure and retain employment.	CAAs have a network of local, state and federal resources and partnerships they can access for technical assistance to develop and expand programs benefiting job seekers or workforce training participants
Jobs For Veterans State Grant (JVSG)	
STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES/OPPORTUNITIES**
Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist are providing individualized career services to 99% of the Veterans they provide services.	Incorporate the service delivery strategy utilized by DVOPs in to the American Job Centers statewide. Currently the EER for all Veterans receiving services statewide is 42%. Large opportunity for improvement.
Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) are integrated in to the Business Services Teams within their assigned workforce regions. LVERs conduct employer outreach with and as a part of regional business services teams.	LVERs performance measures could be developed and tied to employment outcomes. These efforts could provide more opportunities for Veterans entered employment.

Senior Community Service Employment Program	
STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES/OPPORTUNITIES**
Several reputable Nonprofit Organizations within the state currently providing employment and training programs for seniors 55 and older.	Developing partnerships with LWDAs in local areas where Nonprofit Organizations exist to create a referral system; thus, increasing elderly employment and training services in local workforce development areas and workforce regions.

C. State Workforce Development Capacity

The Louisiana Combined State Plan Partners have defined "capacity" in three categories of service: efficiency, connectivity, and funding. LWC has a solid foundation in efficiently providing employer and job-seeker services. The implementation and operation of a continuous process improvement strategy shows promise in continuing to create efficiencies in these processes.

There is opportunity for stronger coordination and consistency between Partner Programs, through the use of a Common Intake Process and Co-enrollment strategy that will improve efficiencies across the board for all partners. This "any door" approach will enable any job seeker to enter the system with a consistent approach, which will result in seamless transition among Partner Programs and Supportive Services providers. LWC is also engaged in developing a "data warehouse" that will make data sharing more instantaneous and homogenous to all partners.

LWDA leadership continues to rely on the use of Wagner-Peyser and WIOA Adult, to support their operations. LWDAs must begin to take a leadership role by enrolling Dislocated Worker and Youth participants in the appropriate funded programs, even though services under those programs are more complex to manage and require more effort. This is the only way to bring Louisiana into true compliance with the intent of WIOA. LWDAs coming into compliance with the intent of WIOA, as identified in the State's Co-enrollment and Service Delivery Policies, will provide broader opportunity and greater success for the client (potential WIOA program participant) population. LWC will guide LWDAs in leveraging additional Partner Program funding in order to overcome this shortfall.

The capacity of the State's education and training services varies from region to region and is based on the needs of individuals and funding availability by the LWDA. The State has adopted a Career Pathway approach to address efficiency issues related to how timely and responsive it is in developing plans and entering job-seekers into training. This will allow employers and job-seekers to focus on a stepped approach to earning education and training.

The State is determined to meet the need of "market connection" by identifying and providing "working learners", with greater flexibility and broader opportunities in education and training in order to overcome limited funding. The State's goal is to develop capacity to assist job-seekers, who find training and education at odds with making a "family sustaining wage." This can be accomplished through closely managed and leveraged resources.

LWC is quickly building capacity in Business Services through the use of a combination of "Industry Sector Coordinators" and "Business Consultants" One of which focuses on specific industries (chemical, medical, etc.) while the other focuses on providing service to specific employers within an industry. Together they connect with Program Partners who are enrolling, assessing, and providing career and individualized services to job-seekers in order to meet anticipate and meet labor market demands in a timely manner.

LWC's Apprenticeship Division is working statewide to improve the capacity of the workforce system relative to incorporating Registered Apprenticeship in service design and delivery, as well as to support the emphasis on career pathways. The engagement of State apprenticeship staff with the Office of Apprenticeship in Dallas has also been robust, and we expect that partnership to continue. As noted earlier in this plan, LWC believes Registered Apprenticeship is a model that strikes "…the critical balance between serving individuals and employers in a manner that will produce strategies that in the long run are good for both."

LWC's service platform is proven, and is a solid foundation on which to broaden its use. However, there are still challenges with the state's larger communities and metropolitan areas. These are difficult to serve consistently, due to the varying size of firms and industry concentrations.

Because of the complexity of adopting new laws, in the context of waning budgets and moving industry targets, the State and its LWDAs face a series of strategic challenges to the workforce system both in services to job seekers and employers. Together, these challenges are high, but the opportunities to address these challenges are even greater. The State is building a coalition of Partner Programs, researching and designing support structures, and shall effectively address the next stage of The State's workforce development system through strategic realignment, simplified navigation and an integrated approach to serving all its customers.

LWC's Office of Workforce Development has realigned staffing and its operational strategy to provide effective guidance and support to Local Workforce Areas identified in the plan, and in support of regional business engagement strategies. One partner, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, has identified human capital as its greatest challenge in meeting the requirements of WIOA. This is due, largely, to current vacancies and attrition. The State's service delivery models are a solid foundation for striking the critical balance between serving individuals and employers in a manner that will produce strategies that in the long run are good for both.

B. STATE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS

1. Vision

Today's economic landscape and workforce is constantly changing and the demands shift on a regular basis for a growing economy. Since 2016, Louisiana has experienced growth in numerous in-demand industry sectors of the workforce, including manufacturing, information technology, healthcare and biotechnology, to name just a few. With the increasing need for skilled workers, the creation of Industry Sector Partnerships aligns education and skills acquisition to meet the general requirements of workers and businesses. One of the goals in releasing the plan is to provide a reliable guide focused on creating and sustaining good jobs while identifying strategies that support future-oriented education and training for Louisiana citizens as well as America's Workforce. This vision has continued the mission with which Gov. Edwards charged the people of Louisiana. That shared mission of "Putting Louisiana First" and making it possible for all Louisiana citizens to be healthy and prosperous has guided the preparation and evolution of this plan.

Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) and Governor John Bel Edwards work consistently to support and remain committed to workforce progress as a priority of Louisiana. Louisiana's economy is evolving. Parallel to our evolution are the changing needs and demands of our state and nation, resulting in a shift in the business needs and skills demand to meet businesses' needs today and in the future. As the administration continues to keep the promises made during the previous and current terms, LWC has re-energized the Workforce Commission's commitment to increasing business engagement, employer utilization, reducing employer costs, and increasing value received from the workforce system to recruit and hire qualified Louisiana

workers. We additionally have refocused our commitment to ensuring that working families earn a living wage that strengthens families and support our state's economic recovery.

Louisiana's workforce climate is at an all-time high of economic vibrancy and LWC supports the philosophy of bipartisan and cross-agency collaborations that creates solutions to lift people out of poverty. It is our goal to ignite more enthusiasm in creating solutions pertinent to Louisiana's Labor environment.

We, the people of Louisiana, envision a workforce system that will provide pathways for all Louisianans, including individuals who are receiving public assistance, the unemployed or underemployed, those who are deficient in basic skills, as well as persons with disabilities, including disabled veterans, and others who have significant barriers to employment. All will have access to education, training and supportive services needed to prepare for and secure high-demand occupations that pay family-sustaining wages.

2. Goals

STRATEGIC GOALS

Goal 1: Continue to strengthen existing and establish new Career Pathways as a model for skill, credential and degree attainment for Louisiana citizens. This will help to secure jobs that provide opportunities for economic independence and family stability. This goal will be accomplished by executing the following objectives:

1. Workforce development system partners will develop a shared vision and strategy for industry sector-based career pathways for youth and adults. Career pathways are diverse, with multiple entry and exit points allowing individuals of varying abilities, including adults and youth with multiple barriers to employment and in need of skill enhancement, to have realistic access to pathways.

2. Engage employers and integrate sector strategy principles to ensure employers, business associations and organized labor are partners in creating demand-driven career pathways.

3. Increase the identification, prioritization and leverage of workforce system partner resources to provide supportive services and reduce barriers,

4. Strengthen the alignment of K-12 education, workforce, and other viable initiatives such as improving processes for transfer credits through postsecondary, apprenticeships and college coursework as entry and exit points in the career pathways model for in- and out-of-school youth.

5. Expand utilization of registered apprenticeship by employers to train workers and meet industry sector standards and demands.

Goal 2: Expand career services and opportunities for targeted and special populations facing multiple barriers.

1. Expand and incentivize the utilization of evidenced-based workforce strategies that support targeted populations (e.g., the long-term unemployed, individuals with disabilities, veterans, out-of-school youth) into sector-based career pathways leading to gainful employment.

2. Enhance and expand the delivery of integrated reentry and employment strategies to reduce recidivism among Louisiana’s returning citizens and meet the skill and workforce needs of business and industry.

Goal 3: Increase the participation and utilization of the workforce system by employers and job- seekers to foster the improvement and expansion of employer-driven regional sector partnerships to meet occupational demands as supported by regional labor market information.

1 Increase the use of labor market and educational data and technology, in coordination with local data, to inform and guide strategic workforce development decisions.

2. Develop focused, regional workforce initiatives that blend partner resources (co-. investment) to educate and train workers for jobs within the workforce region.

3. Increase the alignment and efficacy of formula, discretionary and competitive workforce funding in efforts to support regional and local workforce initiatives.

4. Promote meaningful, portable industry credentials supported throughout the workforce delivery system.

5. Fortify a system of accountability for the workforce development system that supports and promotes the evaluation of the effectiveness of state and local workforce development boards in meeting the workforce demands of business and workforce.

3. Performance Goals

Proposed performance levels are in Appendix 1 and are subject to modification pending final agreement with the Secretary of Labor in conjunction with the Secretary of Education and approved by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL).

In addition to the common performance measures described in Section 116(b)(2)(A), LWC will continue to track business-focused metrics as USDOL identifies standardized indicators for measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers (EISE). LWC reports annual count data, housed in the HiRE MIS system, of employer services. Further, LWC chose two EISE pilot performance measures to report to USDOL annually—Employer Penetration and Repeat Business Customers Rate. The results and methodology are detailed in the annual report.

Employer Penetration Rate (Percentage of employers using services out of all employers in the State.)

This approach tracks the percentage of employers with twenty or more employees who are using the core program services out of all employers represented in an area or the State served by the public workforce system. American Job Centers will keep track of the number of establishments served within a program year, and States will collect that data and compare it to the aggregate number of employers in the state.

PRIMARY DATA SOURCE

The primary source of information for this measure is data recorded in the Management Information Systems (MIS) system of the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC), HiRE. Services to employers are both automatically recorded by HiRE and manually entered into HiRE by One-Stop Center staff. The HiRE system has the capability to have service codes added to indicate business market penetration activity.

Repeat Business Customers (Percentage of repeat employers using services within the previous three years)

This approach tracks the percentage of employers who receive services that use core program services more than once. This approach is useful in determining whether employers who receive services from the core programs are satisfied with those services and become repeat

customers. This approach also assesses the workforce system's ability to develop and maintain strong relationships with employers over extended periods of time.

PRIMARY DATA SOURCE

The primary source of information for this measure is data recorded in the MIS system of the Louisiana Workforce Commission, HiRE. Services to employers are both automatically recorded by HiRE *and* manually entered into HiRE by One-Stop Center staff. The HiRE system has the capability to record service codes to indicate business market penetration activity.

4. Assessment

LWC conducts an assessment of operations through review and analysis of participant data. Leadership focuses on identification of opportunities that have been capitalized upon and those that could have been. The review and assessment is conducted on a quarterly basis, those assessments are collaboratively engaged for purposes of improvement of services. The LWDB Directors actively participate in the evaluation and analysis of successes and opportunities.

C. STATE STRATEGY

1. Describe the strategies the State will implement, including industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations and career pathways, as required by WIOA section 101(d)(3)(B), (D). "Career pathway" is defined at WIOA section 3(7) and includes registered apprenticeship. "In-demand industry sector or occupation" is defined at WIOA section 3(23)

The framework developed by the Louisiana Workforce Commission to deal with industry sector partnerships for in-demand occupations implemented Industry Sector Specialist (ISS) for the top demand occupations. The Industry Sector Specialist continue to address challenges and opportunities for improvements for the State of Louisiana with regards to career pathways and in demand occupations. This strategy was developed to support talent pipeline approaches designed to assist partners in working together to address the workforce needs of businesses within a region. These industry sector partnership models are led by the businesses and focused on crucial industry clusters. Sector partners work collaboratively to listen and understand the workforce needs of businesses and to develop customized solutions that respond to those needs. Eight foundational elements for the framework have been identified and recommended for use by local areas. The integrated provision of business services is:

- **Sector-based** – The provision of business services should align around regionally identified industry sectors significant to the regional economy.
- **Transformational** – Engagement of businesses should provide a platform for regular and ongoing dialogue, providing a transformation of the relationships between business and workforce partners.

- **Regional** – Service delivery should be regional in nature and should align with the eight economic development regions, as well as multi-region and multi-state approaches when those are indicated by the needs of the sector partnership.
- **Coordinated** – The framework should describe coordinated approaches and strategies used by *all* partners to meet business needs.
- **United** – Building upon efforts already underway, efforts should continue to co-locate partners to ensure maximum coordination.
- **Flexible** – The framework should provide enough guidance to be helpful but should also allow flexibility for regional innovation and customization.
- **Aligned** – Existing policies/procedures should be reviewed and revised to ensure alignment and progress toward service integration.
- **Allowable** – Partners' federal mandates to provide specific, related services must still be met when developing this framework.

LWC has identified five components that are necessary for the integrated provision of business services in the state and its eight economic development regions:

- **Organizational structure** – At the State and local level, organizational structures will be developed to enable communication between partners to develop a strategy to support engagement and contact between employers within the workforce/economic development system. The form of these organizational structures will vary according to economic development region and sectors. Leveraging existing relationships between and among businesses and public partners is recommended as the most reliable initial strategy for engagement with particular employers and sectors. The eight regions develop mechanisms connect business to the full range of partner services – regardless of source.
- **Management of business intelligence** – The need to share information across partners -- at the State level, but particularly at the regional/local level -- management of business intelligence is critical. Recognizing the challenges of creating a statewide cross-agency, the state's initial strategy will focus on supporting creative approaches to meeting these regional/local level responsibilities. It is important for regional partners to understand the grassroots nature of business intelligence development. Perhaps the most important data development issue will always be the creation of methods to record and access partner knowledge regarding employer needs, to share that knowledge across the partner network and then to utilize that knowledge to jointly develop and implement proactive solutions to business and sector needs.
- **Solutions-based service offerings** – The service offerings provided to businesses must be focused on delivering timely solutions to expressed business needs. Each region has developed their own process for contacting employers in each targeted industry sector and have the capability of providing direct access to appropriate services or referral to all partners who can provide those services. Solutions-based service first requires a focus on listening to what business communicates for its needs, and then requires flexible, creative and timely responses to those needs - a process that builds a portfolio of customized solutions for businesses, without merely "dumping" pre-packaged programs and processes. This should be a cradle to the grave process.
- **Emphasis on work-based learning and other business-focused services** – Closely tied to the solutions sought by businesses is the expanded use of work-based learning (Registered Apprenticeships, Youth Apprenticeships, Pre-Apprenticeships, Customized Training, On-the-Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training and others). This emphasis

recognizes work-based learning as often the most effective mechanism for delivering Training and Education solutions in an environment that is directly shaped to and for the needs of the employer. This is beneficial because it's an earn while you learn environment. Employers like this process because it is a plus for their business.

- **Accountability and performance measurement –** The framework elements mentioned thus far will bring significant changes in the focus, intent and utilization of business services. Along with those changes, comes the need to develop appropriate measures of performance. This will enable the measurement (and dissemination) of the meaningful results of those business services activities for the local regions. This process will also serve to establish feedback loops that facilitate data-driven course corrections. In particular, these measures should be focused on the value of services to businesses through measures, such as, reduced turnover, reduction in the time required to fill vacancies, enhanced employee retention, additional viable candidates applying for work and enhanced productivity.

2. Describe the strategies the State will use to align the core programs, any Combined State Plan partner programs included in this Plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and any other resources available to the State to achieve fully integrated customer services consistent with the strategic vision and goals described above. Also describe strategies to strengthen workforce development activities in regard to weaknesses identified in section II(a)(2)

The state of Louisiana will continue to utilize an effective strategy to prepare for the impending job market expansion, in terms of both skills demand, and accelerated job growth. WIOA provides a framework in its requirement for agency and program partnerships that will streamline processes, and create a pipeline for recruiting, training, educating, and otherwise preparing citizens to acquire a living wage. To be successful, this has been and will continue to be a collaborative effort and shared responsibility among all partners. An additional benefit of this course of action will come in the form of a stronger economy. The continuous expansion of the collaborative partnerships will allow Louisiana to fulfill the requirements of WIOA. It will also maximize benefits to the state's workforce, employers and the overall economy.

Louisiana Workforce Investment Council (WIC) in partnership with the Local Workforce Development Boards is increasing focus on alignment with economic, workforce, and education systems to coordinate system based on skill needs in regions. This entails aligning Career and Technical Education and Apprenticeship opportunities as well as other education programs and activities occurring at the local level in each region. The fifteen workforce boards, through their required Strategic Plans, are developing strategies and actions to promote the alignment of all programs with WIOA-funded programs. Additionally, they are including sector strategies and youth initiatives to promote integration of services across all programs. The strategy related to this goal is creating a new, integrated Regional Planning process across the economic, education, and workforce Secretariats.

The new regional planning process reorganizes higher-level activities (e.g. data analysis, strategic planning, service mapping etc.) into a newly designated structure. Partners include but are not limited to LWC, Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB), Community Colleges and Vocational Technical Schools, and Economic Development.

The purpose of the regional planning under the LWDB is to use the same regional boundaries between economic development, workforce, education and key partners. Each region identifies business demand for skills, creates regional strategies, and aligns existing resources to this process. The goal is to ensure that regional employers, educators, and workforce training officials are coordinated in a way that creates a strong talent pipeline, for both middle-skilled

and highly skilled jobs. Integrated Regional Planning will support the development of cross-secretariat partnerships formed to support sector initiatives/career pathway initiatives that includes education and training, credential attainment, work-based learning (OJTs or apprenticeship), etc. Local Boards convene regional leaders in partnership with education and economic development partners to coordinate strategic activities and performance metrics.

LWC ensures that the LWDBs develop and utilize an integrated jobseeker customer flow between WIOA Core Program Partners, which will build statewide integrated, technology-based intake and case management information system as the main entry portal into the expanded Louisiana Workforce Development System for all staff and common customers (both job seekers and employers). Designing and implementing the technological infrastructure to execute a common intake/registration application with real-time triage processes that feature strong skills and transferability assessments, job matching and job referral, common case management and reporting systems across all partners is imperative to our ability to strengthen the consistency and quality of services provided by the system to job seekers and businesses. The plan is also to create regional "career pathways" or customer flows for each customer base across systems (adults, dislocated workers, UI Claimants, long-term unemployed, adult education student, TANF/SNAP, vocational rehabilitation clients, veterans, older workers and individuals with additional barriers to employment including, the homeless etc.) to align programs and resources that lead to employment outcomes, particularly for those with barriers to employment. The statewide MOU for all of the WIOA Core Program Partners and additional stakeholders' outlines models for organizing pathways and opportunities to share systems, staff and resources to build out the model. The 15 regions have developed specific local Memorandum of Understandings that speaks to the implementation of joint service design for priority populations. MOUs developed baseline models and work to forge relationships across WIOA and non-WIOA partners. Service design includes:

- Partners working together on development of One-Stop Career Center operational components such as design of workspace, customer service flow, menu of services, marketing and outreach materials, etc.
- Clearing procedures for mutual referrals between partners.
- Maximizing the capacity to share data and information across systems for both sharing of information on individual customers, and tracking the use of partner services by common customers.

WIOA sets very high expectations for all American Job Center partners to improve outcomes for business and individuals with barriers to employment within the same level of resources, or in some cases, less funding and staffing. Workforce Development Boards are centered in bringing together the diverse interest groups representing the multitude of populations who face barriers to employment to organize new service pathway for each priority population.

III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

A. STATE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

1. STATE BOARD FUNCTIONS

The Louisiana Workforce Investment Council (WIC) is established in accordance with Section 101 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, and under Louisiana Law, LSA-R.S. 23:2042-2056. The mission of the WIC is to support the development of an employer-led, demand-driven workforce development system based on occupational forecasts in which

training, education and services for job-seekers prepare Louisiana residents for high-wage, high-demand career opportunities in Louisiana.

The WIC achieves this mission by:

- Recommending policy actions to public and private institutions and creating coalitions to achieve their implementation.
- Working with workforce development system partners to integrate workforce development into the decision-making of business leaders, economic developers, educators and human resource professionals.
- Raising public awareness of the importance of workforce development for Louisiana's economic future.
- Ensuring public accountability by evaluating the effectiveness of the overall workforce development system.

The responsibilities of the WIC include:

- Submitting a strategic plan to meet current and forecasted workforce needs to the Governor and report plan progress.
- Holding stakeholders accountable for implementing agreed-upon strategic goals that align workforce supply and demand.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of Workforce Development Boards in meeting workforce demand.
- Directing the activities of the Occupational Forecasting Conference.
- Driving state and local policy to support the alignment of education and training with workforce demand.
- Overseeing the Industry-Based Certification (IBC) Council responsible for evaluating the alignment of credentials with state workforce demand for inclusion on the IBC State Focus List.
- Overseeing, jointly with the Board of Regents, the evaluation of two-year and shorter-term programs for TOPS Tech eligibility in alignment with state workforce demand.
- Contributing to the evaluation of TOPS Tech Early Start training providers to ensure alignment with state and regional workforce needs.
- Supporting the alignment of Jump Start Pathways with statewide and regional workforce demand through the Graduation Pathway Review Panel.

The powers of the WIC include:

- Performing all of the duties and responsibilities of the State Workforce Development Board as defined in Section 101(d) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
- Directing the occupational Forecasting Conference for the purpose of projecting job growth and demand in the state of Louisiana.
- Advising the Governor and legislature on the full range of issues related to workforce development.

The WIC meets no less than four times each calendar year, and all meetings comply with the Louisiana Open Meetings Law. Decisions are made by a vote of a majority of the total serving membership of the WIC. Decision-making votes shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order. Educational and information portions of meetings are conducted according to the preference of the Chair. The Executive Committee of the WIC is comprised of the Chair, Vice Chair, a sample of heads or designees of state agencies represented on the WIC, at least one legislator, and at least two organized labor representatives. The WIC is composed of a majority of business members. Duties include, but are not limited to overseeing the implementation of the strategic plan, tracking work-group plans and progress; leading the alignment of the work-groups; and driving provisions of critical workforce data.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGY

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

The U.S. Department of Labor has reduced both administrative and programmatic funds available to state workforce agencies in both WP and WIOA. At the same time, funding availability has been diminishing, the cost and complexity of providing service delivery, programmatic management and support, and fiscal and performance reporting have increased. This makes it essential that LWC and local boards continue to work together to reduce overhead costs and streamline (economize) services.

This plan supports the State's commitment to supporting at least one "Comprehensive One-Stop Center" in each local area (defined as the presence of all WIOA required Partner Programs). Smaller offices operated by local boards and/or One-Stop operators (contractors) where all Program Partners are not present, shall be designated and operated as "Affiliate" One-Stop centers and may have any subset of partners, but shall not be operated as Wagner Peyser stand-alone Employment Services offices.

Under the plan, local boards will have the flexibility to include additional partners in One-Stop Centers, in particular and specifically identified by the law:

- Employment and training programs administered by the Social Security Administration, including the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Programs.
- Employment and training programs carried out by the Small Business Administration.
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) employment and training programs.
- Other programs authorized under the National and Community Service Act of 1990.
- In addition to these specified additional partners the law and plan allows boards to include other partners as part of the one-stop delivery system -- local employers and community-based, faith-based, and/or non-profit organizations, as well as employment, education and training programs provided by public libraries or the private sector.

This plan is designed to support a refined focus on employment, training, adult education and vocational rehabilitation programs designed to provide workers and their families an opportunity for economic prosperity.

The new infrastructure combined with the recently redesigned service delivery model strengthens existing workforce development and adult education programs in four ways that can benefit adults and youth with barriers to economic success by:

- Increasing the focus on serving the most vulnerable workers (with limited skills, lack of work experience, and other barriers to economic success) through more focused profiling and assessment processes.
- Expanding education and training options to help participants access good jobs to start/advance their careers.
- Providing targeted, managed and appropriate levels of supportive services to disadvantaged and unemployed adults and youth while they receive training and effective employment-based activities.
- Supporting the alignment of planning and accountability policies across core programs to support more unified approaches to serving employers and job-seekers (in particular those who are low-income, low-skilled individuals).

This plan creates an opportunity for chief elected officials (CEOs), boards and local communities to rethink reshape and expand workforce systems, policies and practices in a way that conforms to local needs while maintaining fiscal prudence and viability. The plan also drives the realignment of funding streams to improve accountability across core programs, support career pathways and sector strategies and create continuous opportunities to measure performance and to identify areas for improvement. Operating in the most effective and efficient way by:

Identifying inefficiencies and targeting improvements that will bring costs in line with reasonable standards.

- Measuring local and regional performance so that decision-makers better understand the unit cost of a service, the productivity of staff, results achieved with programs and efficient use of assets.
- Reducing waste (in particular waste created by redundancies in support and oversight), personnel costs, excess paperwork, wasted supplies, excess equipment, etc.
- Maintaining, understanding and managing in real-time with the goal of efficiencies in the actual cost of services at the local and regional level.
- Setting benchmarks as a process of comparing performance and practices locally, regionally and statewide.
- Setting standards for the cost of services, efficiency, effectiveness, productivity and asset use for local, regional and state comparison to trend cost efficiencies as improving, declining or falling.
- Using reporting, measuring and benchmarking as a foundation for goal setting and to shine a light on efficiencies and effectiveness on how funds are being used.

This plan establishes the state's commitment to supporting the WIOA requirement that "Each local area must have one comprehensive One-Stop Center that provides access to physical services of the core programs and other required partners."

The required partner programs, in addition to the core programs, (and if they are present) for a comprehensive One-Stop Center under WIOA are:

- Career and Technical Education (Perkins).
- Community Services Block Grants.
- Indian and Native American Programs.
- HUD Employment and Training Programs, Job Corps.
- Local Veterans Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans Outreach Program.
- National Farmworker Jobs Program.
- Senior Community Service Employment Program.
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (unless the Governor takes special action to make TANF an optional partner).
- Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs.
- Unemployment Compensation Programs.
- Youth Build.

For the purposes of operations under this plan regarding services provided in a Comprehensive One- Stop Center, each member of the partnership shall agree to core hours, core services, individualized services, supportive services, data sharing and the sharing of costs for business operations.

This plan commits the state to providing support for one Comprehensive One-Stop Center in each local area. Regionally, boards may choose how they use the resources provided under this plan and other support agreements. However, the use of these resources shall not becontrary to the provisions and requirements of the U.S. Department of Labor or state laws, regulations and statutes.

The relationship established under this plan between the local boards, required partners and all optional partners shall be operated as a Service Level Agreement (SLA). That is, all resources shall be allocated by formula as defined or specifically detailed in the plan. SLAs find their origin in the private sector where they are streamlined contracts between a provider of a service or product and a customer or subsidiary that could require provision or management of service delivery, and as such are the most cost-effective and simplest to operate fiscal and managerial processes for this activity.

Key elements of the service relationship covered in this plan include implementation, performance, finances and operations. All of these characteristic key elements and expectations can be directly related to service-delivery at a One-Stop Center regarding negotiated performance outcomes and managerial metrics.

- **Implementation:** As a minimum, the following details required in WIOA must be crafted into a cost allocation and operation agreement for each of these Comprehensive One-Stop Centers and although they will be specific to the individual LWDA, they must contain detail on the following as a minimum:

o Who will be physically present in the center – full or part time.

o When not physically present will center staff be required to supply support, i.e. provide customer guidance when using an online tool, etc.?

o What services will be offered, and how do those services support a Career Pathway?

o Defined interface with partner programs to provide seamless services.

- Method of supervision and guidance provided to staff.
- Defined administrative or other supports required to be successful.
- Facility costs.
- Operational delivery, how services are delivered, by whom and when.

- **Performance:** Services shall be provided as required under the relevant funding streams and partnerships identified/negotiated under the statutes, laws and regulations which, in detail, identify expectations, outcomes and outputs by the parties from the arrangements.

- **Finances and other resources:** Resource-pooling arrangements, fee structures, cost variances, adjustments, transparency and arrangements of settlements shall be detailed and agreed to by all parties.

- **Operations:** The state provides WP-funded staff to support a single Comprehensive One-Stop Center for each WDB. The state recommendation is that LWDA boards utilize this staff to support a centralized recruitment and placement effort, and for a centralized business engagement process. Boards may operate other locations within their LWDA as "affiliate" sites and may from time to time have WP-assigned staff at these locations based on need.

The state shall allocate Wagner-Peyser-funded staff by formula based on the level of effort necessary to support labor exchange services in an LWDA or region.

Elements of the Local Delivery Structure

- Board members and staff operate under prior consistent state law. As such, members and staff are primarily private-sector employers with some representing local education agencies, labor organizations, community-based organizations, economic development councils and One-Stop partners such as adult education and literacy (AEL) and vocational rehabilitation (VR). Each board develops a strategic and operational plan, with local plans subject to review by WIC and approval by the Governor. Boards designate one-stop partners, identify providers of training services, and monitor system performance against performance accountability measures.

- Board staff conducts the board's day-to-day administrative operations. Boards operate with a high degree of local flexibility for service delivery design and partner with local training and educational institutions to ensure employment and training opportunities meet area employment needs.

- American Job Centers provide a variety of online, in-house and on-site services, including employer services, job search resources, labor market information and referrals for customized training. In addition to traditional brick-and-mortar offices, mobile workforce units are utilized in providing on-site, rapid response assistance to area employers and communities.

- Business Service Units (BSUs) address the ever-increasing need for skilled workers in high-demand fields by offering job search assistance, skills training and other workforce development services. Supported by state and federal funds, most basic services are provided free of charge to employers registered with the state and federal government. Some boards also provide certain services, including workshops and seminars, at nominal fees. BSUs within an integrated workforce system offer a unique opportunity to ensure that all workforce services are structured to ensure that the business needs are considered when delivering services to job seekers and consumers.

Boards shall develop new local plans under WIOA to align local goals and objectives set forth in the state's Combined State Plan and also describe collaboration strategies with system partners.

To address limited financial resources yet still meet the needs of Louisiana' employers, boards must:

- Leverage additional funding sources.
- Develop, analyze and share labor market information and regional economic studies.
- Engage in planning and service delivery across workforce areas and/or with other workforce and community partners.
- Incorporate new delivery strategies and adapt existing ones, such as the use of mobile units and new technologies that make service more accessible.
- Strive for integrated, effective service delivery by sharing, modifying and replicating effective training models and processes.

Events and projects provide the opportunity for boards and system stakeholders to collaborate, innovate and streamline services to improve workforce service delivery. Continuous improvement efforts by the boards are facilitated and encouraged through activities such as:

- Sharing best practices and other information at LWC's annual conference, workforce forums and regional and local meetings.
- Maintaining user-friendly, online resources for topics including:
  - Integrated workforce processes.
  - Performance measures.
  - Program-specific monitoring toolkits, through the ongoing work of OWD monitoring effort.

B. ALIGNMENT WITH ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE PLAN

This plan aims to ensure that the alignment of activities between core programs and partners to improve coordination of employment and training activities and avoid duplication of services to customers. Below are some examples of coordinated efforts currently in practice:

I. Engaging At-Risk Youth through LWDA/High School Partnerships

Understanding that the goal of keeping school-age youth engaged in constructive educational experiences is reducing the risk of truancy, crime and violence. LWC's Office of Workforce Development works with several local areas to approach public schools and school boards about the possibility of partnering to offer assistance to youth at risk of exiting high school before graduation. The results are cooperative endeavor agreements signed by LWDB chairs and directors, high school principals and public school superintendents to ensure a "soft handoff" occurs the moment these students are removed from the school's enrollment. Immediately, they are enrolled into WIOA once eligibility has been formally established.

II. Louisiana Jump Start Initiative - Employer Engagement- Department of Education

The Louisiana Department of Education (K-12), is in the process of revamping their initiative that offers Career Technical Education (CTE) to high school students in grades 10 through 12. This initiative, known as JumpStart, provides classroom training and work experience in-demand occupations in Louisiana through unpaid internships provided industry partners. Participating students are able to obtain high school credit hours, college course credits, and

industry certifications, all leading to high school diplomas. In some instances, students are able to graduate high school with associate degrees, beginning their professional careers in technical fields immediately after completing high school with a dual degree. Fast Forward is an initiative that allows students to dually earn a high school diploma and a technical associate degree or participate in a Louisiana Workforce Commission registered pre-apprenticeship/apprenticeship. In this program students spend grades 9 and 10 on the high school campus earning core graduation requirements and the majority of grades 11 and 12 at a postsecondary site or in apprenticeship.

Essential to the program's success is employer engagement. Employers within targeted industries must be willing to engage high school students through internship opportunities, providing students with on-the-job training and career mentors.

The reworking of Jumpstart (Jumpstart 2.0) is striving to eliminate duplication of efforts to engage business leaders and overtaxing of resources by working cooperatively through LWDBs and Perkins V Regional Coordinators to actively plan and implement career and technical education and training through the regional teams which align with the RLMAs designated by LWC. These teams are comprised of education (K-12, community, and technical colleges), private business, economic development organizations, local One-Stop operators, public sector leaders, re-entry coordinators, and others. These teams are actively working to streamline the process of business engagement.

Local and regional workforce plans will be evaluated to ensure they align with the state's initiatives to support this process. This process is just one solution to promote business engagement as it relates to opportunities for youth and adults in need of training and work experience.

III. Louisiana Board of Regents – Master Plan

To move Louisiana aggressively forward, the Board of Regents has embraced a robust new attainment goal that calls for 60% of all working-age adults (ages 25-64) in Louisiana to hold a degree or high-value credential by 2030.

IV. Registered Apprenticeship-LWC

The Apprenticeship Division is working to improve our collaboration with the Local Workforce Development Boards through the initiatives of our Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE) and State Apprenticeship Expansion 2020 (SAE2020) grants awarded to the LWC by USDOL. Some of these initiatives include supplementing WIOA by reimbursing a portion of the local boards' funds spent on apprentices for On-the-Job Training (OJT) Contracts and Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). We currently have sub-awards with three local boards for our ASE grant, and we're working to coordinate more through assistance provided by Maria Brady, USDOL Multi-State Navigator.

The SAE2020 grant includes three Apprenticeship Navigator positions, housed in local offices, to improve the integration of Registered Apprenticeship and WIOA throughout the state. Each navigator will be responsible for two to three of the eight regions. LWC has hired one navigator presently in northern Louisiana. We aim to hire the other two shortly for southeast and southwest Louisiana.

Our website ApprenticeshipLA.com continues to provide a statewide WIOA pre-screening form to determine potential WIOA eligibility for apprentice applicants. Online applications are forwarded to the appropriate local AJC for eligibility and enrollment in WIOA funded services. This provides the opportunity to bridge potential gaps between outreach and recruitment of eligible populations allowing the use of multiple funding streams to support a common activity between partners. The pre-screening form increases the potential for determining eligibility and providing more robust service delivery.

Louisiana Workforce Commission hosted and/or took part in four events for National Apprenticeship Week 2021:

1. **Statewide Apprenticeship Fair**

Through LWC's virtual job fair platform, job seekers were able to communicate with programs and inquire about Registered Apprenticeship opportunities throughout the State of Louisiana in a variety of different industries and career paths.

2. **LOSFA 2021 Louisiana Virtual Apprenticeship Expo**

LOSFA hosted a statewide virtual expo for high school students, highlighting the benefits of Registered Apprenticeship as a career pathway. This event featured speakers from LOFSA, USDOL, and LWC, as well as recent apprentices.

3. **Urban Youth Apprenticeship Career and Resource Expo**

The Urban League of Louisiana hosted an Expo for in-school youth at Scotlandville Magnet High School. The event allowed high school students the opportunity to learn about Registered Apprenticeship and meet with employers to explore career opportunities following high school.

4. **Registered Apprenticeship Healthcare Accelerator with H-CAP**

The Healthcare Career Advancement Program in partnership with LWC provided a webinar to healthcare providers across the state to promote Registered Apprenticeship as the solution to their workforce needs.

A key strategy identified in the Louisiana Combined Plan goals and objectives is the expansion of the use of Registered Apprenticeship programs where employer and employee are equally committed to the program's success. Registered Apprenticeship programs have demonstrated that employers benefit from lower employee turnover, increased employee productivity, improve employee problem-solving skills, and enhance employee relations.

LWC continues working to develop new non-traditional programs in industries such as health care, information technology, transportation, utilities, and more. The Apprenticeship Division continues to encourage new and existing programs to take advantage of partnership opportunities within our workforce system. We have also presented the benefits of joining the Eligible Training Provider List to Registered Apprenticeship programs not yet included and the process to opt-in.

Provisions in WIOA clearly support the expansion and incorporation of registered apprenticeship as an evidence-based approach to workforce development. Louisiana sees this as an opportunity to create a statewide vision that supports substantive partnerships between LWDBs and Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors.

V. HUD/Public Housing

As with the aforementioned strategies to engage out-of-school youth through partnerships with high schools, efforts to work with public housing authorities funded with Department of Housing and Urban Development dollars have begun and will continue throughout the life of this state plan. The goal is to partner and share resources to provide education and employment services to out-of-school youth and adults living in public housing.

VI. Re-Entry-Department of Corrections

LWC and its local workforce partners have aligned with the Louisiana Department of Corrections on several reentry initiatives across the state. Participants are justice invovled individuals and sentenced to serve time in the re-entry program. This alternative sentencing structure is designed to work with men and women while they are incarcerated in an effort to

provide job skills in demand occupations, reducing the chances of recidivism among participants and complying with the terms and conditions of sentencing. Minimally, engagement in the re-entry program ensures the following:

- Inmate receives workforce individualized career services prior to release.
- Inmate must secure employment prior to release.
- Peer mentors are assigned to each inmate.
- Peer mentor must verify the inmate's readiness for release.

OWD is 100% dedicated to this initiative and has specifically assigned specialized staff toward this initiative working in/with Day Reporting Centers (DRC) to provide individualized career services through the case management framework. LWC has added workforce specialist to assist the DRCs in the Orleans, Jefferson, St Tammany, East Baton Rouge and Caddo Parishes. Furthermore, OWD has increased its presence at nine different specialty courts throughout the state to assist with re-entry barriers to employment.

Additionally, OWD's Veterans' Unit offer re-entry services to incarcerated veterans statewide. Staff work with these individuals starting nine months prior to release. They continue to engage both parish and state formerly incarcerated personnel with significant barriers to employment in a concentrated effort of giving people a second chance to become productive, gainfully employed citizens.

LWC ensures that all workforce programs maintain access, equity, inclusion and diversity within a universal service delivery.

VII. Community Service Block Grant

The Community Services Block Grant Unit, as a component of the LWC, Office of Workforce Development, will provide leadership and technical assistance to the local Community Action Agencies (CAAs) to support the collaboration and coordination of their employment and training activities, as well as their supportive services with their local and regional WDBs. CAAs in each region will be included in the Louisiana Career Pathways model development, and are well-positioned to serve as lead partners in the development of "supportive service pathways" or service flow charts for vulnerable populations (i.e. low-skilled, low income, individuals with disabilities, re-entering citizens) focusing on reduction of barriers to employment. The CSBG Unit will achieve this commitment by providing best practices models and supporting innovative strategies that align services to ensure that customers receive the best available employment and training services and employment supports, to achieve their employment and self-sufficiency goals.

C. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS

WIOA reaffirms the role of the customer-focused one-stop delivery system, a cornerstone of the public workforce investment system, and enhances and increases coordination among several key employment, education and training programs. WIOA presents an extraordinary

opportunity for the workforce system to accelerate its transformational efforts and demonstrate its ability to improve job and career options for our citizens through an integrated, job-driven public workforce system that links diverse talent to our nation's businesses. It supports the development of strong, vibrant regional economies where businesses thrive and people want to live and work.

Goals are as follows:.

- Add flexibility to the delivery of training services by simplifying the process for identifying qualified candidates.

- Operate a process that recognizes the ever-changing funding environment associated with federal mandates and grants.

- Support the state's redesign of its business engagement process in a way that optimizes agency response to in-demand industry needs in hiring, retaining, training and advancement of workers.

- Anticipate the ongoing need for creating contingency plans to support economic growth in targeted industry sectors, and developing improved relationships with local and state economic development entities with the goal of pre-empting shortfalls in a skilled workforce.

- Address the need to reintegrate specific UI recipient related functions into the job-seeker process in order to shorten the return-to-work time for individuals receiving unemployment insurance benefits.

The Combined State Plan partners continue to refine Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) that define the parameters and principles of roles and responsibilities for partners in support of robust comprehensive One Stop Centers.

The redesign and refinement of service delivery provides an unprecedented opportunity to modernize Louisiana's workforce system, where the needs of employers and job-seekers drive workforce solutions. This allows One-Stop Career Centers and partners to provide excellent customer service to job-seekers and employers with continuous improvement through evaluation and data-driven policy.

The foundation for success is efficient and effective coordination of programs, services and governance, based on common assessment process, career service methodology, case management and job development systems. Leadership at all levels must think expansively, moving forward to produce the best customer-focused comprehensive delivery system.

Although each local board is responsible for its own service delivery, the state has established minimum standards for a demand-driven integrated service delivery process in order to establish consistency across the state.

Over time, the system fluctuated between an unbalanced focus on business to an unbalanced focus on employees. The current efforts are toward finding the level delivery of quality services to both entities consistently through policy followed state-wide throughout AJCs. Further, the balance of customer focus has become far too heavy on the job-seeker and too light on the employer. This "process evolution" combined with a reduction in resources (personnel and financial) is inhibiting state and LWDA leadership ability to quickly and effectively respond to compliance and performance demands and be flexible in operating a true outcome-based demand delivery system.

This revision is based on continuous process improvement (CPI). This moves the partnership away from the "compartmentalization" process of the original design and allows for the following in a real-time context: benchmarking (metric driven change), anticipating and meeting changing customer needs, local control of the process to reduce cycle time and idle

resources and incorporate lessons learned through marrying quality assurance (monitoring) directly to training.

The new process for all job-seekers regardless of their reason for entering our services is a roadmap designed for speed and flexibility. It provides for continuous assessment, career services and follow-up. This supports the original design concept of "efficiently determining customer needs, routing customers to the appropriate service, tracking customer activity through the process and targeting and recording outcomes." Each step in this process has an associated metric draw for continuous improvement.

Continued Guidelines and Required Actions: All job-seeking customers visiting a physical One-Stop Center location who receive staff-assisted services are included in the common measures performance calculations.

Because all One-Stop Center services, staff, facility and activities are funded in-part by both WP and WIOA, sequence of services and assessments shall determine the timing for co-enrollment of job- seekers who receive staff-assisted service in a One-Stop Center, or affiliate, into both WIOA Title I and the WP program for reporting and performance measures.

Any job-seeker served in any One-Stop (or affiliate) shall be counted as a participant in WIOA, regardless of the presence of WIOA-funded staff onsite. Conversely, all WIOA participants shall be counted as WP participants, regardless of the presence of WP funded staff at the enrolling service location.

Staff shall provide services to employers and job-seekers with the intent of developing high-quality outcomes. Performance accountability is based on the quality of services and not the number of services provided.

Service Delivery Process: Assessment, Career Services, and Follow-up for Job-Seekers:

Rather than being divided into three distinct workspaces, local leadership must design space usage to most efficiently and effectively move customers through the process. This may involve some team areas for specific tasks, but should not "silo" staff such that a "lack of work" can exist.

The old term and concept of "intake process" shall be replaced with "assessment process." While further discussion of assessment in this policy and in its operation will be divided into "initial assessment" and "comprehensive assessment," always think of assessment as an ongoing process in the context of service delivery.

Assessment may include the use of tools and processes that shall be modified by local leadership to be most effective based on the demographic of their specific location, customer base, staffing levels, program availability and access to supportive services.

One-Stop staff shall provide services without regard for their status as state or LWDB employees. Minimally, job-seeker services must include initial registration, WP and (when applicable) WIOA enrollment, with the appropriate staff-assisted first service.

Career services shall include both basic career and individualized career services as appropriate based on job-seeker and employer needs, and the most recently directed criteria associated with compliance and performance under any applicable U.S. Department of Labor grant. These services may include, but are not limited to, assisted job search activities, evaluation of skills, interests, preferences, career counseling training options, matching skills to current job openings, individualized career services, case management and follow-up.

The Three Tracks for a Job-Seeker

In the service delivery process, there are three tracks that any job-seeker may take. These are defined as workforce-ready in a demand occupation, workforce ready not in a demand occupation and case management.

It is important to note that one of these tracks will apply to all job-seekers regardless of their reason for entering our staff-assisted service, and that during the course of service assessments and re-evaluation the job-seeker may move from one track to another.

Entry may begin as a self-service electronic registration (in or out of a One-Stop Center), an outreach contact (regardless of reason for outreach), an automatic registration created by an application for UI benefits and the subsequent required service points requiring a visit to a One-Stop Center, a staff-assisted registration and enrollment for a job-seeker who is a "walk in" to a One-Stop Center or an individual who is registered by any means while receiving Rapid Response services.

Job-seekers who are also UI claimants

Required service entry for UI beneficiaries is based on worker profiling. UI claimants are profiled "most likely" to exhaust their benefits and be in need of employment services. Determination of service tract is based on individual assessment.

These job-seekers must report to the One-Stop Center at specified service points as a requirement of continued eligibility to receive UI benefits (following the most current U.S. Department of Labor and state guidance for grant specific requirements).

Any job-seeker who is also a UI recipient entering a One-Stop Center for service shall receive an orientation (e.g. provision of labor market information and career information, information on assessment tools and orientation to services available through the One-Stop Center and partner organizations).

Note: Orientation is optional but is encouraged for all non-UI recipient job-seekers as well.

Workforce Ready, in a Demand Occupation:

Job-seekers who are not UI recipients may arrive at the One-Stop Center for a variety of other reasons (they may be unemployed by choice or seeking a career change, for example). If the initial assessment indicates they have no significant barriers to employment and are workforce ready in a demand occupation, they will be placed on the workforce ready in a demand occupation track.

When an initial assessment indicates no significant barriers to employment, and that the job-seeker has skills, credentials, certification, education, soft skills, previous experience or a combination of these factors that qualifies them in a demand occupation, they shall be sent to career specialists performing business services or other career specialists designated by local management for job referral.

AJC staff performing business services shall review the job-seeker's skills comparing them to specific demand occupation job vacancies, match those skills to job vacancies and make a staff referral. The career specialist who made the referral, or who is case-managing the job- seeker, should plan for a formalized follow-up process, such as a 30-, 60-, 90-day cycle, developed locally with documented reassessment.

Workforce Ready, Not in a Demand Occupation:

When the initial assessment indicates a job-seeker is workforce ready but not in a demand occupation that job-seeker shall be referred to self-service and offered assistance as needed with informational services. As defined in Informational Services, these services will include guiding the job-seeker to labor market information including jobs in demand, wage rates, education requirements, work search tools, skills and interest-matching assessments.

Staff should plan for robust and effective follow-up, reassessing as necessary. This is critical because continued failure to achieve employment may indicate the existence of a barrier to employment that was not identified earlier in the assessment process.

Should follow-up for any job-seeker on the workforce ready track show continued unemployment, more individualized career services may be indicated. These job seekers shall be moved to the Case Management Track.

Case Management Track:

Job-seekers who have poor or large gaps in their work history, limited, obsolete or unknown skills, limited education, lack credentials, lack soft skills, have significant barriers to employment or a combination of any of these factors shall be considered not workforce ready.

Job-seekers who are not workforce ready shall be provided individualized career services, consisting of a minimum of a comprehensive assessment and development of an individualized employment plan (IEP) in the context of case management.

Comprehensive assessment is vital to collecting information on job-seeker barriers to employment, employment goals, knowledge, skills and abilities, and proficiency in occupational knowledge. This assessment shall be done as a client-centered approach to evaluating the needs of a participant without regard to services or training program availability. The purpose is not to match the job- seeker to what is available, rather to determine job-seeker needs.

The IEP is developed with a job-seeker to identify or create employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives and the right combination of services to assist in achieving goals and objectives. In short – "Where am I now?" "Where do I want to go?" "How will I get there?"

The IEP must include goals and objectives that are SMART (specific, measureable, attainable, realistic and time bound). A case note must accompany the IEP and must justify the plan based on the identified barrier(s) to employment.

Case management requires a regular follow-up and review or revision of the IEP until such time as the job-seeker becomes workforce ready or enters a training program. In either case, follow-up is critical, using a 30-day cycle until the job-seeker attains employment or completes training.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Successful implementation of integrated service delivery depends on the development of true partnerships and honest collaboration at all levels and among all stakeholders. This means developing effective partnerships within local communities, including but not limited to, business and industry associations, businesses, organized labor, community-based organizations, educational institutions and other partners. Establishment and effective operation of an ongoing and aggressive training program for both state merit and Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB)-funded staff is also critical to success.

D. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS

Louisiana's core program partners along with One-Stop partner programs in each of the 8 regions coordinate activities and resources through local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), focusing on delivering regional business services and creating a positive long-term economic impact in the regions. The coordinated activities and resources are designed to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs. This regional approach is appropriate for the following reasons:

- It builds strategic partnerships among businesses, training providers, community organizations and other key stakeholders in a labor market region that is designed to bolster

the region's economic competitiveness and promote systemic change to achieve ongoing benefits.

- This approach is more responsive to labor demand than solely traditional job-matching and training services because it is problem-oriented (versus program-oriented), addresses needs interdependently (versus independently) and works to understand the collective needs of business.

The Regional Business Service Team (RBST) determines the skills, recruitment and retention needs of employers, as well as the training, employment and career advancement needs of job-seekers and workers. This meeting of the needs of businesses in the region has the potential to strengthen a region's overall economic vitality by:

- Addressing the needs of employers through an intense focus on the workforce needs within specific industry sectors and businesses over a sustained period, often concentrating on a specific occupation or set of occupations within that industry.

- Addressing the needs of workers by creating formal career paths to good jobs, reducing barriers to employment and sustaining or increasing middle-class jobs.

- Bolstering regional economic competitiveness by engaging economic development experts in workforce issues while aligning education, economic and workforce development planning.

- Engaging a broader array of key stakeholders through partnerships.

- Promoting systemic change that achieves ongoing benefits for the industry, workers and community.

Regional Business Service Team

The Regional Business Service Team is a partnership between core program partners and mandatory/optional One-Stop partner programs with local Workforce Development Boards that convene and provide guidance to the team. The Regional Business Service Team within each region consists of the following programs:

- Wagner-Peyser.
- Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER).
- Adult/Dislocated Worker Youth Program.
- Louisiana Rehabilitation Services.
- Incumbent Worker Training Program.
- Rapid Response.
- WorkReady U (Adult Education)
- Other stakeholders that engage employers in the region.

The RBST should meet on a regular basis in order to collaborate and coordinate their focus on employers' needs in the region. The RBST supports and aligns One-Stop business services within each region. Below is a list of business services in the region the team provides to the employer community:

- Develop and facilitate industry or sector partnerships.

- Customized screenings and referrals of qualified participants in employer based training services to employers (e.g. on-the-job, customized and internship etc.).

- Customized services to employers, employer associations or other such organizations on employment-related issues.
- Customized recruitment/hiring events, job fairs, workshops and related services for employers (e.g., targeted hiring, new business openings, seasonal hiring and safety training).
- Human resource consultation services, such as writing/reviewing job descriptions and employee handbooks, developing performance evaluation and personnel policies and creating orientation sessions for new workers.
- Teaching job interview techniques for efficiency and compliance.
- Analyzing employee turnover, explaining labor laws to help employers comply with wage/hour and safety/health regulations.
- Providing customized labor market information for specific employers, sectors, industries or clusters.
- Increasing coordination with stakeholders to support and develop pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities.
- Providing assistance or referral for assistance in the development of registered apprenticeships.
- Creating job order listings and applicant referrals through HiRE. Providing access to One-Stop Centers to develop innovative workforce investment strategies to meet the needs of the region's employers.

E. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Higher education is not a mandated partner in WIOA, however, the Louisiana Workforce Investment Council membership consists of the state leadership of most of the state's educational systems, including the Louisiana Community and Technical College System, the Board of Regents of Higher Education and the superintendent of education (K-12).

As stated in Section II (C), Louisiana has developed a shared definition and framework for Career Pathways as a method for the alignment of education, training and work-based learning (apprenticeships, internships) and support services that enable individuals and students to be better prepared to achieve economic independence and family stability. The WIOA partners have continuously organized resources (staff, supports, etc.) around target job-seeker populations and business development using a model that will encourage separate agencies to wrap resources, staff and supports around the customer base.

As referenced in Section II (C) Regional Business and Sector Strategies, the educational partners, particularly the Louisiana Community and Technical College System institutions, are planning cooperatively through Perkins V and WIOA planning to provide workforce skills training and integrated work-based training to meet regional employer and economic development needs. State partners continue to work with local and regional workforce development boards and partners to define and build pathways appropriate to the region. Regularly scheduled meetings continue to occur facilitating collaboration and strategic planning between education, workforce, and economic development state and regional partners. These collaboration efforts continue to yield breakthrough service results for all partners and specifically benefit served populations.

With the support of LMI and Occupational Forecasting Conference, the Louisiana Workforce Commission's Star Jobs ratings system was developed. The Star Jobs ratings system provides a ranking of the highest-demand, highest-wage jobs in Louisiana, based on factors such as forecasted employment growth (long-term and short-term), jobs available in the previous year, and wages. Star Jobs ratings are developed and dynamically updated. Since the inception and implementation of Star Jobs ratings, this ranking system has been utilized by educators across Louisiana at all levels.

F. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS

View corresponding narrative from PYs 2020-2023

Current Narrative:

As required under WIOA, the State maintains a publicly accessible Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and their eligible training programs, including relevant performance and cost information. The ETPL includes public and private educational institutions, community-based organizations, and proprietary training providers meeting eligibility. LWC determines procedures for initial determination of eligibility and subsequent certification of training providers.

The flexibility afforded by WIOA has allowed for engagement and expansion of other training programs. For example, this flexibility is demonstrated in the State's Registered Apprenticeship program which supports increased involvement of unions, trade associations, community colleges and other training providers.

Local Workforce Development Boards in coordination with American Job Center operators are required to collect performance information and determine whether training providers meet required performance criteria as set by the State and their locally established criteria. Providers that meet the criteria are considered eligible providers of training services.

LWC provides the policy and structure for the ETPL, and the LWDBs are charged with aligning education and training resources in their local areas and regions to provide maximum opportunities for job-seekers to attain skills and experiences needed to obtain employment.

In issuing a determination, local boards are required to:

- Analyze the impact of economic, geographic and demographic factors, and the characteristics of the populations served by applicants, including their difficulties to access or provide services, if any.
- Determine the occupations for which they are requesting training services, which shall be those in demand in the geographic region covered by the local board.
- Keep the process of initial eligibility determination open throughout the year.
- Establish eligibility criteria, requirements for additional information and minimum performance levels for providers of training beyond what is required by the State Board, which might be applicable to the specific local area.
- Safeguard the confidentiality of personally identifiable information of any education records, including the circumstances related to prior consent, and comply with the provisions of the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA).

- Periodically invite public and private educational institutions and community-based organizations to submit applications for initial or subsequent eligibility determination as providers of training for occupations in demand.
- Regarding apprenticeship programs, promote automatic inclusion of providers in the State List after a request is made by a registered provider under the provisions of the *Registered Apprenticeship Act* and enabling State provisions.
- Procedures for on-the-job training; customized training; incumbent worker training; transitional employment; or the circumstances described at WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(G)(ii).
- Exception made of Registered Apprenticeship, One-Stop Centers' operators are required to collect performance information and determine whether the providers meet the performance criteria. Providers that meet the criteria are considered eligible providers of training services.

G. LEVERAGING RESOURCES TO INCREASE EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

The LWIC has been a partner for the leveraging of federal, state and local investments to expand access to workforce development programs in education and training institutions. Several workforce development regions have leveraged local and state resources to attract philanthropic investments to implement innovative targeted strategies targeting low-skill unemployed and underemployed individuals. LWC will continue to work closely with post-secondary education partners, including all Perkins V postsecondary recipients, to leverage federal, state and local resources. This includes including financial aid programs and veterans (e.g. GI Bill) benefits to enhance access to educational opportunities.

It should be noted that Louisiana Community and Technical College System, as well as other public and private organizations in the state, have received millions of dollars in discretionary grants and will continue to apply to receive future discretionary grants to support workforce training services and strategies to impact the lives of targeted populations (e.g., dislocated workers, veterans, re-entry, out-of-school youth). The governor's vision is to improve coordination and collaboration in delivering services to eligible participants in an effort to improve upon the efficacy and effectiveness of service delivery, thereby increasing participation of the state's those most vulnerable populations in need of workforce training and supportive services, as well as overall program outcomes.

Under the vision and leadership of Gov. John Bel Edwards, the LWC Secretary has maintained conversations with federal and state leaders relative to maximization of current federal and state resources to enhance and expand access to workforce development programs that support career pathways for citizens in need of skill upgrades. LWDBs are also being challenged to convene their local partners to continuously develop and update resource maps of existing resources and transformational opportunities.

H. IMPROVING ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS

Core to the implementation of Louisiana Career Pathways is the identification and development of stackable credentials that meet the needs of high-demand industries and support individual mobility from one post-secondary program to another. This includes Registered Apprenticeships and occupational training programs, and from basic education into post-secondary programs.

The foundation for Louisiana's approach to post-secondary credentials is the development of Career Clusters at the secondary school level, these are:

- Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources
- Architecture & Construction
- Arts, A/V Technology & Communications
- Business, Management & Administration
- Education & Training
- Finance
- Government & Public Administration
- Health Science
- Hospitality & Tourism
- Human Services
- Information Technology
- Manufacturing
- Marketing, Sales & Services
- Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics
- Transportation, Distributing & Logistics

This Career Pathway approach is designed to prepare students to meet the demands of postsecondary education and the expectations of employers, in particular those representing "in demand" occupations.

Integral to this process is the opportunity for a participant to acquire a "portable" and "recognized" credential that they have successfully demonstrated skill competencies on a core set of content that is complete with performance standards that are based on a specific set of work-related tasks in either a single occupational area, or a cluster of related occupational areas. Louisiana currently has multiple certifications that are "Industry Based" and "Locally Designed" and available state-wide.

I. COORDINATING WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Sector strategy initiatives have been developed in each of the 8 Workforce Regions of the state. LWC has industry coordinators and business consultants currently on staff and assigned to each region. Their primary roles are to engage business and industry to identify short- and long-term workforce needs, and assist local workforce boards (business consultants) and One-Stop Centers (industry coordinators) with developing goals, objectives and strategies to address these needs.

Each Workforce Region has identified at least 3 of the top industries within the region, industries that have the need to fill vacancies in high-demand occupations. Star Jobs (3-5 star jobs) are the targets. These industries are identified through the use of LMI and engagement with local and regional economic development associations.

LWC and local areas also work with Louisiana Economic Development's Fast Start Program. LED-Fast Start provides quick workforce solutions to businesses in LED's effort to attract new businesses to the state, or retain existing businesses. Solutions include recruitment and workforce training, working with the state's community and technical college system to develop curriculum approved by the employer(s) to produce short-term training to job candidates and helping trainees attain the skills necessary to fill jobs quickly.

B. STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

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

Customer service and a focus on consumer needs for user-friendly resources in the areas of skill assessment, career planning, post-secondary training opportunities and workforce information are the highest priority. Louisiana Occupational Information System (LOIS) integration with HiRE provides a seamless delivery point for occupational and career data.

Through HiRE, LWC has maximized customer choice, providing the ability to directly enter the labor exchange process by either self-identification or through staff assistance. The system provides job-seekers with direct access to employer listings through the self-service component, as well as the ability to complete skill-based resumes.

Enhancements launched in November, 2015, provided job-seekers with the ability to do business with the LWC more efficiently with online access to file appeals to unemployment insurance decisions, access real-time claim updates and the ability to correspond online rather than through postal mail.

Louisiana's labor market information system, case management system, job bank, and internal (customer and staff) communications systems are all integrated into one system – HiRE. HiRE is administered by Geographic Solutions, Inc. (GSI). GSI is responsible for administration, development, and data management of the HiRE system. Each aforementioned functional area within HiRE has its own module for the intake and management of information (customer, labor market, job listings, etc.). This seamless coordination between these functional areas enables rapid and efficient access to different categories of information needed to assist job seekers and employers. LWC will continue to identify opportunities to link electronic delivery of services and resources.

Featured Job-Seeker Tools

Star Jobs

Louisiana's Star Jobs rating system was developed in response to the need to broaden our assessment of "top" occupations to be prioritized by training and education policymakers. The Star Jobs rating system considers immediate opportunities and wages associated with that job, as well as short-term (3-year) hiring outlook.

The ultimate advantage of the Star Jobs rating system is the simple, direct way that all rankings are combined into a single measure. Jobs that fare well across several dimensions stand out.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission's Star Jobs ratings system allows job seekers to explore occupations based on their interests. The Star Jobs system enables users to understand the

nature of work, identify education and training requirements, connect with education and training providers and apply for jobs online.

My life. My way.

Louisiana Workforce Commission has an online mobile tool called My life. My way. for students, young adults and anyone interested in finding high-demand careers that interest them while supporting the standard of living they want to maintain. It seamlessly flows users into Louisiana Star Jobs, the job search and career exploration tool, automatically showing users jobs that pay the salary they need.

Louisiana Workforce Commission's HiRE system (Helping Individuals Reach Employment) is the principal repository for collected data. LWC's Management of Information Systems (MIS) unit is responsible for ensuring that the data collected is accurate and timely, analyzed and presented for performance reporting. Collected data is managed by Geographic Solutions Inc. (GSI). GSI houses the data and aggregates the data for the different USDOL program performance reporting processes for which LWC is responsible.

The HiRE system facilitates a wide range of dynamic reports of job seeker and employer data including: job search activities, training services, counseling services, assessment activity, recruiting efforts, services to employers, and detailed job vacancy data. Moreover, the HiRE system has readily available labor market data with information on employment trends, wage rates, hiring demand, and industrial data. This enables workforce staff, employers, and job seekers to leverage the available market data in planning and executing services to participants, employee recruiting, and strategic employment planning.

Participant and employer data are in input into the HiRE system by AJC staff, job seekers, and employers. This data is produced for reporting in formats for submission to the USDOL WIPS performance reporting system through the administrative functions of the HiRE system, both for full programmatic periodic reporting and periodic reporting by specific customer groups. Wage data, both in-state and out-of-state, are incorporated into the WIPS-compatible data extracts by the HiRE system. The reporting extracts, with wage records, are formatted accordingly with respect to the quarter reported and the participating and exited program participants.

Supplemental Performance Resources

The MIS unit provides technical assistance to Workforce Investment Boards and AJC staff as it relates to data collection and reporting. Such technical assistance comprises common and program-specific requirements such as eligibility, data entry, case management, individual fund tracking and the management of providers. Further, the MIS Unit provides periodic WIOA performance orientation training and refresher training for new AJC staff and experienced AJC staff, respectively, updating AJC personnel with trends and ETA areas of focus related to WIOA performance.

As a supplement to HiRE, LWC and boards utilize a third-party vendor, FutureWorkSystems (FWS) which further processes data to enable greater detail of information for analysis. This allows LWC and Boards to optimize decision making related to policy and process. The FWS performance analysis application offers the ability to analyze diverse permutations of performance data, including detailed participant demographic and service delivery data, to enable AJC staff to more effectively deliver program services based on rapidly accessible customer population characteristics.

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

III. b. 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

Co-enrollment – WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs

Individuals who meet the respective program and service eligibility requirements may participate in Adult/Dislocated Worker and Youth programs concurrently. Co-enrollment offers the opportunity to access additional program services and funds to help address a participant's specific barriers to employment and/or education. Local programs operators determine the appropriate level and balance of services under the Youth and Adult/Dislocated Worker programs. Case managers must include a case note of justification in the participant file explaining why the co-enrollment is appropriate. Participants must meet the eligibility requirements of each program and will become part of each program's performance. This determination depends not only on the eligibility requirements of each program, but also on the services needed by each participant [TEGL 19-16]. Services available under each funding stream will depend on eligibility for services under that funding stream. Local program operators determine the appropriate level and balance of services for each individual under each program. Local program operators must identify and track the funding streams that pay the costs of services and ensure no duplication of services [20 CFR 681.430]. However, if it is determined that only the Youth or the Adult/Dislocated Worker program array of services is appropriate for an individual aged 18 - 24, then the local program provider may enroll the participant in only one program [20 CFR 681.440].

LWC continues to evaluate the process for the development and modification of MOUs with core and required partners. The purpose of the MOU is to:

1. Articulate a coordinated vision for organizing the broadly defined public workforce system in Louisiana to produce the best possible outcomes for customers — job seekers and businesses.

2. Describe the manner in which the WIOA program partners are legally authorized to participate in the delivery of services, under the provision of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, through Local Workforce Development Boards, the American Job Centers/One-Stop Career Centers and WIOA Core Program partners.

3. Establish agreement at the state level focused on designing partnerships and service delivery systems through the WIOA Core Program partners to ensure that Louisiana businesses and job seekers, including those individuals with disabilities, low-income status, Veteran status, education or language barriers, and other individuals "shared" by the core program partners, achieve/demonstrate measurable and better outcomes in the areas of education, training, job placement, and wages.

4. Establish a definition and set of shared infrastructure costs to support newly designed partnerships and service delivery between the core program partners, specialized centers and/or affiliated centers, and the local workforce development boards, American Job Centers/One-Stop Career Centers in local areas as authorized by WIOA.

5. Guide the establishment of local area partnerships and MOU agreements on how services can be connected, integrated or enhanced by sharing staffing, resources or jointly designed services in ways that improve outcomes for "shared" customers – job seekers and businesses.

The Office of Workforce Development Monitoring Unit reviews and evaluates executed MOUs annually to ensure alignment with State infrastructure policy, that partners follow the identify MOU purposes listed above, as well as have a method to identify shared common customers, have a system in place to provide and track referrals, and enroll shared customers in the State's HiRE case management system to serve as a data warehouse to report on outcomes of both job seeker and business customers. Agreements must also have clearly defined infrastructure cost-sharing requirements for all core and required partners.

LWC's various departments reviews, updates, and develops policy guidance on an ongoing basis to support the implementation of workforce activities throughout the state. Policies provide guidance on local board membership and responsibilities, regional and local planning, one-stop certification, priority of service, program eligibility, and one-stop partner requirements for access in the system ensuring one-stop operators and all partners have a mutual understanding of what is required.

LWC, as the lead agency for the implementation of the WIOA Combined State Plan, has developed a foundational set of policies that provide guidance for LWDBs to implement WIOA Core Programs and other associated services. The chart below presents an overview of the state's policies designed to support effective implementation of WIOA and the One-Stop delivery system:

Policy Number	**Policy Name**	**Purpose**
OWD 4-11	WIOA Board Composition and Certification	Guidance on composition and certification criteria for LWDBs
OWD 2-13.4	WIOA Eligible Training Providers	Guidance to LWDA, training providers and other stakeholders on the certification process and procedures.
OWD 2-21.2	Youth Program Operation	Codifies TEGL WIOA 23-14 guidance for the operation implementation WIOA Youth formula funds.
OWD 2-23.1	Integrated Service Delivery	Defines the role and responsibilities for state staff in the One-Stop Centers; and key definitions
OWD 2-24.2	WIOA Adult Dislocated Worker Eligibility Policy	
OWD 2-27	IEP & LMI Policy	Codifies TEGL 22-08 , LMI is a tool that provides information for IEP

One-Stop Partner Programs' Contributions

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) requires that all mandated partners (as defined in TEGL 17-16) provide access to service in at least one Comprehensive American Job Center in each of Louisiana's fifteen Workforce Development Areas. WIOA also requires that each mandated partner contribute to infrastructure funding of the Comprehensive American Job Centers in each of Louisiana fifteen Workforce Development Areas and any Affiliate American Job Centers through which individual partner entities provide access to services.

Funding contributions for infrastructure costs and additional costs, such as shared costs and shared services which may be in the form cash, non-cash, third-party in-kind contributions, funding from philanthropic organizations, other private entities, or other alternative financing options, as described in WIOA sec. 121(c)(2)(A)(ii) and 20 CFR 678.715, 34 CFR 361.715 and 34 CFR 463.715

WIOA requires that all mandated partners provide access to services in each of Louisiana's Comprehensive American Job Centers. WIOA also requires that the mandated partners contribute to infrastructure costs in each Comprehensive American Job Centers.

Workforce development areas in Louisiana are not required to operate Affiliate American Job Centers; however, partners who provide access to services in any Affiliate American Job Center are also required to contribute to infrastructure costs within those Affiliate Centers.

Infrastructure Costs

WIOA defines infrastructure costs of Comprehensive and Affiliate American Job Centers to be non-personnel costs that are necessary for the general operation of the American Job Center:

- Non-personnel costs that are necessary for the general operation of the One-Stop Center include but are not limited to:
    - Rental costs of facilities
    - Costs of utilities and maintenance
    - Equipment , including assessment related products
    - Assistive technology for individuals with disabilities
    - Supplies
    - Telecommunications

Infrastructure Agreement Development

Negotiating sessions with mandated partners are held as frequently as possible to meet the deadline for developing Infrastructure Agreements and submitting MOUs. Not all mandated partners are able to attend in person infrastructure funding negotiation meetings. In these instances, provisions are made to communicate these partners via teleconference or other means.

The steps in determining infrastructure costs are as follows:

1. Local boards and chief elected officials of Louisiana's fifteen workforce development areas finalize the list of One-Stop delivery system partners who are required to provide access to services within the Comprehensive American Job Centers in their respective areas. Documentation must be kept relative to any mandated partner(s) who are not located in an area and are unable to provide access to services.
2. Local boards, chief elected-officials, and partners determine the services to be provided through the one-stop delivery system and the method through which access to services will be provided for each mandated partner.
3. Local boards, chief elected-officials, and partners develop an operating budget listing line item cost objects listing infrastructure and other costs.
4. Local boards, chief elected-officials, and partners determine the cost base to be used to allocate each of the cost objects within the operating budget. It is recommended that the parties involved concentrate and reach an agreement on infrastructure costs first. In

determining the cost base, the parties involved will consider each partner's proportionate use of the system and the relative benefit received from each line item cost object.

5. Local boards, chief elected-officials, and partners determine the method by which partners will contribute their allocated share of infrastructure costs.
6. Local boards, chief elected-officials, and partners will determine the point at which the operational infrastructure budget will be reconciled. It will be Louisiana's policy to require that reconciliation of infrastructure budgets occur no less than once per quarter. A monthly reconciliation is recommended.
7. The local boards, chief elected-officials, and partner entities will enter into an MOU no later than December 1, 2017 that includes an Infrastructure Funding Agreement.

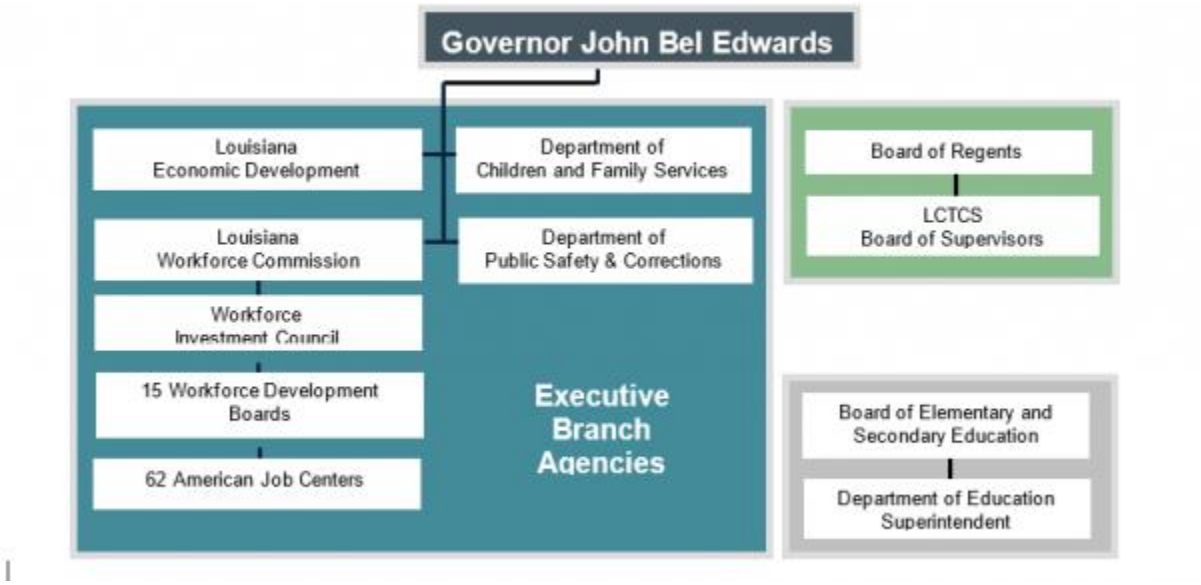
State Infrastructure Funding Mechanism

The State, with the Governor's approval, will use a method to determine infrastructure costs of the American Job Center(s) in a Local Area when partners are unable to agree on how to share costs. The amount that each required partner can contribute is capped per WIOA section 121(h)(3)(B). The State Infrastructure Funding Mechanism only applies to certified comprehensive Centers in Local Areas that cannot reach agreement on a cost sharing agreement.

3. STATE PROGRAM AND STATE BOARD OVERVIEW

A. STATE AGENCY ORGANIZATION

The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) interrelates with its partner agencies as illustrated in the organizational chart.



Among the Executive Branch agencies, the lines of authority are very clear. Each agency is run by a Cabinet-level appointee, and these appointees all report to the Governor. All of the cabinet members in the agencies listed above are members of the Workforce Investment Council (WIC) which serves as our state board.

All post-secondary education is governed by a state Board of Regents, some of whose members are appointed by the Governor. The Regents' chief executive, the state Commissioner of Higher

Education, is a member of the WIC. Under the Regents' umbrella is the Board of Supervisors for the Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS), whose chief executive is also a member of the WIC.

Elementary and secondary education is governed by the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). Eight members are elected from the eight BESE districts, and the remaining three members are appointed by the Governor. BESE's chief executive is the Superintendent of Education, who also is a member of the WIC.

Title 1 (Adult Youth and Dislocated Worker) and Title III Wagner-Peyser, Community Service Block Grants (CSBG) are administered by LWC. The Secretary of LWC is a member of the WIC. Title III Vocational Rehab is administered by LWC and the Director of LRS is a member of the WIC. Title II (Adult Education) is administered by LCTCS, a member of the WIC.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) are administered by the Department of Children and Family Services and is a member of the WIC.

Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) program has dedicated staff to provide individualized career and training related services to veterans and eligible persons with significant barriers to employment and to assist employers to fill their workforce needs with job-seeking veterans.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is overseen by the Office of Elderly Affairs. Louisiana SCSEP administers two Sub-Grantees which are: Capital Area Agency on Aging, and Jefferson Council on Aging. In addition, to collaboration with the National Grantees: Institute for Indian Development (IID) and Asociación Nacional Pro Personas Mayores (ANPPM). The purpose of the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) are to foster and promote useful part-time opportunities in community service activities for unemployed low-income persons who are 55 years of age or older and who have poor employment prospects; to foster individual economic self-sufficiency; and to increase the number of older persons who may enjoy the benefits of unsubsidized employment in both the public and private sectors.

B. STATE BOARD

Affiliation	**First Name**	**Last Name**	Representing
Governor	John Bel	Edwards	Governor's Office
Louisiana Workforce Commission	Ava	Cates	Louisiana Workforce Commission
Louisiana Economic Development	Don	Pierson	Louisiana Economic Development
Department of Children and Family Services	Marketa	Walters	Department of Children and Family Services
Department of Education	Cade	Brumley	Department of Education (K-12)
Community and Technical College System	Monty	Sullivan	Community and Technical College System (Adult Education)
Board of Regents	Kim	Reed	Board of Regents

Affiliation	**First Name**	**Last Name**	Representing
Public Safety and Corrections	James "Jimmy"	LeBlanc	Public Safety and Corrections
Vocational Rehab	Melissa	Bayham	Vocational Rehab.
CEO of community based organization	Thelma	French	Community Based Organizations
Woman Owned Business	Sandra	Herman Thompson	Woman Owned Business
Minority Owned Business	David	St.Etienne	Minority Owned Business (I.T.)
Minority Owned Business	Conrad	Carriere	Minority Owned Business (Construction)
Retail & Wholesale Sector	Vacant	Vacant	
Energy sector	Randy	Hayden	Energy Sector Businesses
Medical Services and Biotechnology Sector	Tracey	Schiro	Medical Services and Biotechnology Sector (Ochsner Hospitals)
Entertainment and Tourism Sector	Paul	Arrigo	Entertainment and Tourism Sector (La. Travel Promotion Assn.)
Information and Technology	Melissa	Mann	Information and Technology (Century Link)
Durable Goods and Manufacturing Sector	Gina	Jones	Durable Goods and Manufacturing Sector
Construction Sector	Vacant	Vacant	Construction Sector
Agriculture & Forestry Sector	Buck	Vandersteen	Agriculture & Forestry Sector (Louisiana Forestry Association)
Financial & Insurance Sector	Stephen	David	Financial & Insurance Sector (Hancock Whitney Bank)
Logistics & Transportation Sector	Bruce	Busada	Logistics & Transportation Sector (Diesel Driving Academy)
General Business	Richard B. “R.B.”	Smith	General Business (La. Economic Development Alliance)
General Business	Robert J. “Bob”	Lobos	General Business (Wolf Creek Business Growth Institute)

Affiliation	**First Name**	**Last Name**	Representing
General Business	Valerie	Aymond	General Business (Gilchrist Construction)
General Business	Thomas A.	Yura	General Business (Cornerstone Industries)
General Business	Roy O.	Martin III	General Business (Roy O. Martin Lumber)
General Business	Sonia A.	Perez	General Business (AT&T)
General Business	Leigh	King	General Business (Cox Cable)
General Business	Ada	Womack-Bell	General Business (Southern Business Alliance)
General Business	Jason	Cobb	General Business
General Business	Vacant	Vacant	General Business
General Business	Norisha	Kirts	General Business (NRK Construction)
General Business	Charles Chuck	Henderson	General Business
General Business	Kirk	LaCour	General Business (Acadian One/LABI)
Chief Executive Officer of a Parish or City	Michael	Danahay	City of Sulpher
Chief Executive Officer of a Parish or City	Edward R	Jones	City of Grambling
Labor	Keith W	Brand	Labor (Louisiana Apprenticeship Council)
Labor	Jason	Dedon	Labor
Labor	Jason	Engles	Labor (Carpenter's Apprenticeship and Training)
Labor	Joshua	Sonnier	Labor
Labor	Ronald	Rosser Jr.	Labor
Labor	Louis	Reine	Labor
Labor	Susan	Nelson	Labor
Labor	Joseph	Ardoin	Labor
Labor	John	Hopkins	Labor
Labor	Gerry	Mims	Labor

Affiliation	**First Name**	**Last Name**	Representing
Labor	Brent	Moreland	Labor (Electrician's Apprenticeship and Training)
Senate	Appointment Pending		State Senator
Senate	Barrow	Peacock	State Senator
House	Barbara	Carpenter	State Representative
House	Larry	Frieman	State Representative

I. MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

Affiliation	Title	**First Name**	**Last Name**
Governor	Governor	John Bel	Edwards
Louisiana Workforce Commission	Secretary of Louisiana Workforce Commission	Ava	Cates
Louisiana Economic Development	Secretary for Louisiana Economic Development	Don	Pierson
Department of Children and Family Services	Secretary of Department of Children and Family Services	Marketa	Walters
Department of Education	Superintendent of Education in Louisiana	Cade	Brumley
Community and Technical College System	President of Louisiana Technical College System	Monty	Sullivan
Board of Regents	Commissioner of Higher Education	Kim	Reed
Public Safety and Corrections	Secretary of the Department of Public Safety and Corrections	James "Jimmy"	LeBlanc
CEO of a Community-based organization	CEO of Total Community Action	Thelma	French

Affiliation	Title	**First Name**	**Last Name**
Woman-owned business	CEO New Orleans Entertainment Coalition	Sandra	Thompson Herman
Minority Owned Business	President/CEO of Ultimate Technical Solutions	David	St.Etienne
Minority Owned Business	President/CEO of C&C Construction **(Small Business Rep.)**	Conrad	Carriere
Retail & Wholesale Sector	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant
Energy sector	President of Creative Communications, Inc. for the Energy Alliance	Randy	Hayden
Medical Services and Biotechnology Sector	Executive Vice President, Chief Risk, and Human Resources Ochsner Health Systems	Tracey	Schiro
Entertainment and Tourism Sector	Chairman of Baton Rouge Tourist Bureau	Paul	Arrigo
Information and Technology	Region & Government Affairs Vice President, at Lumen	Melissa	Mann
Durable Goods and Manufacturing Sector	Executive Senior Manager, Americas, Learning and Development at Sasol	Gina	Jones
Construction Sector	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant
Agriculture & Forestry Sector	Executive Director of the Louisiana Forestry Association	Buck	Vandersteen
Financial & Insurance Sector	Senior Vice President of Hancock Whitney Bank	Stephen	David
Logistics & Transportation Sector	CEO of Diesel	Bruce	Busada

Affiliation	Title	**First Name**	**Last Name**
	Driving Academy		
General Business/Vocational Rehabilitation	Director of Louisiana Rehabilitation Services/Voc Rehab	Melissa	Bayham
General Business	Vice President of Business and Workforce Development for the Southwest Louisiana Economic Development Alliance	Richard B. "R.B."	Smith
General Business	CEO Wolf Creek Business Growth Institute	Robert J. "Bob"	Lobos
General Business	COO of Gilchrist Construction	Valerie	Aymond
General Business	COO at Cornerstone Chemical Company	Thomas A.	Yura
General Business	Chairman, CEO, and CFO of Martin Sustainable Resources L.L.C., Martin Timberlands L.L.C., and Martco L.L.C, Director and co-founder of Indigo Minerals, LLC	Roy O.	Martin III
General Business	President at AT&T Louisiana	Sonia A.	Perez
General Business	Vice President of Cox Cable Communication	Leigh	King
General Business	Director at the Louisiana Small Business Development Center	Ada	Womack-Bell
General Business	CEO - Rapides Regional Medical Center	Jason	Cobb

Affiliation	Title	**First Name**	**Last Name**
General Business	CEO of TK Pizza	Charles "Chuck"	Henderson, Jr.
General Business	CEO of NRK Construction	Norisha	Kirts
General Business	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant
General Business	Director of Litigation - Acadian Companies	Kirk	LaCour
Chief Executive Officer of a Parish or City	Mayor of Sulphur Louisiana	Michael	Danahay
Chief Executive Officer of a Parish or City	Mayor of Grambling Louisiana	Edward R	Jones
Labor	Training Director for the Baton Rouge Area Electrical JATC (**Louisiana Apprenticeship Council)**	Keith W	Brand
Labor	Business Rep. Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	Jason	Dedon
Labor	Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Central South Carpenters Regional Council	Jason	Engles
Labor	Labor Representative	Joshua	Sonnier
Labor	Labor Representative	Ronald	Rosser Jr.
Labor	President of Louisiana AFL-CIO	Louis	Reine
Labor	Labor Representative	Susan	Nelson
Labor	Business Rep. Carpenters Union	Joseph	Ardoin
Labor	Labor Representative	John	Hopkins
Labor	Labor Representative	Gerry	Mims

Affiliation	Title	**First Name**	**Last Name**
Labor	Business Manager of IBEW Local 194	Brent	Moreland
Senate	Appointment Pending	Appointment Pending	
Senate	Louisiana State Senator	Barrow	Peacock
House	Louisiana State Representative	Barbara	Carpenter
House	Louisiana State Representative	Larry	Frieman

II. BOARD ACTIVITIES

Workforce Investment Council (WIC) members are Louisiana's workforce champions. They represent a cross-section of stakeholders in the development of a comprehensive, integrated workforce development and delivery system that begins with understanding the workforce needs of industry, connects Louisiana citizens to training, and links trained workers to high-wage, high-demand careers.

The Workforce Investment Council:

- Collaborates and advises on Louisiana's strategic plan for a comprehensive, integrated workforce development and delivery system.
- Advocates for efficiency and cooperation among stakeholders.
- Promotes the development of a well-educated, highly skilled workforce.
- Oversees strategies to educate Louisianans about career opportunities and businesses about services and resources available to help them meet their workforce needs.
- Ensures the equitable distribution of workforce development resources across the state.
- Makes recommendations to the Governor of geographic designations and alterations for workforce development areas.
- Directs the activities of the Occupational Forecasting Conference, responsible for overseeing state-wide and regional job-growth projections, which underpin the planning and budgeting of state and local resources.
- Oversees the Industry-Based Credential (IBC) Council, responsible for evaluating the alignment of credentials with state workforce demand and approval of credentials for inclusion on the IBC State-Focus List, which guides training programs and other stakeholders to important occupations in the state and the industry- recognized credentials leading to those occupations.
- Oversees, jointly with the Louisiana Office Financial Student Aid, the Louisiana Department of Education, Louisiana Economic Development, and the Board of Regents, the evaluation of two-year and shorter-term programs for TOPS (Taylor Opportunity Program for Students) Tech eligibility in alignment with state workforce demand, guided by state industry and occupational forecasts.

● Contributes to the evaluation of TOPS Tech Early Start training providers to ensure alignment with state and regional workforce needs.

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

A. ASSESSMENT OF CORE PROGRAMS

WIOA's primary measures of performance measure each core program's effectiveness at producing desired outcomes. Proposed §677.190(a) directs that state and local final adjusted levels of performance each year will take into consideration characteristics of the participants as well as state and local economic conditions through the application of a federal statistical adjustment model. Therefore, the state and local areas will be assessed based on a comparison of the actual performance level with the adjusted level of performance each quarter and annually.

The State's review of Regional/Local Plans will contain a component regarding how these plans support and relate to the State's Vision, Strategies and Goals, and how they relate to realistic achievement of performance measures. More specifically, how they relate to the State's Continuous Improvement Process. In general, this assessment contains the following components:

- Management Commitment, do they indicate an explicit commitment from all Partner Programs Leadership at the Level of "Decision Maker"?
- Do they indicate a link into the "Common Intake" model, "Co-Enrollment" Process, and Sector Based Business Engagement Effort?
- Do they include a component for developing and maintaining well trained and highly qualified operators (and contractors) providing services in all Partner Programs?
- Is there a component for evaluation of service providers?
- Is there a defined methodology for evaluating outcomes for all Partner Programs and a continuous feedback cycle for those evaluations?
- Are there mechanisms to quickly and accurately identify non-conforming actions in all sub-parts (staff, contractors, partners, supportive services, etc.)? These measurements must be both Valid (measures what it is supposed to measure) and Reliable (measures consistently).
- Do the plans contain a defined methodology for quickly and accurately addressing root causation for failures in a positive and proactive fashion?

These components mirror the State's approach to continuous improvement and are applied to all individual and group goals and objectives.

The state will use the following criteria to evaluate local workforce development area common performance indicators:

1. Exceed: Outcome for each measure must be greater than 100 percent of the performance level.

2. Meet: Outcome for each measure must not fall below 90 percent of the performance level.

3. Fail: Outcome for any one of the measures is less than 90 percent of the performance level.

Action: In instances when the state or a local area fails a performance measure, immediate technical assistance will be provided by the appropriate office to improve the proficiency of staff members in providing WIOA services and provide an opportunity to develop strategies to improve the program's ability to meet performance measures.

Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth:

Core Programs will be assessed, in coordination with LWDBs, One-stop Operators and Core partners/providers, through financial and administrative monitoring of all sub-recipients of funds expended under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 for Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs), Adult Education and Literacy Act, Rehabilitation Act Title I, and Wagner-Peyser Act. Other programs and activities will include, but not limited to the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program under the Trade Act of 1974, the Trade Adjustment Assistance Reauthorization Act of 2015, and discretionary grants such as the National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG). The State will provide policy guidance to each entity responsible for the administration of Core Programs.

The assessment and evaluation process will include completing annual on-site monitoring reviews of each Core Program to ensure compliance with the Uniform Administrative Requirements of WIOA Section 184(a)(4). These reviews include the appropriate administrative requirements for sub-recipients and applicable cost principles.

The assessment will ensure established policies achieve program quality and outcomes, and meet the objectives of the governing federal laws and regulations. This includes the provision of services by One-Stop Operators, eligible providers of training services, and eligible providers of youth activities; and makes certain that sub-recipients and contractors have demonstrated substantial compliance with federal requirements.

The State will ensure compliance with the provisions in WIOA for all Core Programs as well as implement a more robust monitoring and oversight process across all levels. Comprehensive and effective monitoring is key to providing opportunities for technical assistance, training, and sharing of proven strategies and practices, which will lead to improved quality of service to job seeker and a stronger workforce.

Adult Education:

Programmatic/Fiscal Onsite Monitoring: Programs are identified for onsite monitoring through a comprehensive risk analysis based on the following factors: (1) desk monitoring; (2) need to verify data quality and program expenditures; (3) consistent low performance on NRS indicators in several categories; (4) prospective noncompliance with grant requirements identified through review of programmatic and fiscal reports, or ongoing communications with the program; (4) unresolved audit findings; (5) ongoing lack of progress in resolving required actions from prior monitoring visit; (6) significant staff turnover in the program; and (7) recent or newly established programs.

The goal for State onsite monitoring visits are to:

- ensure that programs meet AEFLA requirements;
- improve the quality of federally-funded activities;

- provide assistance identifying and resolving accountability problems; and,
- ensure the accuracy, validity, and reliability of data collection and data reporting as well as policies and procedures for program accountability.

Vocational Rehabilitation:

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) will monitor the services provided within the guidelines of the existing cooperative agreements and evaluate if modifications will be needed when they are renegotiated.

To ensure the quality of supported employment services provided to eligible consumers by monitoring the vendors. The monitoring will utilize site reviews and include quality indicators to evaluate the assessment of employment outcomes and an evaluation of the provision of services. The monitoring will be carried out by the state and field office staff.

B. ASSESSMENT OF ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS

Partner agencies and Partner Programs not covered under the monitoring umbrella of the Core Programs shall be monitored in accordance with their individual governing authority and under the general rules of federal and state fiscal compliance.

C. PREVIOUS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Federally Required WIOA Indicators of Performance focus on employment outcomes in the second and fourth quarter after exit, median earnings in the second quarter after exit, credential attainment, and measurable skill gains for job seekers and adult education participants. The State uses an assessment tool based on the guidance of federally required WIOA Measures. All partners and their federally funded programs are measured according to their method of operation in determining the effectiveness of service delivery to job seekers and employers.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission has monitored all Title I and Title III programs which met or exceeded performance goals, at the State level, for program years (PY) PY 2017 and PY 2018, with the exception of credential attainment rate for Youth. The state will complete PY 2019 and PY 2020 monitoring within the next program year. The OWD has continued to conduct annual monitoring of programmatic and fiscal management of grants to ensure that funds are being spent in compliance with federal and state laws and regulations. As part of this ongoing annual monitoring, OWD has included a risk management assessment tool for our WIOA formula and discretionary grants under the management of OWD.

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (Title IV, Vocational Rehabilitation) captured the information below indicating the effectiveness of performance of the WIOA accountability indicators by implementing the following strategies: specific layouts were created in the AWARE case management system, staff participated in training on these layouts and were explained the relevance for capturing this data, regional reports were generated with regard to compliance or non-compliance, and a collaboration with Workforce Partners to retrieve the necessary data.

During the preceding two-year period, WorkReady U (Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy) negotiated targets for the Measurable Skill Gains performance indicator and collected baseline data for the remaining performance indicators in the first year. In the second year, WorkReady U (WRU) negotiated targets for all performance indicators. The table below displays the previous assessment results for the last two program years (PY) with complete sets of data.

State agency partners assess the performance outcomes of the workforce system through annual performance reviews. The state agencies responsible for each of the core programs

outlined in program-specific areas assess performance accountability measures at the state, regional and local levels as required by each core program. To ensure that program partners are well-positioned to meet the performance accountability requirements of WIOA, LWC will create a WIOA Assessment and Evaluation Working Group on performance accountability with core partners to ensure that systems have the capacity to collect and report required new and updated data elements under WIOA, as well as the capacity to track aggregate data for performance indicators applicable to all four core partners. This working group will also review Customer Satisfaction Surveys from both program participants and employers that can be aggregated and compared across the WIOA partner programs. Results from surveys and recommendations from this working group will allow the State to assess our workforce system as well as gauge our progress toward continuously improving service delivery and increase and enhance the quality of employment outcomes for participants.

The following charts display Louisiana's actual statewide outcomes for PY19 and PY20, and whether a gain or loss in service provision was met in comparison:

ADULT	**Statewide Performance PY19**	**Statewide Performance PY20**	**Gain (Loss) PY20**
Participants Served-Career Services	5,128	3,576	-1,552
Participants Served-Training Services	2,558	2,455	-103
Exiters Career Services	4,719	2,016	-2,703
Exiters Training Services	1,764	1,358	-406
Employment Rate 2nd Qtr After Exit	71.3%	60.2%	-11.1%
Employment Rate 4th Qtr After Exit	70.5%	64.0%	-6.5%
Median Earnings 2nd Qtr After Exit	$6,095	$5,900	($195)
Credential Attainment	73.1%	75.5%	2.4%
DISLOCATED WORKER	**Statewide Performance PY19**	**Statewide Performance PY20**	**Gain (Loss) PY20**
Participants Served-Career Services	1,673	1,868	195
Participants Served-Training Services	596	1,313	717
Exiters Career Services	1,436	984	-452
Exiters Training Services	387	651	264
Employment Rate 2nd Qtr After Exit	72.7%	54.9%	-18%
Employment Rate 4th Qtr After Exit	72.0%	68.0%	-4%

ADULT	**Statewide Performance PY19**	**Statewide Performance PY20**	**Gain (Loss) PY20**
Median Earnings 2nd Qtr After Exit	$7,898	$6,881	($1,017)
Credential Attainment	77.3%	81.2%	4%
YOUTH	**Statewide Performance PY19**	**Statewide Performance PY20**	**Gain (Loss) PY20**
Participants Served-Career Services	1,961	2,083	122
Participants Served-Training Services	764	809	45
Exiters Career Services	1,214	800	-414
Exiters Training Services	447	385	-62
Employment Rate 2nd Qtr After Exit	71.9%	65.1%	-7%
Employment Rate 4th Qtr After Exit	76.6%	69.3%	-7%
Credential Attainment	57.1%	49.1%	-8%
WAGNER-PEYSER	**Statewide Performance PY19**	**Statewide Performance PY20**	**Gain (Loss) PY20**
Participants Served-Career Services	47,273	30,866	-16,407
Participants Served-Training Services	2,809		-2,809
Exiters Career Services	46,624	29,878	-16,746
Exiters Training Services	1,889	385	-1,889
Employment Rate 2nd Qtr After Exit	57.9%	51.1%	-7%
Employment Rate 4th Qtr After Exit	61.5%	51.4%	-10%
Median Earnings 2nd Qtr After Exit	$4,835	$4,733	($102)
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION	Statewide Performance PY19	Statewide Performance PY20	Gain (Loss) PY20
Participants Served-Career Services	7,117	6,414	(703)
Participants Served-Training Services	2,236	1,912	(324)

ADULT	**Statewide Performance PY19**	**Statewide Performance PY20**	**Gain (Loss) PY20**
Exiters Career Services	1,903	1,568	(335)
Exiters Training Services	263	220	(43)
Employment Rate 2nd Qtr After Exit	40.5%	52.4%	11.9%
Employment Rate 4th Qtr After Exit	10.9%	47.2%	36.3%
Median Earnings 2nd Qtr After Exit	$3,703	$4,074	$371
Credential Attainment	5.3%	36.7%	31.4%

The chart below displays details regarding participant and exiter levels by programs and costs:

ADULT	Participant Served	Participants Exited	Funds Expended	Cost Per Participant Served
Career Services	3,576	2,056	$7,427,837	$2,077
Training Services	2,455	1,358	$5,743,888	$2,340
21.70% Training-related employed		92.00 % Co-enrolled		11.60% Admin Expended
DISLOCATED WORKER	Participant Served	Participants Exited	Funds Expended	Cost Per Participant Served
Career Services	1,868	984	$10,269,337	$5,498
Training Services	1,313	651	$5,994,607	$4,566
19.70% Training-related employed		92.90% Co-enrolled		11.60% Admin Expended
YOUTH	Participant Served	Participants Exited	Funds Expended	Cost Per Participant Served
Career Services	2,083	800	$2,049,854	$984
Training Services	809	385	$1,255,861	$1,552
19.40% Training-related employed		80.50% Co-enrolled		14.20% Admin Expended

WAGNER-PEYSER	Participant Served	Participants Exited	Funds Expended	Cost Per Participant Served
Career Services	30,866	29,878	$8,305,783	$269
Training Services				
19.70% Training-related employed		20.50% Co-enrolled		N/A Admin Expended
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION	Participants Served	Participants Exited	Funds Expended	Cost/Participant Served
Career Services	6,414	1,568	3,647,307	569
Training Services	1,912	220	2,864,968	1,498
N/A% Training-related employed		3% Co-enrolled		N/A% Admin Expended

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY TITLE II

Performance Indicator	PY 19	PY20
ABE MSG	45.1%	42.25%
ESL MSG	35.70%	22.60%
Overall MSG	42.90%	40.28%
2nd Quarter Employment	18.63%	24.78%
4th Quarter Employment	17.38%	27.24%
Median Earnings	$3,457.50	$3,063.00
Credential Rate	9.84%	15.34%

The COVID-19 pandemic coupled with several hurricanes and flooding events within the state has caused a negative impact on the state's performance outcomes. Closures of state and local governmental offices, American Job Centers, program partner's offices, schools, and businesses drastically limited accessibility to services. Face-to-face interactions were not available and in many instances not allowable due to safety concerns. To mitigate this concern, the state has included in its integrated service delivery increased access to online and virtual services and activities. With this shift in service provision, the state will conduct assessments to determine the success of these added and enhanced service delivery models and implement best practices.

WorkReady U - Local program services were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Subsequently, the Measurable Skill Gains performance indicator suffered – most particularly for Louisiana's English language learner population. Despite these challenges, the majority of WRU's performance indicators held steady or increased slightly. Based on these results, WRU will continue to develop reports that allow programs to disaggregate performance data at the local level, provide monthly and quarterly data review sessions with all local programs, and

track local program progress towards benchmarks. WRU will also continue to use programmatic monitoring efforts to inform statewide strategies for technical assistance and professional development initiatives.

The State will continue to monitor performance measures and implementation of its strategies to improve targeted performance areas identified through ongoing assessments and provide technical assistance as needed. Through ongoing assessment, the State will check and adjust its measures and activities to align performance improvement with strategy implementation.

D. EVALUATION

The Louisiana Workforce Investment Council evaluates the effectiveness of the overall workforce development system by systematically requiring updates on program effectiveness relying on convening resources from local boards, core programs and partner programs' input. Additionally, the WIC monitors effectiveness of LWDBs in meeting workforce demand. This component of the plan, is an ongoing effort, intended to provide both core program administrators and the LWDBs the opportunity to provide input to the evaluation matrix.

Through compliance evaluations conducted through the annual monitoring process, the OWD evaluates the efficiency and effectiveness of programs through desk reviews, technical assistance trainings (in-person, online, and virtual), and bi-weekly and monthly calls with LWDA leadership and staff. OWD identifies and disseminates information on best practices relating to business outreach, partnerships, and service delivery strategies to enable LWDBs to meet and exceed negotiated local levels of performance, sustain fiscal integrity, and achieve other measures of effectiveness (i.e., customer satisfaction, community and workforce partnerships, employer engagement, etc.).

The state will continue to conduct evaluations and research based on data and processes from result-based accountability methods, career pathways system design, performance outcomes, customer-focused initiatives, business metrics, and data from partner agencies. The process is overseen by the OWD and in partnership with local workforce boards, state and federal partners, and representatives from community and non-profit agencies serving individuals with disabilities and disconnected youth. Evaluations follow guidelines set fourth in 20 CFR 682.220. Over the next two program years, LWC will implement statewide initiatives focused on reemployment services, virtual learning, and digital literacy. These initiatives will be evaluated and results shared with all partners.

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)

5. Distribution of Funds for Core Programs

The Governor reserves funds from Title I allotted for services to youth, adults and dislocated workers, for statewide workforce investment activities. The Governor reserves up to 15 percent from each of these sources. Funds reserved under this paragraph are combined and spent on statewide employment and training activities, for adults and dislocated workers, and statewide youth activities, without regard to the funding source of the reserved funds. The Governor reserves up to 25 percent of the dislocated worker funds for statewide rapid response activities, as described in WIOA.

The Governor allocates Title I Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker formula funds in accordance with WIOA sections in accordance with the allocation formulas contained in WIOA sections 128(b) and 133(b). Allocation methodologies are used for distribution of State funds

appropriated for American Job Centers. LWC's Office of Workforce Development and Office of Research and Statistics are responsible for computing the 15 local workforce area allocations for WIOA Title I programs based on the approved formula data and methodology and for providing the allocation levels to LWC's Finance Department. Local area allocations are published annually with the detailed input data and formulas through the Fiscal Year WIOA Local Annual Plan Guidance Policy, and are updated as necessary during the fiscal year if there are changes in federal allotment levels.

The chief elected official or lead elected official in a local workforce development area serves as the local grant recipient for grant funds allocated to the local area for youth, adult, and dislocated worker activities under Sections 128, 129, 132, and 133 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act., and shall be liable for any misuse of these funds.

In Local Workforce Development Areas with more than one unit of general local government, the chief elected officials of each unit will execute an agreement that specifies the respective roles of the individual chief elected officials, including responsibility for maintaining the integrity of the allocated funds. If, after a reasonable effort, the chief elected officials are unable to reach agreement about this responsibility, the Governor makes the determination. The local plan must include the agreement concerning this responsibility.

Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy funding allocations are established based on data from the American Community Survey in addition to a review of the number of citizens needing literacy services within each of the eight LA Workforce regions. WorkReady U (WRU) ensures that funding allocations are used to provide comprehensive literacy programs in all eight geographical workforce regions and that local providers are sufficiently equipped to meet the needs identified for each area. Further, eligible providers are expected to identify and coordinate with all available organizations and programs in their workforce areas to expand and leverage deliverable services beyond those provided solely through WRU state/federal funding.

Louisiana is focused on performance to ensure that funds are used effectively to serve customers and produce positive results. WRU implemented a funding formula for state/federal adult education funds. The formula was designed to consider the scope of services provided in the local program and performance as compared to established benchmarks as a basis for an increase or decrease in funds. Performance benchmarks and performance standards were established with the expectation that grantees will maintain or exceed performance standards through effective service delivery and innovation.

(i.) Youth Activities in Accordance with WIOA Section 128(b)(2) or (b)(3)

Youth activities, in accordance with WIOA section 128(b)(2) or (b)(3), WIOA Title I Youth local area allocations, are computed in accordance with instructions in the WIOA sections identified above and are distributed by percentage share to the 15 Local Workforce Development Areas according to the formula shown below.

- 33 1/3 percent based on the relative number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the local workforce development area, compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the state.
- 33 1/3 percent based on the relative excess number of unemployed individuals in the local workforce development area, compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the state,

- 33 1/3 percent based on the relative number of disadvantaged youth in the local workforce development area, compared to the total number of disadvantaged youth in the state.

A hold-harmless provision ensures that each local area's percentage share of the State allotments designated for local WIOA Title 1 Youth and Adult program activities does not fall below 90% of the local area's average percentage share for the prior two fiscal years.

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

Adult and training activities in accordance with WIOA section 133(b)(2) or (b)(3), WIOA Title I Adult local area allocations are computed in accordance with instructions in the WIOA sections identified above and are distributed by percentage share to the 15 Local Workforce Development Areas according to the formula shown below.

- 33 1/3 percent based on the relative number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the local workforce development area, compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in all local workforce development areas in the state.
- 33 1/3 percent based on the relative excess number of unemployed individuals in the local workforce development area, compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in all local workforce areas in the state.
- 33 1/3 percent based on the relative number of disadvantaged adults in the local workforce development area, compared to the total number of disadvantaged adults in all local workforce development areas in the state.

A hold-harmless provision ensures that each local area's percentage share of the State allotments designated for local WIOA Title 1 Youth and Adult program activities does not fall below 90% of the local area's average percentage share for the prior two fiscal years.

The State has put into place control measures through its monitoring division, to identify the following in an attempt to ensure and maintain fiscal integrity.

1) Formal determinations of disallowed costs and non-compliance as documented by reports of the results of the state's WIOA monitoring, single audits and DOL monitoring (if applicable);

2) Results of investigations of incident reports alleging gross negligence, fraud, abuse or other misconduct; and

3) Formal communication of high-risk status and/or suspension of cash payments resulting from continued violations of administrative requirements and grant terms and conditions and the subsequent corrective actions implemented by the local area to correct the violations. This system of accountability adds another set of tools to ensure grant recipients sustain fiscal integrity.

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

The Research and Statistics Division and the Office of Management and Finance reviews the formula for distribution of Title I Dislocated Worker funds to local workforce areas in accordance with requirements in WIOA section 133(b)(2)(B) and makes recommendation to the Governor through the Secretary of Labor and the Office of Workforce Development. This

review is done annually to ensure that the most current data are used for the formula allocations to local workforce areas.

Unemployment concentration: 35 percent

The 12-month average for the most recently completed October-September fiscal year will be used showing the unrounded number of persons unemployed by parish within each LWDA.

Insured unemployed without earnings: 20 percent

The 12-month average for the most recently completed October-September fiscal year showing the number of continued claims filed without earnings for the reference week that includes the last day of each month. Data is also by parish within the LWDA.

Plant closing and mass layoff:

The term plant closing is when an employment site (or one or more facilities or operating units within an employment site) will be shut down, and the shutdown will result in an employment loss for 50 or more employees during any 30-day period. A mass layoff that does not result from a plant closing, but results in an employment loss at the employment site during any 30-day period for 500 or more employees, or for 50- 499 employees if they make up at least 33% of the employer's active workforce. Data is comprehensive by parish and includes the most recently completed fiscal year.

Exhaustees (long-term unemployed): 25 percent

This is long-term unemployment data that refers to claimants who received a final payment in unemployment benefits. Data is by parish and is an annual average for the most recently completed fiscal year.

Declining industries: 15 percent

Since data on all parishes from the suggested CES Program do not exist, covered employment from the ES-202 Program was used to identify industries that showed a decline in employment for the four-year period ending in March of the prior fiscal year. Decreases in employment for all industries within a parish were totaled and that figure was used toward the allocation of funds for that parish and LWDA.

Farmer/rancher economic hardship: 5 percent

Numerical difference between the last two Census of Agriculture to determine decline in hiring farm workers.

LWC will evaluate alternative formulas for future allocations in alignment with WIOA sec 133 (b)(2)(B) to ensure that the most appropriate information that is available is incorporated.

A hold-harmless provision ensures that each local area's percentage share of the State allotment designated for local Dislocated Worker program activities does not fall below 90% of the local area's average percentage share for the prior two fiscal years.

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 Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS), WorkReady U (WRU), is responsible for administering Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funds to eligible providers and providing program/performance oversight to grantees. As the

administrative/fiscal agency, LCTCS/WRU awards multi-year grants to eligible local providers through a competitive RFP process for the purpose of developing, implementing, and improving adult education within the State. The grants are for a five-year cycle that applies to all programs. After implementation of services, providers must apply on an annual basis for continuation funding under Title II. (See Title II – Adult Education and Literacy Programs (b) Local Activities, Eligible Provider)

WIOA, Title II defines an eligible provider as an organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals and may include:

- A local education agency;
- A community-based or faith-based organization;
- A volunteer literacy organization;
- An institution of higher education;
- A public or private nonprofit agency;
- A library;
- A public housing authority;
- A nonprofit institution with the ability to provide adult education and literacy services;
- A consortium or coalition of agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries or authorities described above; or
- A partnership between an employer and an entity described above.

All applications received are evaluated using the 13 considerations in WIOA section 231(e). The evaluation of each grant application involves an intense assessment of the ability of the eligible provider to comply with the expectations and statutes described within the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act inclusive of: (a) meeting the literacy needs of the area; and (b) demonstrating past effectiveness in improving the literacy of eligible individuals, especially those individuals who have low levels of literacy, participants with disabilities; refugees, dislocated youth and foster care youth, individuals with low literacy skills, displaced homemakers, ex-offenders, individuals with cultural barriers and individuals with a variety of barriers to employment. The grant cycle is five years, and all providers are subject to the same funding cycle -- July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2025. Eligible providers apply to receive adult education funding for the delivery of any of the following adult education and literacy activities:

- Adult education;
- Literacy;
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities;
- English language and acquisition activities;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- Workforce preparation activities;
- Integrated education and training.

As required in Section 427 of GEPA, each applicant provides a description of the agency's process to ensure equitable access to and participation in [AF1] the WIOA Title II adult

education program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. LCTCS has approved state policies that provide for equal opportunity for all qualified persons without regard to disability in the recruitment of, admission to, accessibility to, participation in, treatment in, or employment in the programs and activities operated and sponsored by the Louisiana Community and Technical College System.

The Louisiana Community and Technical College System ensures that all applicants provide data demonstrating their ability to improve the skills of eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy, in the content domains of reading, writing, mathematics, English language acquisition, and other subject areas relevant to the services contained in the RFP application for funds and in accordance with WIOA §463.24. Forms are provided for new eligible applicants (See Title II – Adult Education and Literacy Programs (b) Local Activities, Eligible Provider) to provide performance data for student learning gains, including performance outcomes for low-literacy level and English language learners. All applicants are required to report effectiveness in improving the knowledge and skills of adults to successfully transition to postsecondary education, skills training, or employment. Each application is reviewed to determine whether it met the standard of demonstrated effectiveness.

Several factors are used to determine the funding amounts for successful applicants: (1) performance-based funding formula based on the core indicators of performance as outlined in Title II of WIOA and (2) the literacy rate within each workforce region. The formula is designed to consider the levels of performance in the local programs as compared with established benchmarks as a basis for an increase or decrease in funds.

Programs that do not meet established minimum standards in the first year are expected to demonstrate and document substantial improvement toward meeting those standards. Using the approved statewide data management system, monitoring results, and other documentation, WRU determines and applies requirements for program improvement in the subsequent grant cycles. Minimum standards are determined initially based on data collected during the first year and are raised with each new grant cycle. Programs that do not demonstrate and document substantial improvements during each year of the multi-year grant cycle may not be eligible to receive funding in subsequent years of the cycle.

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

LCTCS uses the same application process for all eligible providers for sections 225, 231, and/or 243. This ensures that all applications are evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria.

The full and open competition is consistent with the standards of 34 CFR Part 463 Subpart C. All activities funded under WIOA are authorized, approved and administered by the LCTCS, WorkReady U. WorkReady U, ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants. LCTCS adheres to all State and Louisiana WIOA Combined Plan laws regarding awarding grant funds and the expenditure of public funds. The following steps are utilized to ensure direct and equitable access:

- An announcement of the availability of federal funds, under the support of Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, is disseminated in various methods including but not limited to a minimum of two newspaper outlets that provide state,

local and regional news coverage, the LCTCS website, and social media outlets in order to provide the widest possible state coverage;

- The same grant and application process is used for all eligible providers in the state;
- Standard criteria for evaluation of local proposals are used for all eligible providers;
- Technical assistance is provided to assist with the dissemination of information to all eligible providers interested in applying. Technical assistance opportunities are included in announcements and the Request for Proposal; and
- The announcement contains information such as:
    - Type of grants available;
    - Contact person to obtain RFP guidelines;
    - Timeline with grant application due date;
    - Other pertinent items;
    - Any information required by state law regarding the awarding of contracts and the expenditure of public funds.

LCTCS uses the following process to distribute funds to approved applicants:

1. LCTCS will use, at minimum, 82.5 percent of the grant funds to award grants and contracts under section 231. No more than 20 percent of that amount shall be available to carry out section 225, Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals.
2. Shall not use more than 12.5 percent of the grant funds to carry out state leadership activities under section 223; and
3. Shall not use more than 5 percent of the grant funds for administrative expenses of the eligible agency.

Federal funds may be used to increase the level of nonfederal funds that would be available in the absence of federal funds, and, in no case, replace those nonfederal funds. Federal funds must not be used for the purpose of supplanting, only for supplementing.

See Title II – Adult Education and Literacy Programs (b) Local Activities for additional details regarding the processes for the request for application process.

C. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

This is not applicable in Louisiana since blind services are operated within the same agency.

6. PROGRAM DATA

A. DATA ALIGNMENT AND INTEGRATION

Data Alignment and Integration

Louisiana's WIOA programs are strategically aligned to achieve the interrelated and often interdependent goals of the four core WIOA programs. Long-term, Louisiana has a vision of developing integrated data warehousing in which program performance data from all four WIOA titles is aggregated for reporting and analysis. Currently, the core program stakeholders

communicate openly and transparently regarding abilities and opportunities to leverage program resources serving the people of Louisiana to accomplish the WIOA mission.

Currently, Louisiana's Title I, Title III, and Unemployment Insurance Programs share an integrated management information system, HiRE (Helping Individuals Reach Employment). The system streamlines the processes of Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims filing, reemployment services, job seeking, employer job posting, applying for employment, and recording of delivery of training, counseling, and other employment services. The state is continuously exploring possibilities to further integrate its information management.

LWC's HiRE system is a comprehensive system that fully integrated workforce development with unemployment insurance. The system is a common portal used by LWDAs for streamlined intake for programs, exchanging information for case management purposes and providing the necessary data for required federal and state reporting. Not only does this aid the job-seeker/claimant in managing their unemployment insurance benefits, job-search functions, and case management, it also enhances services provided to employers by allowing them to manage unemployment claims as well as utilize recruiting features within the system. Working from the WIOA statutes, the State has established needed data points in HiRE and continually work with our vendor, Geographic Solutions Inc. (GSI) to collect required data as the reporting requirements change.

The HiRE system incorporates dynamic modules including, but not limited to:

- Job Seeker and Employer Self Service
- Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Trade, and Veteran Case Management Modules
- On-line Training Module
- UI Module
- Virtual Recruiter for Employers
- Labor Market Information by Parish, Region and Statistical Area
- Louisiana Training Providers with Demand Occupations

The system also provides workforce administrator and manager tools and virtual functionalities including:

- Accountability and Dashboard Modules for Management
- Fund Management Tracking and Reporting
- Managed Employment Services
- Statewide and Partner Case Management
- Follow-Up and Outcomes Tracking
- National Data Sharing Interfaces
- Trade-Affected Worker Module
- Rapid Response to Layoff Module

HiRE has improved user applied knowledge by making available online assessments and outcome tracking of Aptitude and Basic Skills tests, which are easily recorded for search and viewing by authorized staff and users. Through HiRE, LWC continues to move into "paperless" case management and source document management and data validation modules positioning

staff with improved business efficiencies through managed upgrades and modifications to the system.

Louisiana currently produces reports as required by the WIOA by aggregating data through multiple sources. HiRE houses participant case management data. Unemployment Insurance wage data is housed in a state-managed mainframe system. Louisiana is a SWIS member and imports out-of-state wage data for its participants from other SWIS member states and territories.

Adult Education and TANF

The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC), in partnership with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), shares job seeker registration data to promote efficient use of public assistance resources. DCFS clients, who may benefit from WIOA staff services have access to WIOA job seeking resources are referred to AJC offices additional assistance.

LWC's relationships with Adult Education promotes training opportunities for Title I WIOA participants. The integration of Title II Adult Education into the Workforce system promotes the flow of communication of labor market needs and education and training opportunities between Adult Education and Workforce Development. These stakeholders use WIOA program and internal data to maximize the efficiency of its shared programmatic efforts.

Assessment and Evaluation

LWC regularly analyzes its reemployment data, including: population, industry, and occupation metrics, to continuously maximize its ability to return people to work and reduce demand on its unemployment system. Data concerning the state labor force, as a whole, and the state unemployment claimants, including duration, wages, and probability of reemployment during eligibility of UI benefits, drive decision making that factor in steering the delivery of WIOA services offered.

State management, with support from local management, also provides fiscal and programmatic monitoring and serves as liaisons between Workforce Development and UI programs. UI staff provides technical support for job-seekers/claimants and internal staff. The UI technical support unit will upon request provide training to all WIOA and WP staff concerning federal and state UI regulations, eligibility reviews, adjudications services, appeal processes and all other related UI services for job-seekers/claimants.

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) continues to use the AWARE system (Accessible Web-based Activity and Reporting Environment). Unemployment Insurance wage data is imported into the AWARE system to enable LRS to capture wage data necessary for reporting on performance measures. LWC and core partners continue to research innovative methods of capturing additional data for reporting purposes and for more efficiently servicing Vocational Rehabilitation consumers.

Louisiana has a robust system in HiRE that has comprehensive on-demand reporting capabilities from a statewide database. State and local staff are able to enter, view, update, print and upload participant data, and analyze various reports daily. These reports provide mechanisms to measure levels of service and outcomes by program or targeted groups which allows state and local staff to view outcome data at the state, regional, local, and case manager level for Wagner-Peyser, WIOA Title I-B, TAA, Veterans Employment and Training Services and individuals with disabilities while providing a better measure of the impact of outreach programs or specialized initiatives on performance supporting State's strategies. Staff has the ability to run reports any time with the majority of data in real-time. Analysis of report data and case management information allows staff to identify errors and quickly correct and improve

service delivery. Ongoing technical assistance and training is provided to local workforce areas to ensure understanding of performance measures and the impact of program strategies on performance outcomes. All performance reports have a breakout of how individual customers fit into each performance measure, whether positive, neutral or negative. This allows staff to better find errors and improves analysis by revealing the source of the data down to the individual level.

Louisiana recognizes the opportunities that exist to streamline and enhance intake and service delivery, reporting, and cost-sharing agreements through data sharing. This triggers a broad-based system allowing data to be shared across various data systems of required partners. For example, LWC currently has a data sharing agreement with the DCFS used to service and track TANF recipients participating in the STEP (Strategies to Employ People) program. A data sharing agreement like this helps individuals maintain benefits by participating in mandatory job search activities through an American Job Center in their local workforce area and have data entered and track by both agencies to ensure compliance. Partnerships like this will continue to be expanded over the life of this plan to increase data sharing for service provision and reporting of WIOA partner agencies. System updates and expansion of workforce and labor market information will continue to achieve high-quality, timely, integrated data that informs policy, employer and job seeker decision-making.

Statewide Workforce and Labor Market Information Development Strategies

1. Warrant job seekers and workers the availability and accessibility of information and guidance required to make informed decisions about training and careers, as well as access to the education, training and support services they need to compete in current and future labor markets.

2. Equip the State Board to execute the role of planning and coordinating the development of required information products by core, partner and other governmental entities, and the accessibility, reliability, dependability, scalability, interoperability and documentation of the workforce system's data collection and production, and to concert the system's Internet presence.

3. Maintain an active participation in the Wage Record Interchange Systems (WRIS and WRIS2) and collaborate with federal workforce data producers to ensure Louisiana is accounted for in their data products in order to facilitate planning processes under WIOA and national comparability.

4. Ensure seamless coordination to supply timely, reliable and accessible data to all the stakeholders of the workforce system.

5. Implement and standardize high-level reporting to policymakers on education and employment outcomes across workforce programs.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission and the State's Office of Technology Systems continue to work together to develop a data collection and management strategies that will meet the needs of data sharing between, amongst, and about core partners. These plans will develop as system requirement updates are realized and cybersecurity measures are enhanced to protect personally identifiable information (PII).

Louisiana continues to work to align and integrate participant and performance data across WIOA programs with the ultimate goal of providing effective and efficient services that lead to the participants' employment as quickly as possible. Monthly meetings are held between state and local staff to ensure good communication on performance and other related issues. These meetings also serve as the point of discussion on enhancements to HiRE that will further support performance accountability. The programs use the same set of services whenever possible so a service should only need to be entered once for a participant who is enrolled in

multiple programs. This also helps in establishing integrated service plans for participants served by more than one program. The WIOA required partners at the state and local levels engage in monthly and/or quarterly discussions regarding ways to streamline intake and service delivery and incorporate their agreements in their regional and local plans, as well as their MOUs and cost-sharing agreements. Collaboration among partners incorporates a broad-based approach to determine how data systems can be integrated or data can be shared across various data systems of all the required partners that participate in the workforce system.

The State provides ongoing technical assistance and training provided by LWC's Technical Assistance and Training Unit (TAT) within the Office of Workforce Development to local workforce areas to ensure understanding of performance measures and the impact of program strategies on performance outcomes. Quarterly trainings are conducted through virtual and in-person sessions on identified integration strategies that include:

• Functional and technical assessment of external and internal systems in assess and improving common intake solutions;

• Referral to partner agencies;

• Generation and tracking of unique customer identification;

• Automated initial assessment based on real-time triage and intake questions;

• Common dashboard for participant information;

• Policies and procedures for intake, eligibility and enrollment in program services

OWD's TAT Unit in coordination with the Business Services Team comprised of Industry Sector Specialists (ISS), Business Services Representatives (BSR), and Rehabilitation Employment Development Specialists (REDS), also includes assessments and analysis of business services. This assessment is a key step in developing the capacity for concentrated outreach and recruitment campaigns, access to customer and participant job search activities, identifying eligible job seekers with the HiRE system, improve job postings, and overall improved service delivery to meet the needs of businesses among workforce partners.

LWC will establish a Technical Assistance Working Group comprised of representatives from all WIOA core partners and required one-stop partners administered by State agencies, to develop and issue field guidance for regional and local planning, the one-stop memoranda of understanding and cost-sharing agreements, and provide a mechanism to resolve local WIOA implementation issues between partners.

These strategies include making the system easy to navigate and promoting multiple entry points to access data that will adopt, adapt, or create one or more models of streamlined intake and referral that one-stop centers throughout the state can utilize to improve service delivery.

Louisiana's Workforce Investment Council (WIC) works closely with LWC's research and statistics team as well as the Labor Market Information team to ensure data alignment, data sharing and the integration of such data as it relates to WIOA. Those teams evaluate each core partner's current collection method of the required data elements. Specifically, the teams examine what is collected, how it is collected and how and where data is stored. Collection process changes are the outcome of the evaluation and are incorporated into a data storage system that cooperates when possible with other partner agencies.

The State has data sharing agreements (DSA) between several partnering agencies to govern the terms and conditions under which program data may be shared. The State has the opportunity to collect program data from each partnering agency through secured data transmission

protocols. Each partner has a vendor to produce required federal reports and each core partner is successfully meeting the reporting requirements under Section 116.

B. ASSESSMENT OF PARTICIPANTS' POST-PROGRAM SUCCESS

The State is committed to understanding and improving the six primary performance indicators for the core programs. Case management and follow up processes will continue using benchmarking as a strategy to assess and evaluate results, adjusting strategies as necessary to effectively serve participants.

The State requires employers to report Descriptive Job Title / SOC and Nominal Hourly rate of pay. This will allow a better assessment of participant program success for:

- Participants **entering occupations** related to the program from which they exit.
- Participants completing longer-term training / services programs relative to those who enter shorter programs and self-service (**Return on Investment**)
- Career progression / **Career Pathways** typically taken by participants.
- Skills acquired at each level of career and skills gap analysis.

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

Based upon the WIOA requirements to utilize wage record data for performance review and evaluation, LWC's Offices of Workforce Development and Unemployment Insurance work together in identifying and using a variety of on-demand reports that track wage-based performance for Wagner-Peyser, WIOA Title I-B, TAA, and Veterans Employment and Training Services. Out-of-state wages are imported from the Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS2) into participant wage records. There are a significant number of participants who previously had and/or seek out of state employment before and after participation in workforce programs. LWC transitioned to State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) wages to produce a more complete and accurate record of participant earnings.

Unemployment Insurance (UI) Wage Record Data is utilized in data matching for assessing and reporting on state and local employment and training program performance, evaluating training provider performance, and for other purposes allowed by state law and data sharing agreements among state agencies. By utilizing UI Wage Data, the State can measure entered employment, employment retention, and earnings of the individual.

The State continues to work with each of the Core Program partners to continue to meet performance accountability reporting requirements, evaluate and research goals set to support data sharing with education agencies to evaluate the long—term impact of investment and workforce outcomes for individuals who move along a career pathway. Data Sharing Agreements are continuously being reviewed, updated, and maintained to accommodate performance related goals. LWC will create and incorporate a Data Advisory Group across major Secretariats and agencies to help guide this process.

D. PRIVACY SAFEGUARDS

Agency legal counsel and Division of Administration Office of Technology Services reviews and approves language in any applicable data-sharing agreement (DSA)and service contract to ensure that privacy safeguards are properly in place.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) employs multiple safeguards to customer data. Internally, staff members are held accountable for the use of customer data. All employees accessing LWC's customer management system, HiRE, are required to sign confidentiality agreements governing the use of information in the HiRE system. Rules, policies, and practices employed by LWC staff are focused on guarding customer data being used strictly for LWC

program purposes. Staff use of the HiRE system is monitored by supervisors and state administrators for appropriate use.

Information in HiRE is kept on file in a secure database and will only be used by our staff to better provide assistance to LWC's customers in determining eligibility for federal assistance in obtaining employment and/or training for employment. Customer information will not be transmitted to other companies, solicitors or organizations not associated with the performance of the responsibilities delineated in the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014.

For security purposes and to ensure that this service remains available to all users, HiRE also employs software programs to monitor network traffic to identify unauthorized attempts to upload or change information, or otherwise cause damage.

7. PRIORITY OF SERVICE FOR VETERANS

The state shall provide priority of service for veterans in accordance with VPL 07-09 and TEGL 10-09. The term "priority of service" means, with respect to any qualified job training program, that a veteran or covered persons shall be given priority over nonveterans for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services provided under that program, notwithstanding any other provision of law. Such priority includes giving access services to a covered person before a non-covered person, or, if resources are limited, giving access to such services to a covered person instead of a non-covered person.

Priority starts with the first AJC member that comes in contact with the veteran or other covered person. During the reception process, a series of questions identifies veteran or eligibility status. Qualified veterans or other covered persons are provided services prior to other customers and an initial assessment is completed by the first available AJC staff member. If during the initial assessment it is determined that the veteran or other covered person has an SBE, they are immediately referred to a DVOP specialist.

The state provides priority of service in accordance with VPL 07-09 and TEGL 10-09. When a veteran or other covered person is identified as having barriers to employment, they are fast tracked on a priority basis to ensure that those barriers are resolved as expeditiously as possible. The state has memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with U.S. Department of Labor-funded programs covered by 38 U.S.C Section 4215 on veterans' priority and refers veterans to training and supportive services within that network on a priority basis. The state has partnered with educational entities within the state and the vocational/technical institutions, which also provide priority service for veterans and assists them with their educational and literacy needs.

Veterans or other covered persons receive priority for employment and job training opportunities available through WIOA funding, on-the-job training, skills development training and youth training contracts. Veterans or other covered persons can locate training opportunities through the use of the HiRE database and receive training at private facilities, which have been approved through the State Established Training Provider List (ETPL). Should veterans or other covered persons meet the eligibility criteria, their training costs are paid by the WIOA program or through individual training accounts. Veterans or other covered persons always take priority in instances of training as long as eligibility is met. LVER staff and other AJC staff identify jobs and training opportunities specifically tailored for veterans or other covered persons , as they promote them as potential employees. These priority services are made available and provided to veterans, Chapter 31 veterans, Native American veterans and other groups targeted for special consideration, including difficult-to-serve veterans and veterans with barriers to employment.

The state will closely monitor the provision of priority of service. Both JVSG management and local area coordinators shall periodically conduct site checks to ensure all required priority of

service signs are present and properly displayed, and that AJC staff understand both the requirement of priority of service and its proper implementation. During these site visits, monitors pay particular attention to the implementation of priority of service beyond core services, particularly in the allocation of training funds. The state shall consider an indicated referral rate in any one of these areas being lower for veterans and other covered persons than for nonveterans to be evidence of a potential priority-of-implementation problem. The state shall immediately place the affected region under examination and take corrective action measures to include, but not be limited to additional training.

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

Recognizing the high unemployment rate among individuals with disabilities and the qualified employee shortage businesses are facing, the LWC is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and access to all programs, services and facilities. American Job Centers have incorporated practices to effectively serve persons with disabilities through required assistive technology and equipment.

Louisiana's one-stop service delivery system complies with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 with regard to the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities. LWC's Office of Workforce Development Monitoring Unit, Louisiana Rehabilitation Services and Ticket-to-Work staff, along with the Equal Opportunity & Compliance Division works in coordination to conduct on-site reviews of one-stop centers and administrative offices. These reviews are conducted to ensure physical accessibility for customers as well as employees. Reviews are conducted annually and use portions of the Section 188 checklist to ensure programmatic accessibility for customers. Results are included in monitoring reports to ensure Center operations and delivery system partners are in compliance with all applicable requirements in the provision and accessibility of services for individuals with disabilities. Any deficiencies noted are part of corrective actions.

In accordance with federal regulations, the WIC, in consultation with the Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB) and Chief Elected Officials (CEO), establish criteria and procedures for the certification of comprehensive and affiliate one-stop centers/American Job Centers (AJC) for Louisiana. The WIC reviews and updates the criteria every two years as part of the modification of the State Plan. The LWDB must certify its AJCs and AJC network at least once every three years. The OWD provides guidance to LWDAs on the certification process as outlined in state policy. Certification of sites is evaluated by OWD to ensure accurate completion, adherence to service delivery requirements, accessibility requirements, and appropriate partner presence. OWD requires LWDAs to submit completed certification packets for all comprehensive and affiliate sites included in their local MOU. OWD maintains a list of certified sites. During annual monitoring, staff reviews the material to ensure all certification is up-to-date, and that recertification is conducted in accordance with the local MOU, state policy, and federal regulations.

Both monitors and EOOs ensure that the comprehensive one-stop certification and recertification criteria reflects the requirements outlined in section 188 of WIOA (if applicable) and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.). American Job Centers also use a one-stop disability access checklist to self-evaluate its current level of accessibility.

LWC continues to work with other state agencies, disability partners and advocacy groups in reviewing and revising monitoring tools and procedures, ensuring the incorporation of accessibility criteria as part of the One-Stop certification, and investments in staff training and technology to make certain AJC staff serve adult job-seekers with disabilities effectively.

LWC continuously re-evaluates service provision to individuals with disabilities within American Job Centers and Louisiana Rehabilitation Services offices. Outcomes from this evaluation is used in establishing stronger policy guidance and annual reviews for core and other partner programs serving this targeted customer group. The guidance includes staff training, integrated service delivery, accessibility, cost effectiveness, effective leadership, performance and responsiveness. Accessibility standards will ensure staff knowledge of and compliance with Section 188 of WIOA. Responsive service delivery is a critical element in American Job Center operations including Center location for accessibility to the communities it serves, whether hours of operation are responsive to all partners', possessing adaptive technology, and being ADA compliance.

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

Louisiana is committed to ensuring English Language Learners have access to workforce and education programs and services, and UI assistance. LWC has a contract with a Language Line Translating Service used by UI and American Job Center staff members. This is an 866 number that provides translation/interpreting services for multiple languages. The Translator works with the customer and staff to ensure service provision is accessible, understood, and accurately documented.

There are a few American Job Centers in the State that have bilingual staff members as well several employed within LWC's Office of Workforce Development and UI departments. Staff members provide assistance via telephone and/or in person as needed. Staffing needs are continuously evaluated in an effort to hire and train bilingual staff to ensure adequate provision of language assistance services in removing language barrier thus allowing meaningful access to workforce services. Local areas and system partners have established effective referral processes to local adult education centers with English as a second language (ESL) classes to provide individuals language education and other educational services, such as gaining a high school equivalency diploma and employability certificates.

IV. COORDINATION WITH STATE PLAN PROGRAMS

All core partners were consulted for input on individual as well as collaborative efforts. One-stop partner input was solicited through direct communications, meetings and phone calls to coordinate efforts in the development and execution of the combined state plan. Combined plan partners reviewed draft versions of the goals and strategies and each partner contributed information, data, vision and/or goals for their programs as well as coordination of programs with other partners.

The State Board oversees and reviews, as appropriate, the Combined State Plan. It will also steer and align with the State Plan, the local and regional planning processes, through appropriate guidance, pursuant to sections 106 and 108 of WIOA.

V. COMMON ASSURANCES (FOR ALL CORE PROGRAMS)

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)	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of State Boards and local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes;	
3. The lead State agencies with 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 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);	Yes
7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable;	
8. The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program;	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

The Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act of 2014 calls for realigned workforce, education and economic development systems. One of the cornerstones of this legislation is to define common regions across multiple state agencies, most notably workforce, education and social assistance programs.

The LWC's Research and Statistics division developed a report based on seven of the eight factors proposed in the new legislation including: population centers, commuting patterns, industrial composition, location quotient, local labor market conditions, accessibility of community colleges and geographic boundaries.

The following map illustrates 8 workforce regions in Louisiana. Within the 8 regions are 15 local workforce development areas (LWDAs). Previously, there were 18 LWDAs under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).



LWDAs 82 (Morehouse, Union and West Carroll) and 83 (Caldwell, East Carroll, Franklin, Madison, Richland and Tensas parishes) were merged after recommendation of the WIC at its June 15, 2015 meeting and the governor's approval of the recommendation on July 14, 2015.

Under WIOA, local LWDAs 50 (Allen Beauregard and Vernon parishes) and 51 (Cameron, Calcasieu and Jefferson Davis parishes) requested to be re-designated as a single local area within Region 5 in accordance with WIOA Section 106(b)(4). At its September 15, 2015 meeting, the WIC approved the request of LWDAs 50 and 51 to recommend re-designation to the governor. The LWC Secretary, as designee of the governor, approved the re-designation recommendation on September 29, 2015.

Subsequent to the completion of initial designation, Workforce Development Boards 40 and 41 merged.

As of 2017, the State has 15 Local Workforce Development Boards.

Since the initial designation, there have been limited changes to the local areas. The process followed during initial designation was:

As stated in WIOA Section 106, the Governor shall approve a request made for initial designation by any local area if, during PY 12 and PY 13, the local area:

- Was designated as a local area under WIA.
- Performed successfully.
- Sustained fiscal integrity.

Performed Successfully: A local area has achieved at least 80 percent of their negotiated local performance goal on each performance measure for PYs 2012-13 and 2013-14 (WIOA Section 106(e)(1) OWD 2-8 Sanction Policy).

Sustained Fiscal Integrity: The local area has not been found in violation of one or more of the following during PY 12 and PY 13:

- Final determination finding(s) from audits, evaluations or other reviews conducted by state or local governmental agencies or the United States Department of Labor which identify issues of fiscal integrity or misexpended funds due to the willful disregard or failure to comply with any WIA requirements. This includes failure to grant priority of service or verification of participant eligibility; or
- Gross negligence, defined as a conscious and voluntary disregard of the need to use reasonable care, which is likely to cause foreseeable grave injury or harm to persons, property or both; or
- Failure to observe accepted standards of administration. Local areas must adhere to the uniform administrative requirements set forth in Title 2 CFR Part 200 and Title 29 CFR Parts 95 and 97. Local areas must have fully met their federally-mandated responsibilities for the two previous program years, including timely reporting of WIA participant and expenditure data, timely completion and submission of the required annual single audit and not having been placed on cash hold for longer than 30 days. (WIOA Section 106(e)(2)) (i.e. failure to submit timely expenditure reports to LWC).

Initial designations are effective July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2022. Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) applied for initial designation using the process included in this policy.

Subsequent designation eligibility and criteria will be addressed in a separate policy. During the initial designation period, local areas planned and prepared to meet the WIOA requirements for subsequent designation (i.e., perform successfully, sustain fiscal integrity, and in the case of a local area in a planning region, meet the regional planning requirements in WIOA Section 106(c)(1)).

Initial Local Area Designation Application Process

In order to request initial designation, the local Chief Elected Official (CEO) had to follow one the applicable processes noted below:

Existing Local Areas

Complete the Existing Local Area Application for Initial Local Area Designation Program Year 2015-16.

Modified Local Areas

Complete the Modified Local Area Application for Initial Local Area Designation Year 2015-16. A local area that considered local-area modification as part of its initial designation application may include: two or more areas proposing to merge into a new combined single local area or a local area that will be expanded to include part or parts of another current local area.

If the LWDA consists of more than one parish, an updated WIOA Consortium Agreement between all CEOs in the parishes must be submitted along with the application.

The local CEO(s) was required to submit a completed application to the LWC/OWD no later than 5:00 p.m., June 23, 2015 to:

Mail/Hand Deliver: Louisiana Workforce Commission

Office of Workforce Development

1001 N. 23rd St.

Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Assessment of the Application for Initial Designation

Once a completed application was received, the staff from the LWC/OWD would verify the information provided in the application and issue a determination as to whether to recommend approval or denial of the application to the Governor.

The local CEO was notified in writing by June 30, 2015 regarding the approval or denial of its initial designation application. If approved, the initial designation was effective July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2017. If denied, the local CEO could contest the decision using the appeal process below.

Subsequent Designation

After the period for which a local area is initially designated, if the chief elected official and Local WDB in a local area submits a request for subsequent designation, the Governor shall approve a request if the following criteria are met:

1. performed successfully;
2. sustained fiscal integrity; and
3. in the case of a local area in a planning region, met the requirements of Regional Planning (subsection (c)(1))

Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) must apply for subsequent designation using the process included in this policy. LWDAs that would like to modify their current geographical boundaries are eligible to apply under their new structure.

Assessment of the Application

Once a completed application is received, the staff from the LWC/OWD will verify the information provided in the application and issue a determination as to whether to recommend approval or denial of the application to the Governor.

The local CEO will be notified in writing regarding the approval or denial of the subsequent designation application. If approved, the subsequent designation will be effective for a period of two years. If denied, the local CEO may contest the decision using the appeal process below.

Appeal Process for Subsequent Designation

In accordance with Section 106 of WIOA, a unit of local government (or combination of units) which has requested and been denied subsequent designation as a local area under WIOA may appeal the denial to the State Board within 15 calendar days of the date of the decision.

The request for appeal must be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the Louisiana Workforce Commission, Attention: Assistant Secretary Office of Workforce Development, P. O. Box 94094, Baton Rouge, La 70804-9094. The appeal request must be legible, written/typed clearly and concisely, and the request for appeal must be placed at the top of the first page in capital letters, REQUEST FOR APPEAL. The appeal must specifically state why the designation as a LWDA should be approved. The request shall be no longer than five pages. (Exhibits and attachments are not included in the five-page limit.) Within five calendar days of the receipt of the appeal, the Workforce Investment Council will contact the appellant to schedule a hearing date. The Workforce Investment Council will conduct the appeal hearing and provide a written decision to the appellant no later than ten calendar days after the hearing.

Appeal of State Board Decision

If the appeal to the Workforce Investment Council does not result in approval for subsequent designation, the appellant, if appealing subsequent designation under WIOA Section 106 (b) (3), may request review by the U. S. Secretary of Labor. An appeal to the Secretary must be submitted by the appellant or grant recipient no later than 30 calendar days after receipt of written notification from the State Board that the appeal has been denied. Appeals must be submitted by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, DC 20210, Attention: Assistant Secretary, Employment and Training Administration. A copy of the appeal must be simultaneously provided to the Workforce Investment Council .

If the Secretary determines that the appellant was not accorded procedural rights under the appeal process established under the above section, or that the area meets the requirements for subsequent designation in WIOA Section 106 (b)(3), the Secretary may require that the area be designated as a workforce development area. The Secretary must issue a written decision to the Governor.

STEPS IN THE LOUISIANA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA SUBSEQUENT DESIGNATION PROCESS

The process outlined below is to be followed by a unit or units of local government seeking subsequent designation of local workforce development areas under the WIOA.

Step 1. The local government unit(s) seeking subsequent designation of a local workforce development area(s) should coordinate and consult with the CEOs of the local areas and existing local workforce development boards.

Step 2. If a decision is made by the local government unit(s), in coordination with the CEOs, to seek designation under the WIOA, the local government units must undertake a formal public comment period and provide documentation of the results of the formal public comment period with the designation request to partners, including existing local workforce development boards. The formal comment period must allow for comments by businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, community- based organizations, and the public-at-large.

Step 3. The request for subsequent designation of a local workforce development area under the WIOA shall include the following information:

1. How the proposed local workforce development area is aligned with labor market areas including information on growth industries and occupations in the local labor market.

2. How the proposed local workforce development area is aligned with a regional economic development area within the state of Louisiana.

3. How the proposed local workforce development area can effectively administer activities under provisions of the WIOA with available federal and non-federal resources, including a description of area education and training providers, a description of how the available resources will be made available for training activities, and a description of the percentage of overall resources administered by the local area that will be dedicated to training activities.

4. Whether the proposed local workforce development area is seeking Initial or Subsequent Designation as defined by WIOA and a statement of assurance that the proposed local workforce development area meets the requirements for Initial or Subsequent Designation under the WIOA.

5. For Subsequent Designation requests, a discussion of how the local workforce development area met the three criteria outlined in WIOA section 106(b)(3).

Step 4. After submission of the subsequent designation request, the Louisiana Workforce Investment Council will review the request and provide a consultative opinion and recommendation for the Governor. As required by the WIOA, the Governor will use the consultation of the Louisiana Workforce Investment Council and consult with chief elected officials prior to designating local workforce development areas in Louisiana. The Governor may rely on the submissions from the requestor(s) as meeting the requirement for consultation with chief elected officials, including the public records of meetings and any recorded votes or resolutions regarding the designation request.

The Governor is required to approve a request for subsequent designation from a Local Area, if the Local Area performed successfully, sustained fiscal integrity, and engaged in the regional planning process. The State provided definitions of the required criteria and established an application process for Local Areas to obtain subsequent designation for Program Years (PY) 2019-20 and PY 2020-21.

Definitions

Performed Successfully

For the purposes of subsequent designation for PY 2019-20 and PY 2020-21, performed successfully is defined as a Local Area that has successfully negotiated PY 2018-19 and PY 2019-20 performance goals within their designated Local Workforce Development Areas.

For any subsequent designation and recertification request received from a Local Area after PY 2020-21, that Local Area's WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth performance goals must be successfully negotiated within their Local Workforce Development Areas and must meet or exceed negotiated performance for the two previous program years.

Sustained Fiscal Integrity

The Local Area has not been found in violation of one or more of the following during PY 2016-17 or PY 2017-18: Issues of fiscal integrity or disallowed costs due to the willful disregard of or failure to comply with any WIOA requirement, such as failure to grant priority of service or verify participant eligibility, as identified in final determination of significant finding(s) from audits, evaluations, or other reviews conducted by state or local governmental agencies or the DOL. Gross Negligence, which is defined as a conscious and voluntary disregard for the need to use reasonable care, which is likely to cause foreseeable grave injury or harm to persons, property, or both.

Engaged in Regional Planning

For the purposes of subsequent designation for PY 2019-20 and PY 2020-21, engaged in regional planning is defined as participating in, and having contributed to, regional planning and regional plan implementation (for example, participating in regional planning meetings, leading regional plan implementation efforts, and review and approval of regional plan and modifications by Local Boards and local Chief Elected Officials), and participating in regional performance negotiations.

Application Process

Local Areas had to complete and submit one of the following two applications to the Louisiana Workforce Development Board:

- Existing Local Area - Application for Subsequent Local Area Designation and Local Board Certification Program Year 2019-21

- Modified Local Areas for Local Areas that are requesting Local Area modification as part of their subsequent designation, complete "Modified Local Area - Application for Subsequent Local Area Designation and Local Board Certification Program Year 2019-21.

Appeals Process

In accordance with Section 106 of WIOA, a unit of local government (or combination of units) which has requested and been denied an initial designation as a local area under WIOA may appeal the denial to the State Board within 15 calendar days of the date of the decision.

The request for appeal must be sent by certified mail, return receipt, to the Louisiana Workforce Commission, Attention: Office of Workforce Development P.O. Box 94094 Baton Rouge, La. 70804-9094. The request must include the name of the contact person (e.g., WDB Director) and the address where official notices are to be mailed. The appeal request must be legible, written/typed clearly and concisely and the following must be placed at the top of the first page in capital letters: REQUEST FOR APPEAL. The written/typed appeal must specifically state why the designation as a LWDA should be approved. The request shall be no longer than five pages. (Exhibits and attachments are not included in the five-page limit). Within five calendar days of the receipt of the appeal, the State Board will contact the appellant to schedule a hearing date. The State Board will conduct the appeal hearing and provide a written decision to the appellant no later than ten calendar days after the hearing.

Appeal of State Board Decision

If the appeal to the State Board does not result in approval for initial designation, the appellant, if appealing an initial designation under WIOA Section 106(b)(2) or subsequent designation under Section 106(b)(3), may request a review by the Secretary of Labor. An appeal to the Secretary must be submitted by the appellant or grant recipient no later than 30 calendar days after receipt of written notification from the State Board that the appeal has been denied. Appeals must be submitted by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, DC 20210, Attention: Assistant Secretary, Employment and Training Administration. A copy of the appeal must be simultaneously provided to the State Board.

If the Secretary determines that the appellant was not accorded procedural rights under the appeal process established under the above section, or that the area meets the requirements for initial or subsequent designation in WIOA Section 106(b)(2) or 106(b)(3), the Secretary may require that the area be designated as a workforce development area. The Secretary must issue a written decision to the Governor.

Local funding agreements must satisfy the requirements of section 121(h) of WIOA in PY 2017. The State has provided guidance to the Local Workforce Development Areas which contains an appeals process for the allocation of One-Stop Center infrastructure funding effective for PY 2017. The guidance includes the State infrastructure funding mechanism to be implemented in the event that a LWDA fails to reach consensus on funding methods.

State Infrastructure Funding Mechanism

One of the hallmarks of WIOA is an increased emphasis on Local WDBs as conveners who are responsible for the MOU negotiation process. Initiating negotiations via a Local Funding Mechanism (LFM) allows for decision making to be kept at the local level. LWC's goal is to provide the support and guidance necessary to help all Local Areas reach agreement under the LFM rather than under the State Funding Mechanism (SFM.) Local WDBs are urged to seek guidance and support from the state throughout the negotiation process to help prevent the triggering of the SFM. However, if a Local WDB is unable to complete an IFA with all its AJC

partners, then the SFM will be triggered and LWC, with the Governor's approval, must then determine the required contributions of each AJC partner.

If a Local WDB does not believe they will be able to come to an agreement regarding joint infrastructure costs with any of their AJC partners by (May 1st each year thereafter), they must notify LWC in writing immediately.

All AJCs partner programs and/or the Local Board may appeal the SFM decision. Appeals must include justification by the program and/or Local Board and be based on believed noncompliance with WIOA Section 121(h)(3) that outlines the Governor's funding allocations.

Appeals Process

Upon receipt of the specific terms of a State Funding Mechanism, any Local WDB or one-stop required partner may appeal for cause, within 30 calendar days, in writing, LWC's determination regarding the portion of funds (or non-cash contributions) it is to provide. To be officially received, an appeal must fully contain and evidence the following:

- Addressed to the attention of the Secretary of the Louisiana Workforce Commission or his/her designee.
- An introduction identifying the appellant and designating the letter as a formal appeal.
- Full citations from WIOA or the WIOA Final Rules in Title 29 or Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) that support the appeal.
- Identify the basis for the appeal. *WIOA stipulates that a State Funding Mechanism (SFM) allocation determination may be appealed* only *if the determination is inconsistent with the requirements of WIOA sec. 121(h)(2)(E). The Final Rule at 20 CFR 678.750 further limits admissible grounds for an appeal to* three possibilities. *The petitioner must make a case that the State's determination is inconsistent with:*
  - o the proportionate-share requirements in 20 CFR 678.737, or
  - o the cost-contribution limitations in 20 CFR 678.730(c), or
  - o the cost-contribution caps in 20 CFR 678.738
- The letter must be signed by signatory authority (electronic signature is acceptable) and dated.

LWC will acknowledge the appeal and return a determination under the designated authority of the Governor no later than 60 days upon the date receipt of appeal. Until the appeals process is completed, the appellant will remain liable for its contribution as originally determined in the SFM. If a one-stop partner's appeal to LWC using the process described in 20 CFR 678.750 is successful and results in a change to the one-stop partner's infrastructure-cost contributions, then the Local Area's MOU *must* be updated to reflect the final one-stop partner infrastructure cost contributions.

2. STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES

REQUIRED STATEWIDE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES- ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, YOUTH PROGRAMS

Louisiana administers WIOA funds for the purpose of development and funding innovative statewide activities that will improve service delivery strategies and target specific populations throughout the state. These activities are aligned with the mission and direction of WIOA by assisting job seekers, especially job seekers with barriers to employment, with access to employment, education, training, and support services they need to succeed in the labor market

while also matching employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.

WIOA Statewide Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Funds are allocated to the local workforce development areas, with the support of the state, to design, develop, and implement activities that accelerate employment and reemployment strategies for Louisiana job seekers. These workforce activities create and prototype innovative strategies that bridge education and workforce gaps for targeted populations, and implement promising models and practices in workforce system service delivery infrastructure.

LWC has heightened its focus on regional coordination among key partners with efforts to promote relationships with new partners leading to enhanced resources and augmentation of existing services strategies. By working with similar or established programs, organizations are better equipped to anticipate complications and can instead focus on methods and success.

LWC also recognizes that strong relationships with employers are necessary to create pathways to gainful, long-term employment for participants. LWC supports Local Workforce Areas in collaborating with high growth industry leads, as partnerships result in well-crafted trainings and jobs for participants with employers who value them. As a result, service providers receive high-quality job placements because there is a mutual benefit to employers.

The primary goals of WIOA statewide funded activities include:

- Improve labor market and skills outcomes for target groups through the development of strategies that fill gaps, accelerate processes, or customize services to ensure greater access to workforce services and employment opportunities.
- Create new models for service delivery and funding alignment that can be replicated across the State and tailored to regional needs.
- Implement, replicate, and scale successful innovations that emerged from previous projects.
- Leverage state investments with commitments from industry, labor, public, and community partners.

Targeted Population with Barriers to Employment

WIOA statewide funded activities will also ensure more of the targeted population with barriers to employment have access to training, good jobs and economic security, and achieve greater intergenerational income mobility.

The following are outcomes the State hopes to achieve through the reinforcement of serving targeted populations with barriers to employment:

- Demand Driven Skills Attainment:
    - develop a team that jointly convenes industry and is led by industry champions.
    - share industry sector focus and pools/shares resources to meet demand in the region.
    - a process to communicate industry workforce needs to supply-side partners.
    - policies supporting equity and strives to improve job quality.
- Upward Mobility and Equity for Individuals with Barriers to Employment Outcomes:
    - a shared target populations of emphasis.

- deploy shared/pooled resources to provide services, training, and education to meet target population needs.
- utilize shared/common case management and capacity building strategies such as co-enrollment and professional development to develop shared responsibility for providing services and ensure quality outcomes.

The State reserves the rights to use funds reserved by the Governor, as described in WIOA sections 128(a) and 133(b), regardless of whether the funds were allotted as Youth, Adult, or Dislocated Worker Formula Funds, to achieve the following statewide activities:

- Provide assistance to state entities and agencies, local areas, and one stop partners in carrying out the activities described in the combined state plan, including the coordination and alignment of data systems used to carry out the requirement of WIOA
- Provide assistance to local areas for carrying out the regional planning and service delivery efforts required under sec. 106(c) of WIOA
- Provide assistance to local areas by providing information on, and support for, the effective development, convening, and implementation of industry sector partnerships
- Provide assistance to local areas, one stop operators, one stop partners, and eligible providers, including the development and training of staff, which may include the development and training of staff to provide opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment to enter in-demand industry sectors or occupations and nontraditional occupations, the development of exemplary program activities, and the provision of technical assistance to local areas that fail to meet local performance accountability measures described in sec. 116(c) of WIOA
- Disseminating the State list of eligible providers of training services, including eligible providers of nontraditional training services and eligible providers of apprenticeship programs registered under the National Apprenticeship Act of 1937
- Disseminate information identifying eligible providers of on-the-job training (OJT), customized training, incumbent worker training (IWTP), internships, paid or unpaid work experience opportunities, or transitional jobs
- Disseminate information on effective outreach to, partnerships with, and services for, businesses
- Disseminate information on effective service delivery strategies to serve workers and job seekers
- Disseminate performance information and information on the cost of attendance including tuition and fees, for participants in applicable training programs on the Eligible Training Provider's List (ETPL) with recognized post- secondary credentials, as well as OJT and IWTP
- Disseminate information on physical and programmatic accessibility, in accordance with sec. 188 of WIOA relative to nondiscrimination, if applicable, and the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 for individuals with disabilities
- Conduct evaluations of State Programs, in coordination with evaluations of programs and activities carried out by the U.S. Secretary of Labor
- Disseminate a list of providers of youth workforce investment activities eligible to receive competitive, or sole source, grants and contracts for training with credentials for youth

- Provide re-designation assistance to local areas
- Provide assistance in the development of Regional Plans
- Operate a fiscal and management accountability information system (MIS) to manage, track, and report primary indicators of performance for Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker Programs
- Conduct continuous, and at least annually, monitoring and oversight of activities carried out by sub-recipients of WIOA funding to conform to the Uniform Administrative Requirements (UAR)
- Provide additional assistance to local areas that have high concentrations of eligible youth

ALLOWABLE STATEWIDE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES (Discretionary Funds)

This policy allows the State to use funds not more than 15% of the amount of WIOA formula funding allotted for Adult, Youth and Dislocated Workers, reserved by the Governor, and administered by the Secretary, or her designee, to provide for additional statewide employment and training activities under WIOA. These may include the following:

- Developing strategies for effectively serving individuals with significant barriers to employment and for coordinating programs and services among one stop partners
- Implementing innovative programs and strategies designed to meet the needs of all employers, including small employers, in the State, which programs and strategies may include IWTP, customized training, sector and industry cluster strategies and implementation of industry or sector partnerships, and career pathway programs
- The development or identification of education and training programs that respond to real-time labor market analysis, utilize direct assessment and prior learning assessment to measure and provide credit for prior knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences, evaluate such skills and competencies for adaptability, ensure credits are portable and stackable for more skilled employment, and accelerates course or credential completion
- Implementing programs to increase the number of individuals training for and placed in nontraditional employment
- Carrying out activities to facilitate remote access to services
- Supporting the provision of career services in the one stop delivery system in the State
- Activities to improve coordination of employment and training activities with child support services
- Activities in the corrections system that assist ex-offenders in re-entering the workforce
- Activities consisting of development and dissemination of workforce and labor market information
- Conducting research and demonstration projects related to meeting the employment and education needs of adults and dislocated workers
- Implementing promising services for workers and businesses, which may include providing support for education, training, skill upgrade, and statewide networking for

employees to become workplace learning advisors and maintain proficiency in carrying out activities associated with such advising

- Developing and disseminating common intake procedures and related items, including registration processes, materials, or software
- Providing technical assistance to local areas that are implementing pay-for-performance contract strategies, which technical assistance may include providing assistance with data collection, meeting data entry requirements, identifying levels of performance, and conducting evaluations of such strategies
- Research related to meeting the education and employment needs of youth
- Demonstration projects related to meeting the education and employment needs of youth
- Supporting the development of alternative, evidence-based programs and other activities that enhance the choices available to eligible youth and encourage
- Supporting financial literacy, including the ability of youth program participants to create household budgets, initiate savings plans, and make informed financial decisions about education, retirement, home ownership, wealth building, or other savings goals
- Supporting activities that address the particular financial literacy needs on non-English speakers, including providing the support through the development and distribution of multilingual financial literacy and education materials; and
- Providing technical assistance to, as appropriate, local boards, chief elected officials, one stop operators, one stop partners, and eligible providers, in local areas, which provision of technical assistance shall include the development and training of staff, the development of exemplary program activities, the provision of technical assistance to local areas that fail to meet local performance accountability measures, and the provision of technology to facilitate remote access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system in the State.

Policy Number	Policy Name	Purpose
OWD 4-11	WIOA Board Composition and Certification	Guidance on composition and certification criteria for LWDBs
OWD 2-13.4	WIOA Eligible Training Providers	Guidance to LWDA, training providers and other stakeholders on the certification process and procedures.
OWD 2-21.2	Youth Program Operation	Codifies TEGL WIOA 23-14 guidance for the operation implementation WIOA Youth formula funds.
OWD 2-23.1	Integrated Service Delivery	Defines the role and responsibilities for state staff in the One-Stop Centers; and key definitions
OWD 2-24.2	WIOA Adult and Dislocated	Guidance to LWDAs on

Policy Number	Policy Name	Purpose
	Worker Eligibility Policy	requirements for eligibility
OWD 2-27	IEP & LMI Policy	Codifies TEGL 22-08 , LMI is a tool that provides information for IEP
OWD 2-29.1	Guidelines on Co-enrollment and Common Intake	Guidance for LWDAs on requirements for co-enrollment of adults, dislocated workers and youth
OWD 4-14	Use of WIOA funds for Statewide Employment and Training Activities	Guidance on allowable statewide activities
OWD 4-15	WIOA Title I Allocations and Financial Reporting	Guidance on allocations to LWDAs

The goal of Louisiana's Rapid Response unit is to quickly mobilize resources to minimize the adverse impact on companies, affected workers and communities that are associated with a job loss. Rapid Response services expedite the process of obtaining information about where new jobs can be found and training, education and/or supportive services that facilitate re-employment as quickly as possible. Pursuant to WIOA section 134 (a)(2)(A), the Governor shall reserve not more than 25 percent of WIOA Dislocated Worker funding to carry out statewide rapid response activities.

These statewide rapid response activities shall include:

- Provision of rapid response activities, carried out in local areas by the State, or by an entity designated by the State, working in conjunction with local boards and the chief elected officials for the local areas; and
- Provision of additional assistance to local areas that experience disasters, mass layoffs, or plant closings, or other events that precipitate substantial increases in the number of unemployed individuals, carried out in local areas by the State, working in conjunction with the local boards and the chief elected officials for the local areas. The State's Rapid Response activities will include, but are not limited to the following:
- Immediate contact with the employer, representatives of the affected workers and the local community, which may include an assessment of the layoff plans and the schedule for reemployment orientation sessions.
- The team provides customized transition services and assistance. These services are provided at the job site, prior to the layoff and are offered at times convenient for the employer and affected workers. Companies and individuals not covered and/or specifically addressed in the WARN Act are also eligible and provided services through the Rapid Response unit.
- Entering the impacted workers into the HALOW (Helping A Laid Off Worker) database. The HALOW initiative showcases laid off workers to prospective employers by listing the affected job title, length of employment with company, parish of residence, education level and veteran status.
- Active participation with the recent implementation and utilization of a virtual job fair platform. This has given employers an innovative and cost effective means to connect with job seekers, including our dislocated worker population, while maintaining social distancing needs.

Layoff-aversion strategies are the first line of defense. The Rapid Response unit provides companies with industry-specific strategies that have been proven to avert layoffs and closures. Additionally, the Rapid Response unit will quickly convene stakeholders to examine and begin initial implementation of layoff-aversion activities.

These activities and services include, but are not limited to:

- Utilize computer predictability programs to target companies in distress that could face an upcoming layoff.
- Rapid Response unit will work with Industry Sector Specialists and local Business Services staff to continuously conduct outreach to targeted employers in order to build a relationship with the business community allowing quick coordination for job fairs or hiring events.
- Incumbent worker training, including employer loan programs for employee skill upgrading; and
- Linkages with economic development activities at the federal, state and local levels, including federal Department of Commerce programs and available state and local business retention and recruitment activities.

The State reserves the right to determine how RR activities will be initiated based on the circumstances of an individual layoff event. Responsibility for facilitating how the process begins is determined by the Statewide RR Coordinator and communicated to the WIOA Director.

When an official WARN Notice is involved the following sequence of events will be in place:

- The Statewide RR Coordinator will determine whether the WARN is classified as Federal, State or below the required WARN threshold.
- The Statewide RR Coordinator will acknowledge the receipt of the WARN with the company and communicate with the official named in the notice to explain RR policy and gather relevant details about the terms of the closing or layoff.
    - Depending on the type of WARN and dynamics of the impact to the community, the RR Coordinator will reach out to the company official or request a contact be made to the company by the Local Workforce Development Board Director.
    - When collective bargaining is involved in the layoff or downsizing, the labor representative will also be contacted and invited to all meetings.
- The State RR Coordinator will notify LWC agency leadership and Local Workforce Development Board Director, to make them aware of the WARN. The notification will contain a synopsis of the WARN notice details and the WARN Notice will be attached.
- A subsequent e-mail will be sent to the WIOA Director and other relevant LWC leadership in order to coordinate next steps and potential approach to when rapid response services should begin.

Following notification and confirmation of a layoff, the State Rapid Response Coordinator and Rapid Response staff arranges an on-site meeting with the company, union officials (if applicable) and local leadership. The Statewide RR Coordinator delegate the convening and facilitating of the employer meeting to experienced RR staff. The meeting can be conducted via conference call if the need arises.

The State RR Coordinator will make sure the following components are included for an organized, multi-faceted response:

- Contact with company and labor officials from the affected business;
- Contact with local Workforce Development Boards and other local leadership and partners;
- Contact with service providing agencies in the local area;
- Arrangement and facilitation of RR meetings;
- Arrangement and facilitation of RR Orientation

Rapid Response Orientations are conducted at various venues as coordinated with employers and/or workers, and includes services available through American Job Centers and other partnering agencies such as; job search and job placement assistance, resume workshops, career counseling, and training in a new career, and assistance filing unemployment insurance (UI) benefits, and the impacts of layoff with regard to health care. Other state agencies or community-based organizations are invited to participate in the meetings to help workers adjust in a time of crisis.

Louisiana has developed a comprehensive and well-tested disaster response and recovery plan. Rapid Response is a critical component of the state's disaster response and recovery plan and provide services such as:

The WARN Act for Natural Disasters requires certain employers to provide at least 60 calendar days' advance written notice of a plant closing or mass layoff affecting 50 or more employees at a single site of employment. The Act makes certain exceptions to the requirements when dislocations occur due to natural disasters if the employees are unreachable and the employment site is destroyed.

When a plant closure or a mass layoff is the direct result of a natural disaster such as a hurricane, flood, earthquake, drought, storm, or similar events caused by nature, employers are obligated to give as much notice as possible, even if the notice comes after a disaster.

To comply with the law, the employer may send notice to the employees‟ last known address, even if their homes are destroyed. This would indicate good faith. The regulations recognize that the available information may be limited.

Emergency RR quickly coordinates services in the event of a crisis, emergencies or situations categorized as a natural disaster. The delivery must be proactive, comprehensive and structured. The primary goal is to convene all diverse expertise and partners who will be dedicated to help the community navigate difficult times and address the short-term and long-term impacts of such events.

Emergency RR includes, but is not limited to:

- Assisting individuals with accessing UI or Disaster Unemployment Assistance;
- Acquisition of and support for Mobile Workforce Centers
    - Rapid Response Mobile Workforce Centers function as offices on wheels. In the event of a disaster resulting in a job loss or other interruption in employment, the mobile units are deployed. The units run on generators and are equipped with computers and Internet access. The units can also be deployed to remote locations or to regions where offices may have been destroyed;
- Gathering demographic information for potential emergency grant applications; and

- Coordination with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and/or other disaster-response organizations.
- State and local area rapid response providers must work closely with other State and local agencies and other critical partners through strategic planning processes to ensure effective and immediate responses can be undertaken when the need arises.

In situations of natural disaster or other state-declared emergency situations and to adhere to DOL policy guidance relative to disaster DWGs and TEGL 2-15, initial steps and supplementary planning will include coordination with the following:

- FEMA;
- Louisiana Homeland Security & Emergency Management, through the Duty Officer who coordinates with Emergency Management systems;
- Workforce Development Boards and community stakeholders; and
- Business or businesses impacted by economic downturn or the natural disaster and cause of unemployment and affecting the current workforce;
- Priority of Service Populations;
- Disaster Unemployment Insurance;
- Fish and Wildlife;
- Monitoring provisions;
- Work on Private Property rules;
- Prevailing Wages laws;
- Participant Eligibility qualifications as required by WIOA including accessing supportive services;
- Safety/OSHA

LWC has a policy requiring co-enrollment into WIOA services for Trade affected workers receiving services under the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA). Co-enrolling (or multi-enrolling) TAA participants aligns resources and supports the development of clear plans for integrated service strategies necessary to effectively and efficiently assist the Trade-affected workers in transition.

Upon receipt of a valid WARN notification, and LWC determines the lay-off warrants a public announcement, notices are disseminated to personnel identified within the WARN notification network. To ensure timeliness, the State's Rapid Response team, begins intervention efforts within 48 hours of a layoff notification. To better meet local need, Rapid Response coordinators are located in each region of the state to lead and manage activities, and to provide customized responses to businesses and workers within their regions. The Rapid Response Regional Coordinator makes initial contact with the employer and gathers information regarding the cause of the layoff, including any possible trade factors, demographics of the affected workers, immediate needs of the workers, etc. The Rapid Response Regional Coordinator would then relay any trade factors to Trade unit for preparation of the TAA petition.

LWC has activated cross-program strategic planning and service integration (TAA, Dislocated Worker, and Rapid Response) by providing core and intensive services through the Rapid Response unit and by co-enrolling TAA certified participants in need of training in WIOA and TAA. The TAA Statewide Coordinator notifies the Rapid Response Statewide Coordinator

whenever a new petition is filed to ensure that Rapid Response services are provided. In the case that a petition is filed by a worker group then the Regional Rapid Response coordinator and the TAA coordinator will synchronize services to the affected workers.

The Trade unit organizes orientation sessions for employees who were affected by Trade when there is an active petition in the Trade program. The state also provides guidance to Local Boards to develop strategies and policies to provide progressive levels of intervention for job-seekers. Using information collected through early intervention, WIOA staff initiate enrollment of eligible laid-off employees for case management at One-Stop Centers statewide. All eligible dislocated workers are provided a full range of core, intensive, training and other individually appropriate local partner services.

To accommodate worker schedules and enable more employees to access services every effort is made to negotiate on-site services and paid time-off. When possible, Worker Transition Centers are established on-site. Statistics have proven that when services are on-site and during company time it increases participation, morale, while maintaining productivity. The Work Test is provided throughout the interface of staff with unemployment insurance claimants, not just during the eligibility review process. In both daily re-employment (of claimants) efforts and during the eligibility review process, daily notification of work test issues are provided to the UI adjudication staff for follow-up.

Early intervention services that include orientation; initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes and abilities; the provision of labor market information; job-search assistance and financial management workshops continue to be a priority for workers in the TAA program. Once trade-impacted employees are certified, local-merit staff at the AJC approves and enter the TAA program budget obligations and expenditure records in the HiRE system and complete the enrollment of these participants in TAA training.

Certification of a dislocated worker for TAA includes determining eligibility by matching the laid-off employee to the USDOL-certified petition and the employer's laid-off list, as well as approval of the individual using the six TAA criteria for eligibility to be placed in training along with other steps. The TAA criteria requires assessing the emotional, spiritual, financial and intellectual abilities of the trade impacted workers, to demonstrate the individual's qualification to undertake, complete and benefit from the planned training. Supporting the assessment are testing tools (SAGE, TABE, WorkKeys, etc.) administered at the local BCSC level. If the assessment identifies a TAA-certified participant's need for

adult education or remedial services, these programs can be offered by local-merit staff. The assessment tool also can be used to identify education gaps and to pinpoint work-related aptitudes and interests. Approval for TAA training services and selection of a training method or program is based on matching these factors to the participant for appropriate training for a demand occupation

B. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKERS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. WORK-BASED TRAINING MODELS

The State will maximize Work-Based Training program models including on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, registered apprenticeship, transitional jobs (Work Experience), and customized training as part of its training strategy. These models are designed to ensure high quality training for both participants and employers. The Louisiana Work-Based Training model has as its goal to meet job seekers as well as employer needs.

In order to enhance the success of the Work-Based Training program's model, Louisiana will engage partners in the development of strategies, frameworks, and models to insure successful

implementation of work-and-learn experiences. The State will strategize to elevate the importance of work-and-learn models. Through partnerships with employers LWC will strive to mitigate employer challenges as well as determine best practices.

Furthermore, job seekers will be able to establish connections directly with potential employers by using this evidence-based approach to career readiness. The State will additionally provide guidance for the field through policies, standardized procedures, statewide training, and technical assistance.

Work-Based Training models will utilize work-based learning to fill regional business needs for skilled employees, thereby increasing employee earning potential and the business's bottom line. To ensure quality in work-based training, local Workforce Development Areas are expected to demonstrate evidence of the following criteria:

- Occupation training for in-demand jobs as defined by Occupational Forecasting Conference and approved by the State Board (Workforce Investment Council) accessible through (STAR JOBS)
- Clear program goals
- Outreach implementation to program participants and employers regarding OJT opportunities; including leveraging various partners' relationships with employers
- Standardizing and streamlining forms, including contracts and training plan templates in each region
- Clear roles and responsibilities for trainers, worksite supervisors and support personnel
- Assessments to identify existing skills of individual learners
- Reasonable training length reflecting both the complexity of the job and skills of the trainee
- Specified methods of instruction
- Assurance that participants are job-ready prior to work-based training opportunities
- Established evaluation processes
- Clear expectations and feedback to assess progress toward achieving learning/skills acquisition goals.

These Work-Based Training programs will better prepare adults and dislocated workers for an economy that demands that workers have career knowledge and skills, are adaptable to change, and are prepared for lifelong learning. The strategy of Work-Based Training will utilize community partners in an effort to provide job seekers with the opportunity to learn the necessary workplace skills required for success in the new economy.

2. REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

Registered Apprenticeship is currently aligned with WIOA through initiatives of the State Apprenticeship Expansion (SAE) grant awarded to the LWC by USDOL. One of these initiatives includes a supportive services pilot for apprentices similar to those offered at the local comprehensive career centers. SAE supportive services have provided tools, childcare assistance, and gas reimbursement for apprentices with financial need, supplementing funds for WIOA participants who need additional support and providing resources for those who are not eligible for WIOA but still require such assistance. These supportive services will continue until the SAE grant ends in October 2020.

ApprenticeshipLA.com utilizes a WIOA pre-screening form to determine potential WIOA eligibility for apprentice applicants, based on a model developed by Region 1. Completed forms are sent to the ApprenticeshipLA email and forwarded to the appropriate local board so they can reach out to these individuals and screen them before their apprenticeship begins. This has proved beneficial, as many are unaware of the services provided at comprehensive job centers. The pre-screening form increases the likelihood of determining eligibility before employment where afterward they may no longer be eligible for OJT contracts, supportive services, and/or individual training accounts (ITAs).

A new source of grant funding awarded in 2019, the Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE) grant, provides funds for employer incentives to assist with OJT and Related Technical Instruction (RTI) training costs. The LWC will partner with local boards to execute this incentive, braiding funds with OJT contracts and ITAs to increase the amount of WIOA funds utilized by employers with a Registered Apprenticeship model and encourage Registered Apprenticeship expansion across the State of Louisiana.

During National Apprenticeship Week in 2019, the Apprenticeship Division held two events in the Monroe and Lafayette regions, coordinated with two local workforce boards. These events focused on informing employers of the benefits of Registered Apprenticeship and how WIOA funding can amplify programs, with a cumulative attendance of over 80 individuals. The Apprenticeship Division aims to replicate these events in the other regions of Louisiana to strengthen partnerships between the LWC, the local boards, and employers.

3. TRAINING PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURE

LWC revised its agency policy and ETPL manual to meet requirements of TEGL 8-19 and issued July 2021. The edited manual is publicly available at http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WFD/ETPLManual.pdf. Policies are available through the LWC website at http://www.laworks.net.

LWC is responsible for facilitating the application process and for calculating the performance outcomes based on student level data submitted by training providers. In addition, LWC is required to disseminate the State's list of eligible providers of training services, including eligible providers of non-traditional training services, performance information and program costs.

LWDBs are responsible for notifying providers in their area of the opportunity to apply for status as approved eligible training providers. At its own discretion, an LWDB may also solicit training providers from outside of their LWDA. Solicitation may be done through a combination of direct mailings, newspaper notices and other appropriate means. An LWDB is responsible for ensuring that training providers have access to the application for certification and a list of demand occupations for their LWDA. WIOA requires training funds be used for training job seekers for occupations on the demand occupation list. The list contains information for training providers regarding where training funds should be used.

Training providers that do not have data entry access to the HiRE (Helping Individuals Reach Employment) should contact LWC's Office of Workforce Development at (225)342-7693 to obtain the necessary security access. Refer to the Eligible Training Provider Manual for additional information on the application process, at http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WFD/ETPLManual.pdf.

The statewide standardized system eliminates duplication and provides uniformity in the provider information gathered for the statewide list. Potential training providers must submit an application for each course of study or program being proposed, including cost information on each course or program. Each training provider must submit one (1) single application containing all required information on the training institution and one (1) on each program being proposed to receive WIOA training funds.

In addition to the application, each provider must submit required student data as outlined in chapter 7 of the Eligible Training Provider Manual. High school students, prisoners, and non-degreed individuals are excluded from the student data requirements. A non-degreed individual is defined as an individual who is enrolled for a single course without the intention of completing a program. The data submission must include the signed "Student Data Certification Statement" found in Appendix 1 — Form C. As part of the certification process the state will verify a proprietary school's licensure status through the Louisiana State Board of Regents, through the Louisiana State Board of Regents, a proprietary school's licensure status. Applications will not be processed through the certification process until this verification has been made. Questions regarding licensure status should be directed to the Board of Regents at (225) 219-7150, (225) 342-4253 or at the following address:

Louisiana State Board of Regents Proprietary School Section P. O. Box 3677 Baton Rouge, LA 70821-3677

Initial Eligibility

- Providers must submit an application to the State for training program(s) it wishes to offer. In addition to any local requirements, providers must follow the process outlined in this policy and submit student and performance data as required by the State.
- Providers are eligible only for programs that qualify and are approved by the State and LWDBs.
- Providers must submit evidence of accreditation and/or licensure from the appropriate state or other governing body.
- Distance learning programs are eligible only when offered by institutions that are fully accredited by a recognized accrediting body.
- Initial eligibility is limited to a period of one (1) calendar year for each approved program.
- The provider must renew its eligibility and establish continued eligibility for each approved program to continue receiving WIOA funds after the program's one-year period of eligibility ends.
- Providers must contact the State every two years to renew each program's continued eligibility to receive WIOA funds.
- The State shall provide a written notice of determination of acceptance or rejection of an initial application in HiRE to an applying entity within thirty (30) calendar days of the receipt of the completed initial eligibility determination application.

Continued Eligibility

All training providers must apply annually to remain on the ETPL by submitting a completed application along with the required information. The State will review the application, make a determination of approval, and notify the applicant of the determination within 30 days of receiving the completed application. The State will notify the applicant of the final determination in writing in HiRE, including in the case of a denial, the reasons for the final determination and a statement that the provider may appeal the determination as provided in the ETP policy. The applicant may appeal the determination of the State using the appeals procedures outlined in the ETP policy. Any training provider that does not apply to remain on the ETPL pursuant to this policy shall be removed from the ETPL.

The following information is required for a continued eligibility determination:

1. A completed online application;

2. Performance reports for the past two years, as applicable;
3. Certification that the following have not changed from previous years:

- the provider's refund,
- equal employment opportunity and accessibility policies; and
- the class schedule. If changes have been made, new copies of the aforementioned shall be provided;

4. Redetermination of licensure status by the Louisiana State Board of Regents; and
5. Any additional information requested by the State.

A continued eligibility determination will be made for each training provider on a program-by-program basis and be based on the following criteria:

- A training provider's prior eligibility status or status of existing programs.
- The performance of training providers on the performance accountability measures relating to the State Plan and the training provider's individual performance measures established by the State.
- The availability of training services throughout the State.
- Information reported to State Agencies with respect to Federal and State programs involving training services, including adult education and vocational rehabilitation programs.
- The degree to which the program relates to in-demand industry sectors and occupations in the State.
- Compliance with State licensing requirements, where applicable.
- The ability of the training provider to offer quality programs that lead to postsecondary credentials.
- The ability of the training provider to provide training services to individuals who are unemployed, underemployed, incumbent workers and individuals with barriers to employment.
- Demonstrated ability of the training provider to submit timely and accurate performance reports.
- A training provider's ability to meet the State Plan's performance measures as required by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Violations

LWC is responsible for removing existing training providers/programs from the certified training provider/program list under the following conditions: (There must be documented proof that these conditions exists).

- The training provider intentionally supplied inaccurate information; the termination will remain in effect for a minimum of two years.
- The training provider substantially violated any requirement under WIOA or state policy, the termination will remain in effect for a minimum of two years.

- If a Registered Apprenticeship program is deregistered, it shall be removed from the ETPL. Information on any deregistered program will be provided by the State Director of Apprenticeship.

A provider who has been removed from the list of eligible training providers is liable to repay all adult and dislocated worker training funds received during the period of noncompliance and will remain off the ETPL for a minimum of two years.

Apprenticeship

As stated in the State's ETPL Manual (2021) Pp. 3-23, Under WIOA, Title I, Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors are automatically eligible for placement on the state-approved ETP list and will remain on the list as long as the program is registered or until the program sponsor notifies the State that it no longer wants to be included on the list. However, registered apprenticeship programs are given an opportunity to consent to inclusion on the ETPL before being placed on the list. Registered Apprenticeship programs are not subject to the same application and performance information requirements or to a period of initial or continued eligibility as other providers. In addition, LWDBs cannot establish additional criteria and information requirements or establish higher levels of performance for these entities to provide training services in the local areas.

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 outlined in OWD policy 2-24.2," Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult and Dislocated Worker Eligibility Policy", for the purpose of determining eligibility of Adults under WIOA, individualized career or training services shall constitute a minimum of 51 percent of Adults served meeting the priority target groups. This minimum threshold will ensure that local One-Stops are targeting Adults in most need of services beyond "basic career"services while developing talent pools that meet the short term as well as long term workforce needs of businesses.

Compliance with Adult priority will be evaluated on an annual basis at the end of each program year and should be tracked at the local level on an ongoing basis using regular monitoring and reporting systems.

Potential Barriers to Employment Solutions:

- Partnering with community organizations and businesses to provide business-appropriate wardrobe for Low-Income job seekers.
- Partnering with local government and community organizations to identify resources to provide stabilized housing, childcare, domestic violence solutions, and transportation services.
- Offering soft-skills training to those individuals with barriers to employment.
- Identifying mentors who have successfully completed the program while living with some of these barriers to employment.
- Provide training to front-line staff to better understand cultural differences while conducting outreach and providing services to individuals with limited English proficiency.

- Developing a pool of employers willing to hire ex-offenders and/or provide work experience or On-The-Job Training (OJT) sites.

Action:

Each Local Workforce Development Area must provide added emphasis towards the identification, outreach, and enrollment of individuals possessing barriers to employment. This added emphasis must include, but is not limited to:

- Development of a comprehensive Local Outreach Plan geared towards increased enrollment and service delivery to individuals with barriers to employment. This includes a broadening of the current local area service delivery base to identify and collaborate with advocates for veterans and their spouses, the homeless, low-income, formerly incarcerated, single mothers, and individuals with limited English proficiency or cultural barriers. This plan will be reviewed during the annual State WIOA Monitoring site visit.
- Designating staff who will serve as the lead coordinator(s) of Local Area outreach efforts to serve individuals with barriers to employment. The lead coordinator will be interviewed during the annual State WIOA Monitoring site visit.
- Identification of best practices in your local area that may be replicated in other regions of the State.
- Formalizing MOUs or other institutionalized practices designed to increase enrollments to individuals with barriers to employment.

5. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S CRITERIA REGARDING LOCAL AREA TRANSFER OF FUNDS BETWEEN THE ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAMS

WIOA sec.133(b)(4) provides the authority for Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB), with the written approval of the Governor, to expend up to 100 percent of the Adult activities funds on DW activities, and up to 100 percent of DW activities funds on Adult activities. LWC's State Combined Plan outlines the policy to evaluate transfer requests from local workforce areas. Expenditures of monies transferred between local DW and adult programs are reported on the ETA-9130 reports. ETA notes when considering such transfers that career and training services must continue to be made available to both Adult and DW participants in the AJCs (see WIOA sec. 134(c)(1)).

However, State policy will limit the maximum allowable transfer to 75 percent. A local board may send written notice requesting a transfer of funds between adult and dislocated worker funds up to a maximum amount of 50 percent in the first year in which funds are made available. In the second year, local boards may send written notification requesting up to an additional 25 percent.

The written request must include the following information:

1. The transfer fund source (i.e., from adult to dislocated worker or dislocated worker to adult);
2. The dollar amount of the transfer request, including the percentage share of the base allocation represented by that dollar amount;
3. The reason(s) for the transfer; (Example: Economic conditions such as high/low unemployment, business closures, etc.)

4. Signed approval from the full local board or Board Chairperson requesting the transfer.

Transfer of funds process

LWDBs must submit requests to transfer adult or dislocated worker funds to LWC's Office of Workforce Development.

LWC's Office of Workforce Commission will make recommendations to the Secretary based on funds availability and business case submitted by the LWDA. As part of the review, may request additional information from LWDBs, however, OWD may alternatively deny the request or authorize a partial transfer of funds. Following approval of a fund transfer, OWD will notify LWDBs by email, which will also include the appropriate grant modification packages for LWDBs to complete and sign.

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]

Local Boards may directly provide some or all of the youth workforce service activities. If a Local Board serves as the youth service provider and performs other roles such as fiscal agent or AJC Operator, the Local Board must have appropriate firewalls in place between the staff providing services, the staff responsible for oversight and monitoring of services, and the Local Board. The firewalls must conform to *Title 20 CFR Section 679.430* for demonstrating internal controls and preventing conflicts of interest.

Local Workforce Development Areas may follow their local procurement rules provided those rules are not less stringent than the Louisiana State Contract and Procurement Policies, otherwise local areas must adhere to State procurement policies**. (**Louisiana Title 34 Government Contracts, Procurement, and Property Control)

Local Boards must also identify youth service providers based on criteria in the State Plan *(Title 20 CFR Section 681.400)*. The State Plan establishes that Local Boards should select service providers that do the following:

1. Employ proven recruitment strategies of effective outreach, engagement, enrollment, and retention of OSY.
2. Demonstrate meaningful partnerships with eligible training providers, institutions of higher education, and employers from in-demand industries.
3. Offer a continuum of services that allow participants to obtain a GED/High School diploma, enroll into postsecondary education, and obtain employment within their chosen career path.
4. Utilize career pathways and sector strategy models with a structured sequence of activities, as well as multiple entry and exit points that provide adequate supportive services.
5. Use structured work-based learning, such as paid and unpaid work experiences and career exploration that leads to gainful employment.

6. Provide intensive case management and support services to help youth overcome complex barriers, successfully complete the program, and retain employment.

1. **Competitive Basis**

If a Local Board chooses to award, grant or contract youth service providers for some or all activities, the Local Board must award such grants or contracts through a competitive process that does the following:

1. Takes into consideration the ability of the youth service provider to meet performance accountability measures.
2. Meets the procurement standards specified in Uniform Guidance and the DOL Exceptions.
3. Follows state and local procurement laws.

2. **Sole Source Exception**

The local board may award, grant, or contract on a sole-source basis if such board determines there are an insufficient number of eligible providers of youth workforce investment activities in the local area.

When the Local Board awards a grant or contract to a youth service provider who also fulfills another role in the Local Area, a written agreement with Local Board and the Chief Elected Official must provide clarity on the expectation for those roles and clear methods of tracking execution and accountability for the distinct roles.

Local areas are encouraged to refocus traditional performance—based contracts to place an emphasis on the contractor achieving outcomes, like participants obtaining and retaining good jobs, rather than outputs like the number of people served. No more than 10 percent of the local youth allotment can be expended on the implementation of WIOA pay—for—performance contract strategies for youth training services and other activities.

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.

The Local Boards are responsible for developing local plans for the governor's approval, designating local One-Stop operators, designating eligible partners of training services, negotiating local performance measures with the state workforce board and the Governor, monitoring local system performance against established performance measures, and helping to develop the labor market information system for local areas. Local Boards will facilitate relationships between Partner Programs, local entities, and supportive service agencies for a strengthened service delivery in regard to provision of services to youth. These relationships will include, as a minimum, procedures for youth participant co-enrollment and common intake as necessary to integrate: intake, case management, and reporting. This shall be the case for all Partner Programs under which youth may be served. Youth services shall begin with a systematic approach to gathering information about strengths and assets, need and challenges, and interests and goals. These assessments shall be used to determining program eligibility, and subsequently guide the development of individualized plans and all other Case Management activities. Youth shall be co-enrolled as necessary in any programs under WIOA funding sources and any Partner Program that is not WIOA funded, e.g., Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Children and Family Services that is necessary based on their needs assessment. Youth will be simultaneously co-enrolled in any and all programs under which they are eligible for, and receiving, services. This will prevent youth having to wait until they exit one program in

order to access services offered by other programs, and allow them to receive the best combination of services from different funding streams. For any program year, LWDBs must spend not less than 75 percent of local workforce development area funds to provide direct services to out-of-school youth. The LWC submitted a waiver request to the USDOL on August 18, 2021 and was approved for the following - 1) authorizing the state to lower the expenditure requirement for Governor's reserve and local areas for PY 2020 and PY 2021 from 75 percent to 50 percent for OSY (out-of-school youth, ages 16-24), and 2) approving the use of individual training accounts (ITAs) for ISY (in-school youth, ages 16 - 21) through June 30, 2022. For any program year, LWDBs must spend not less than 20 percent of the funds allocated to the local area to provide in school youth and out of school youth with work experiences such as summer employment, pre-apprenticeship, internship, job shadowing, and on-the-job training. Local boards shall ensure that parents, participants, and other members of the community with experience relating to the programs for youth are involved in its design and implementation. One-Stop operators shall carry out programs that:

- Provide an assessment of academic levels, skill levels and occupational skills, any prior work experience, employability, interests and aptitudes.
- Develop service strategies for each youth that directly links to one or more of the established performance indicators.
- Provide activities leading to the attainment of a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent or a recognized postsecondary credential.
- Provide for preparation for postsecondary educational and training opportunities.
- Create strong linkages between academic instruction and student academic achievement standards that lead to postsecondary credentials.
- Prepare for unsubsidized employment opportunities.
- Establish effective connections to employers in demand industry sectors and occupations of the local and regional labor markets.

Local boards shall develop strategies that support the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, entry into postsecondary education, and career readiness for participants, the programs shall provide elements consisting of:

- 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 post-secondary credential.
- Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate.
- Paid and unpaid work experiences that have an academic and occupational education component.
- Pre-Apprenticeship programs
- Occupational skills training, which includes 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 quality criteria.
- Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

- Leadership development opportunities including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors.
- Supportive services.
- Adult mentoring for a duration of at least 12 months that may occur both during and after program participation.
- Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation.
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth.
- Financial literacy education.
- Entrepreneurial skill training.
- 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.
- Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training.

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]

Local Boards may directly provide some or all of the youth workforce service activities. If a Local Board serves as the youth service provider and performs other roles such as fiscal agent or AJC Operator, the Local Board must have appropriate firewalls in place between the staff providing services, the staff responsible for oversight and monitoring of services, and the Local Board. The firewalls must conform to *Title 20 CFR Section 679.430* for demonstrating internal controls and preventing conflicts of interest.

Local Workforce Development Areas may follow their local procurement rules provided those rules are not less stringent than the Louisiana State Contract and Procurement Policies, otherwise local areas must adhere to State procurement policies**. (**Louisiana Title 34 Government Contracts, Procurement, and Property Control)

Local Boards must also identify youth service providers based on criteria in the State Plan *(Title 20 CFR Section 681.400)*. The State Plan establishes that Local Boards should select service providers that do the following:

1. Employ proven recruitment strategies of effective outreach, engagement, enrollment, and retention of OSY.
2. Demonstrate meaningful partnerships with eligible training providers, institutions of higher education, and employers from in-demand industries.
3. Offer a continuum of services that allow participants to obtain a GED/High School diploma, enroll into postsecondary education, and obtain employment within their chosen career path.

4. Utilize career pathways and sector strategy models with a structured sequence of activities, as well as multiple entry and exit points that provide adequate supportive services.
5. Use structured work-based learning, such as paid and unpaid work experiences and career exploration that leads to gainful employment.
6. Provide intensive case management and support services to help youth overcome complex barriers, successfully complete the program, and retain employment.

Competitive Basis

If a Local Board chooses to award grants or contracts to youth service providers for some or all activities, the Local Board must award such grants or contracts through a competitive process that does the following:

1. Takes into consideration the ability of the youth service provider to meet performance accountability measures.
2. Meets the procurement standards specified in Uniform Guidance and the DOL Exceptions.
3. Follows state and local procurement laws.

Participant activities will be monitored through desk reviews and other monitoring methodologies.

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.

As outlined in OWD policy 2-21.3 "Youth Program Operations" Local Boards are responsible for establishing local definitions and eligibility documentation requirements for "requires additional assistance" as it relates to both OSY and ISY. The local policy should be reasonable, quantifiable, and based on evidence that the specific characteristics of the youth identified in the policy objectively requires additional assistance. Some examples could include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Have repeated at least one secondary grade level or are one year over age for grade.
2. Have a core grade point average of less than 1.5.
3. For each year of secondary education, are at least two semester credits behind the rate required to graduate from high school.
4. Are emancipated youth.
5. Have aged out of foster care.

6. Are previous dropouts or have been suspended five or more times or have been expelled.
7. Have received court/agency referrals mandating school attendance.
8. Are deemed at risk of dropping out of school by a school official.
9. Have been referred to or are being treated by an agency for substance abuse related problem.
10. Have experienced recent traumatic events, are victims of abuse, or reside in an abusive environment as documented by a school official or other qualified professional.
11. Have serious emotional, medical or psychological problems as documented by a qualified professional.
12. Have never held a job (applies to OSY).
13. Have been fired from a job within the 12 months prior to application (applies to OSY).
14. Have never held a full-time job for more than 13 consecutive weeks (applies to OSY).

This policy is subject to the monitoring process.

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.

School status must be based on status at the time the eligibility determination portion of program enrollment is made. Once the school status of a youth is determined, that school status remains the same throughout the youth's participation in the WIOA youth program, unless the youth exits from the program, reapplies, and is again determined eligible.

For the purposes of determining ISY status, the school attended may be either a secondary school (including alternative secondary school services) or postsecondary school. If the youth participant is enrolled in credit-bearing postsecondary classes, including credit-bearing community college and credit-bearing continuing education classes, he or she is attending postsecondary education and is an ISY. If the youth is only enrolled in non-credit bearing postsecondary classes, he or she would be considered an OSY.

For the purposes of WIOA school status, the following are not considered to be schools, so youth enrolled, only in these programs are OSY:

- Adult education programs under Title II of WIOA;
- YouthBuild programs; and
- JobCorps programs.

Youth enrolled in high school equivalency programs and dropout re-engagement programs are also generally considered OSY, unless the program is funded by the public K-12 school system and the youth is enrolled in the school system, in which case the youth is an ISY.

If a youth is determined eligible for the WIOA youth program during the summer and is in between school years, the youth is considered an ISY if enrolled to continue school in the fall. **A youth who is determined eligible for the WIOA youth program between high school graduation and postsecondary education is considered an ISY once he or she has**

registered for postsecondary courses (i.e., when courses for the upcoming term have been selected and confirmed) even if classes have not yet begun. However, if a youth who completed secondary education **has not yet registered** for postsecondary courses at the time of eligibility determination, he or she is an OSY, even if he or she has been accepted into a postsecondary education program.

Regardless of the prior paragraph, a secondary student earning postsecondary credit through the College Credit Plus program defined in Chapter 3365 of the Revised Code who intends to continue attending the same postsecondary school after graduating secondary school remains an ISY during the period between completion of secondary school and enrollment in the postsecondary school.

If a child is being homeschooled in accordance with the requirements of Louisiana Department of Education home school laws, the child is in school.

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.

Basic Skills Deficient: A youth is basic skills deficient if they have English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test, in accordance with WIOA section 3(5)(A). WIOA section 3(5)(b) indicates that a basic skills deficient, with respect to an individual, is a youth or adult who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

Local Workforce Development Boards have the flexibility to use WIOA section (3)(5)(A) only or use WIOA section 3(5)(A) and WIOA section 3(5)(A) and WIOA Section 3(5)(B); however, Local Workforce Development Boards must further define WIOA section 3(5)(B) beyond what is WIOA, in alignment with 68 l.290(b). (Assessment process must include reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities.)" The Local Workforce Development Boards must establish its policy in its respective Local Plans. The Training and Technical Assistance Unit will provide technical assistance to the local areas on how to define "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).)

E. WAIVER REQUESTS (OPTIONAL)

Louisiana Workforce Commission submitted two waiver requests to the U.S. Department of Labor on August 18, 2021 requesting to waive certain expenditure requirements and limitations on individual training accounts within the WIOA Youth Program. Both waivers have been approved allowing the following:

1) ETA approves for Program Year (PY) 2020 and PY 2021, which includes the entire time period for which states are authorized to spend those funds, the State's request to waive the requirement that the State expend 75 percent of Governor's reserve youth funds on OSY. The State may lower the expenditure requirement of Governor's reserve to 50 percent for OSY. In addition, ETA approves for PY 2020 and PY 2021, which includes the entire time period for which states are authorized to spend those funds, the State's request to waive the requirement that local areas expend 75 percent of local youth formula funds on OSY. Louisiana may lower the local youth funds expenditure requirement to 50 percent for OSY. As a result of this waiver, ETA expects that the number of in-school youth (ISY) served will increase and that performance accountability outcomes for overall WIOA Youth (including both ISY and OSY) will remain steady or increase for the majority of the WIOA Youth performance indicators.

2) ETA approves, through June 30, 2022, the State's request to waive the requirement limiting ITAs to only OSY, ages 16–24. In addition to these OSY, the State may use ITAs for ISY, ages 16–21. ETA reviewed the State's waiver request and plan and has determined that the requirements requested to be waived impede the ability of Louisiana to implement its plan to improve the workforce development system. Approval of this waiver should not impede the State's efforts to prioritize OSY, including outreach to the OSY population.

Louisiana is requesting waivers for Program Years 2022 and 2023. Louisiana submits this request to waive certain provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Please know the Louisiana Workforce Commission has worked closely with its Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) to develop a comprehensive request that is both reasonable and responsive to barriers that LWDBs are facing during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, we believe this request and waiver comport to federal regulations.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Waiver Request Submission

I. The statutory and/or regulatory requirements the State would like to waive

The State of Louisiana seeks approval of the following statutory waiver in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

- A waiver of the requirement, WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410 to expend 75 percent of Statewide Activities and local funding on the OSY population for Program Years 2022 and 2023.

Louisiana is requesting that this percentage be lowered to 50 percent. This would allow the State to increase services to eligible in-school youth to better address the negative educational and employment impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the hurricanes that have impacted our State.

With the approval and implementation of this waiver, Louisiana seeks to achieve the following strategic goals:

- The implementation of evidence-based programs and strategies;
- Progress toward closing the economic inequity gap by securing jobs that provide opportunities for economic independence and family stability;
- Meeting Governor John Bel Edwards' statewide education goal of 60 percent of working-age adults in Louisiana to hold a postsecondary credential by 2030; and
- Placing more of Louisiana's citizens on a career path to high-wage skills.

II. Actions to Remove Barriers

While the provision of services to OSY is vital, the requirement to expend 75 percent of youth statewide and formula funds on OSY inhibits Louisiana and its 15 local workforce development area's discretion when serving youth based on local demographics, resources, economies, employment outlook, and other labor market factors. The current requirement also weakens our ability to design and deliver meaningful career pathway programs to all youth, regardless of school status. Furthermore, the 75 percent OSY expenditure requirement limits local workforce development area's ability to carry out initiatives that provide much needed education and training experiences for students and that address the employer's workforce education and skills needed.

Consistent with WIOA's increased emphasis on credential attainment, the flexibility that this waiver would allow, if approved, would allow the Local Workforce Development Boards an opportunity to provide work-based learning opportunities such as work experience for ISY as specified in Section 129(c)(2)(C) and 20 C.F.R. 681.600. The ability to provide more work-based learning opportunities to ISY is vital to our commitment to enhancing choices available to eligible youth and to encourage them to complete secondary education, enroll in postsecondary education and advanced training, progress through a career pathway and enter into unsubsidized employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency. It will also provide opportunities for ISY to obtain industry-based certifications (IBCs) prior to, or shortly after, completing their secondary education, thereby improving their ability to obtain unsubsidized living-wage employment and career opportunities.

III. Strategic Goals

Louisiana's State Plan articulates our Governor's commitment to consistently support and make workforce progress a priority with the vision of a workforce system that will provide pathways for all Louisianans. In furtherance of this commitment, the below strategic goals were identified in Louisiana's WIOA Combined State Plan and accompanying executable objectives for their accomplishment:

Goal 1: Continue to strengthen existing and establish new Career Pathways as a model for skill, credential and degree attainment for Louisiana citizens. This will help secure jobs that provide opportunities for economic independence and family stability.

Objective 1.1: Workforce development system partners will develop a shared vision and strategy for industry sector-based career pathways for youth and adults. Career pathways are diverse, with multiple entry and exit points allowing individuals of varying abilities, including adults and youth with multiple barriers to employment and in need of skill enhancement, to have realistic access to pathways.

Objective 1.4: Strengthen the alignment of K-12 education, workforce, and other viable initiatives such as improving processes for transfer credits through postsecondary, apprenticeships and college coursework as entry and exit points in the career pathways model for in and out-of-school youth.

Goal 2: Expand career services and opportunities for targeted and special populations facing multiple barriers.

Objective 2.1: Expand and incentivize the utilization of evidenced-based workforce strategies that support targeted populations (e.g., the long-term unemployed, individuals with disabilities, veterans, and out-of-school youth) into sector-based career pathways leading to gainful employment.

These strategic goals were developed to overcome significant barriers faced by Louisianans who are receiving public assistance, unemployed or underemployed, basic skills deficient, persons with disabilities, and others by creating solutions that will ensure access to education,

training and supportive services needed to prepare for, and secure high-demand occupations that pay family-sustaining wages.

IV. Projected Programmatic Outcomes Resulting from Implementation of the Waiver

Louisiana's waiver request for PY 2020 and PY 2021 was approved in October 2021 lowering the expenditure requirement of Governor's reserve and local areas expenditure requirements to 50 percent for OSY. Performance outcomes after statewide implementation during October 2021 - March 31, 2022 was only for six months and had a minimal increase because of this short duration of time; however, Louisiana expects increased participation to continue on an upward trajectory through the end of the PY 2021 period of performance of June 30, 2022. Subsequent approval of this waiver is critical in maximizing services and increasing enrollments for PY 2022 and PY 2023. The state anticipates a steady increase in serving youth by providing more resources to meet the needs of all youth populations ensuring access to quality career exploration and work experience opportunities.

With waiver approval, Louisiana will be able to:

- Increase the number of WIOA youth program participants
- Strengthen and support Career Pathways
- Expand career services and opportunities for those individuals with multiple barriers
- Increase access to work-based training, thus aiding achievement of the 20% spending requirement for work experience
- Build a better workforce for Louisiana businesses An increase in participants is projected and areas expressed they could see a potential to double youth participants if we are given this waiver as it opens the doors to much more flexibility. With the increased participant enrollment, some areas want to do an in-school JAG program (25-30 participants) and also want to expand a "Career Exploration Project" (additional 15-20 youth) that was just kicked off this summer, but limited it to just OSY. They also have ideas of putting in a carpentry pre-apprenticeship project (15-20 participants) at a Community College. Many areas have the partners ready to go and they are just waiting on us to get the waiver. This isn't counting those enrolling in ITA's that we currently enroll as adults as they don't meet the OSY criteria and we can afford to show them as an ISY. Enrollment would increase significantly across the state if this waiver were granted.

V. Alignment with Department policy priorities

This waiver request is consistent with USDOL's policy priorities in that the request will:

- Focus on ensuring that eligible youth achieve secondary and postsecondary educational success;
- Increase youth access to much needed opportunities for education, training, employment and supportive services; and
- Align with WIOA's intent by supporting career pathways and the preparation of young people for in-demand careers.

VI. Individuals, groups, or populations affected by the waiver

The intent of this waiver is to benefit at-risk ISY who face barriers to education, training and employment. OSY will also benefit as they will continue to be served as a priority population as required by WIOA. Local boards will benefit from increased flexibility to develop unique solutions to improve service to all youth according to local conditions and needs.

VII. Plan for State Monitoring of Waiver Implementation

Annual WIOA on-site programmatic reviews will include an evaluation of the impact of the waiver on local programs to ensure programmatic goals and outcomes are being met. In addition, local areas will monitor their own progress under this waiver by reviewing their monthly expenditures, along with their performance reports.

VIII. Public Comment and Notification to Local Workforce Development Boards

This waiver request will be posted on a publicly accessible website with a link to provide and/or accept public comment for a minimum of 30 days on April 22, 2022 in alignment with the State's Combined State Plan. The state notified all 15 Local Workforce Development Board Directors and other stakeholders of the publication and comment period.

Local Workforce Development Boards were provided a copy of this waiver request and given the opportunity to contact the Office of Workforce Development prior to submission of Louisiana's WIOA State Plan modification to discuss and have input on the waiver request.

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	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
State consults with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the State in determining the distributions;	
7. The State will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7);	Yes
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)	67.0%	65.9%	67.0%	65.9%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	67.0%	66.1%	67.0%	66.1%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$6,400	$6,400	$6,400	$6,400
Credential Attainment Rate	65.0%	73.5%	65.0%	73.5%

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Measurable Skill Gains	54.0%	65.5%	54.0%	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.

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)	65.0%	64.0%	65.0%	64.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	68.0%	67.0%	68.0%	67.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$7,500	$7,500	$7,500	$7,500
Credential Attainment Rate	75.0%	79.8%	75.0%	79.8%
Measurable Skill Gains	67.0%	74.5%	68.0%	74.5%
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)	68.0%	70.7%	68.0%	70.7%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	72.0%	72.0%	72.0%	72.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter	$3,100	$3,100	$3,100	$3,100

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
After Exit)				
Credential Attainment Rate	50.0%	52.0%	50.0%	52.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	46.0%	50.0%	46.0%	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 plans to continue the provision of labor exchange service through state merit employees. The state shall allocate Wagner-Peyser-funded staff by formula based on the level of effort necessary to support labor exchange services in an LWDA or region.

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

The Louisiana Workforce Commission, Office of Workforce Development has developed and implemented the following internal training program for employment service staff, which includes:

- Standardized performance ratings for individual staff members with technical competencies based on federal and state laws, regulations, statutes and standardized operating procedures were developed for use statewide with behavioral competencies required for effective "case management" and provision of service.
- Standardized performance monitoring of case management and other intensive services.
- An on-boarding training process provided by expert staff members.
- Inclusion of mandated professional development training through WorkforceGPS.

* A mandatory quarterly training program that was specific to the shortfalls and errors discovered in managerial metrics and performance monitoring. (For JVSG funded staff, sending new staff members to NVTI for their first training session within 45 days of being hired).

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

The State's Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program is designed to provide intensive reemployment assistance to individuals who are receiving unemployment benefits and are determined likely to exhaust their benefits before becoming reemployed and transitioning veterans receiving Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Service members (UCX).

The State's have developed a RESEA Plan that defines the scope, objectives, and overall approach. It is a critical element for initiating, planning, executing, controlling, and assessing the effectiveness of the services and continuous improvement of outcomes.

The primary goals and objectives are:

- Promote the integration of Workforce Development and Unemployment Insurance activities to put people to work faster in sustaining careers.
- Ensure shared responsibility between LWC, the AJCs, and the job seekers.
- Promote continuous improvement through evaluation of services and outcomes as the dynamic of our economy changes.

The RESEA program focuses on the following primary strategies:

1. Conducting in-person and virtual reemployment and eligibility assessments; and,
2. Providing customized reemployment services that are tailored to each claimant's needs.

The goal of RESEA is to provide claimants with a wide array of resources that support reemployment as quickly as possible and to connect claimants to reemployment services, including co-enrollment in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I program or other partner programs, as appropriate.

A cross collaboration team consisting of Workforce and Unemployment Insurance staff meet monthly to discuss strategies, issues and program impact. The team ensures that the core components of a RESEA are being met through training and quality assurance reviews. Core services include:

- Enrollment in Wagner-Peyser Act-funded Employment Services; Providing support to the claimant to develop and implement an individual reemployment plan;
- Providing information and access to AJC services and providing referrals to reemployment services, and training as appropriate, to support the claimant's return to work.
- UI eligibility assessment, including review of work search activities, and referral to adjudication, as appropriate, if an issue or potential issue(s) is identified; and
- Providing labor market and career information that addresses the claimant's specific needs;

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

All American Job Center staff members are trained in the program overview, case management and all key aspects of job-specific functions. Administrative and managerial staff members at all levels provide operational oversight and technical support for programs. Regional senior managers through their local managerial structure and in cooperation with LWDA leadership are responsible for ensuring a seamless process in AJCs through coordinating staff training, providing technical support, maintaining program documentation and continuous communication and dissemination of information. These leaders work in coordination with the Management of Information Systems (MIS) technicians and UI technical support teams on all issues relating to UI eligibility, disqualification and requalification.

C. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING REEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE TO UI CLAIMANTS AND OTHER UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS

The philosophy is to engage individuals to our services as quickly as possible, thus reducing the amount and duration of unemployment. AJC operators, Business Services staff, and LWC Industry Sector Coordinators must recognize and engage in integrating user-friendly customer interfaces, continuous information updates, and coordinated outreach processes to effectively support job development in the industries, careers, and jobs that labor market research indicates RESEA participants are moving into. RESEA participants in addition to other identified Priority Populations should be offered as high quality candidates for any job postings or for future staffing needs the participant is being prepared to fill.

Goals and Objectives

- Helping UI claimants access the full array of on-line, in-person, and virtual services delivered through American Job Centers;
- Connecting UI claimants and other unemployed individuals to the Reemployment Orientation and other career services;
- Ensure claimants meet eligibility requirements such as searching for work and participating in reemployment services;
- Ensure that claimants are notified of all deadlines and eligibility requirements associated with the TAA program (including TRA, ATAA and RTAA), and that communication with case managers for TAA participants is seamless;
- Working with Rapid Response teams to provide services to employers and workers in mass layoff situations, and conducting claim filing activities when needed; and
- Undertaking strategies to promote entrepreneurship.

OWD's Technical Assistance Unit and Management Information Service Unit provides assistance to state and local staff through various methods including needs assessments, monitoring outcomes and updates and/or newly issued federal and state requirements. This process identifies knowledge/skills/attitudes (KSAs) gaps and learning objectives for:

(1) grants/programs,

(2) service delivery,

(3) internal (state) and external (local) processes and procedures,

(4) accessing/using HiRE,

(5) Workforce Specialist roles & responsibilities), etc. Assistance is provided through statewide training, webinars, conferences, workshops and meetings.

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:

LWC has taken an aggressive approach in developing more comprehensive integrated systems throughout the agency. True integration and collaborative processes have been established through building stronger links among Workforce and Unemployment Insurance departments working together to provide a full array of services to our customer base. Louisiana has fully integrated its Unemployment Insurance process with its Employment Services and Employment and Training Services through the HiRE system. This system allows for automatically referring claimants to the American Job Center for Job Seeker services and provides for automated referral to Adjudication Services.

Any person filing a UI claim in Louisiana is automatically registered with the State's Employment Service through the HiRE platform. Subsequent to the completion of any UI claim and prior to the determination of "monetary eligibility" all claimants are "enrolled" in Wagner-Peyser services and are then profiled and placed on a standardized service delivery track as delineated in the state's "Integrated Service Delivery" policy.

Through the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program, Wager-Peyser and WIOA staff have been trained to identify UI eligibility issues and refer their findings to the appropriate UI staff for adjudication. The RESEA program is a major area of emphasis of re-employment and the training needs of unemployment compensation claimants.

Every RESEA session includes a one-on-one assessment of the claimants' continuing UI eligibility. This assessment includes several questions confirming employment status, a review of the claimant's work search activities, and referral to adjudication if an issue or potential issue is identified. AJC staff completes an internal form that is submitted electronically to the UI Adjudication Unit for review and determination of continued benefits. RESEA service delivery staff receives continuous training to identify eligibility issues and how to properly refer all eligibility issues to UI merit staff for adjudication, as appropriate.

RESEA uses a modernized statistical model that focuses on general variables to reflect a number of economic and motivational aspects of the unemployed. The method of selection concentrates on those claimants most likely to exhaust benefits and recently separated Veterans receiving Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Service members (UCX). Claimants are provided customized labor market and career information based on their assessment of needs, development of an individual reemployment plan, and information and referral to additional reemployment services including job search assistance and job placement, AJC services, resources, and training, as appropriate.

For delivering services to Job Seekers, regardless of their "reason for" or "point of" entry into the AJC, the State has adopted a Continuous Process Improvement (CPI) methodology. This process moves the Program Partners away from "Compartmentalization" and allows for the following in a real-time context: benchmarking (metric driven change); anticipating and meeting customer changing needs; local control of the process to reduce cycle time and idle resources; and incorporating lessons learned through marrying quality assurance (monitoring) directly to staff training.

Service delivery is customer demand driven and efficient. So, while it is important that all offices will "standardize job seeker services and enrollment processes," the way in which these are delivered may be flexible, and link directly to the manner in which Program Partners serve employers.

The new roadmap for all job seekers regardless of their reason for entering LWC services is designed for speed and flexibility by providing for Continuous Assessment, Career Services, Adjudication (as necessary), and Follow-up. This supports determining participant needs, routing participants to the appropriate service, tracking participant activity throughout the process, and targeting and recording participant outcomes.

All customers visiting a physical One-Stop-Center location who receive staff-assisted services shall be included in the common measures performance calculations.

Because all AJC services, staff, facility and activities are funded in-part by both WP and WIOA, the sequence of services and assessments shall determine the timing for co-enrollment of job seekers who receive WP or WIOA Title 1B staff-assisted service in a One-Stop Center for reporting and performance measures.

Most job seekers served in any One-Stop Center should be counted as a participant in WIOA, regardless of the presence of WIOA-funded staff onsite. Conversely, most WIOA participants should be counted as WP participants; regardless of the presence of WP funded staff at the enrolling service location.

The State requires AJCs and LWDBs to provide services to participants with the specific intent of developing quality outcomes. For this reason, the State bases its performance accountability system on the quality of services and not the number of services provided.

The State has replaced the concept of "Intake Process" with "Assessment Process" (which is the step following "Common Intake"), further dividing the assessment process into an "Initial Assessment" and "Comprehensive Assessment". The assessment process is continuous and ongoing in the context of referrals and assistance in acquiring training, education, access to resources, and employment.

Assessments shall include the use of assessment tools and processes modified by local leadership to be most effective based on the demographics of their local area, customer base, staffing levels, program (and Program Partner) availability, and supportive services access. To provide a foundation for all services, as a minimum, job seeker services shall include: initial registration, WP and (when applicable) WIOA Enrollment, with the appropriate staff assisted first service.

One-Stop operators shall ensure that appropriate services as appropriate are provided based on job seeker and employer needs, and the most recently directed criteria associated with compliance and performance under any applicable USDOL grant. These services may include, but are not limited to: assisted job search activities, evaluation of skills, interests, preferences, career counseling training options, matching skills to current job openings, intensive services, case management and follow up.

Comprehensive assessment is vital to collecting information on job seeker barriers to employment, employment goals, knowledge, skills and abilities, and proficiency in occupational knowledge. This assessment shall be done as a client centered approach to evaluating the needs of a participant without regard to services or training program availability. The purpose of the assessment will be to determine the job seeker's needs and not simply to match the job seeker to what is available.

This assessment is best defined operatively as an "intensive interviewing process." which includes behavioral observations and may also require the use of structured assessment tools. Other information gathered may include detailed work history, family support available, social services affiliations, offender status, and a detailed education history.

Comprehensive assessments must be documented via case notes, with regard to privacy and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA") rules.

The comprehensive assessment is the foundation for development of an IEP. No IEP shall be created without completing a comprehensive assessment. In many cases the comprehensive assessment will be an ongoing process that may result in changes to the goals and objectives of the IEP.

The IEP is developed with a job seeker to identify or create employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and the right combination of services to assist in achieving goals and objectives. In short — "where am I now," "where do I want to go," "how will I get there?"

The IEP is a plan for the future, not a rehash of the past. It must include goals and objectives that are SMART (specific, measureable, attainable, realistic, and time bound).

Case Management requires a regular follow-up and review or revision of the IEP, until such time as the job seeker becomes workforce ready or enters a training program. In either case follow-up is critical, using the 30, 60, and 90-day cycle until employed or training is complete is appropriate — except for long term training. For long-term training, Career Specialists should follow the most current guidance.

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.

A. Assessment Of Agricultural Activity Within The State

In 2019 (the latest year for which information is available); Louisiana growing and harvest season was a struggle for most agricultural and forestry producers. Wet conditions in the spring and during planting along with high river levels caused difficulty for many commodities and either forced acreage to be shifted to other commodities or totally left unplanted. The difficult start to the growing season along with intermittent wet weather throughout the production and harvest season resulted in most of the state's major row crop commodities experiencing lower yields in 2019 as compared to the previous year.

Louisiana summarizes and categorize all commodities into agriculture and natural resources as follows:

1. Animal Enterprises – Gross farm income for all animal enterprises was over $1.63 billion for 2019, down 10.1% from $1.82 billion in 2018. Value added was nearly $1.03 billion for 2019, down from $1.15 billion in 2018. Total value of all animal enterprises in the Louisiana economy was $2.67 billion, down 10.3% from $2.97 billion in 2018.

Animal enterprises are composed of beef cattle, dairy, horses, poultry, rabbits, sheep and goats, swine, and exotic animals.

2. Fisheries and Wildlife Enterprises – Total farm value of all fisheries and wildlife enterprises during 2019 was $852.8 million, down less than 1% from the $859.5 million in 2018. Value added in 2019 was $568.7 million, up marginally from$567.9 million the previous year. Total

value of all fisheries and wildlife enterprises to the Louisiana economy for 2019 was $1.42 billion, down marginally from the $1.43 billion in 2018.

Fisheries and Wildlife Enterprises is composed of aquaculture, fisheries, fur, hunting lease enterprises, and honey.

3. Plant Enterprises – The gross farm value of all plant enterprises was more than $3.44 billion in 2019, a decrease of 6.4% from$3.68 million in 2018. Value added was $3.63 billion for all plant commodities during 2019, up from $3.59 billion in 2018. Total value of all plant or crop enterprises to the Louisiana economy was $7.07 billion in 2019, down 2.75% from $7.27 billion in 2018.

Pant enterprises is composed of cotton, feed grains, forestry, fruit crops, commercial greenhouse vegetables, hay sold, home vegetables gardens, nursery crops, peanuts, pecans, rice, sod and turfgrass production, soybeans, sugarcane, sweet potatoes, vegetables, and wheat.

As indicated below, in **2018**, agricultural employers placed job orders with LWC relative to the following selected crops.

Crop	Acres/Producers/Farms	Dollars
Sugarcane	459,217 acres	$1,009,000,000
Soybeans	1,340,000 acres	$606,100,000
Rice	436,130 acres	$506,000,000
Crawfish	237,234 acres	$209,000,000
Plant Nurseries	728 producers	$171,020,000
Strawberries	208 acres	$8,074,000

Source: LSU AgCenter

As indicated below, in **2019**, agricultural employers placed job orders with LWC relative to the following selected crops.

Crop	Acres/Producers/Farms	Dollars
Sugarcane	482,111 acres	$495,400,000
Soybeans	888,387 acres	$345,500,000
Rice	415,000 acres	$294,700,000
Crawfish	247,753 acres	$201,000,000
Plant Nurseries	728 producers	$178,570,000
Corn	544,802 acres	$386,200,00

Source: LSU AgCenter

Sugarcane:

In 2018, sugarcane was grown on 459,217 acres in 25 Louisiana parishes. Harvested acres were 429,368 after accounting for seed-cane acreage. The 11 operating raw sugar factories in the state processed nearly 16,867,669 tons of cane. In total, the 11 factories produced 1.84 million short tons of sugar (96 pol). The average field yield of cane on harvested acres was 39.3 tons per acre. The average sugar recovery was the second best on record at 218 pounds of sugar (96 pol)

per ton of cane. The yield of commercially recoverable sugar produced per acre averaged 8,577 pounds. Although the pricing period is not complete for the 2018 crop, the projected average price for raw sugar was estimated at 26 cents per pound. The molasses price was projected to average $97 per short ton at 79.5 °Brix.

The gross farm value of the 2018 sugarcane crop was $600.1 million for sugar and molasses. The gross farm value reported above represents 60% of the value of the sugar and 50% of the value of molasses produced. The remaining percentages are for raw sugar processing, which amounted to $408.6 million. Therefore, the total value of the sugarcane crop to Louisiana producers, processors and landlords at the first processing level was $1.009 billion.

In 2019, sugarcane was grown on 481,111 acres in 24 Louisiana parishes. Harvested acres were 440,000 after accounting for seed-cane acreage. The 11 operating raw sugar factories in the state processed nearly 13,588,003 tons of cane. The average field yield of cane on harvested acres was 39.3 tons per acre. The projected average price for raw sugar was estimated at 26 cents per pound.

The gross farm value of the 2019 sugarcane crop was $495.4 million for sugar and molasses.

Soybeans:

In 2018, 1.3 million acres of soybean were planted by 2,254 producers. However, only 1.1 million acres were harvested because of inclement weather. While planted acreage and numbers of producers were similar to that in 2017, harvested acres were 121,369 lower in 2018. Despite inclement weather at harvest, the statewide average yield was 55.7 bushels per acre, compared to 53.5 in 2017. Gross farm value for 2018 was $606.1 million, down $73.2 million from 2017.

The 2018 season got off to a good start, but dry conditions slowed planting. Insect and disease pressure were low during the year, but persistent late-season rains prevent producers from harvesting 147,777 acres. Seed quality and yields were negatively impacted in fields that were harvested after being subjected to extended periods of inclement weather.

In 2019, only 888,387 acres of soybeans were planted, down from 1.3 million in 2018. Excessive rain and flooding throughout much of the spring and early summer prevented a large number of acres from being planted. Of the acres planted, continued weather disruptions and difficulties through **much** of the growing season resulted in only 862,796 acres being harvested.

With the much lower acreage and lower yields, gross farm value in 2019 was estimated at $345.5 million, down 43% from the $606.1 million in 2018.

Rice:

Louisiana planted more than 436,000 acres in 2018. Planting was spread out more evenly than normal from the period beginning in late February through March, mainly because of wet soil conditions caused by frequent, but not excessive, rainfall. The Rice Variety by Parish Survey conducted annually by extension agents indicated that Louisiana planted approximately 89% long grain, 10% medium grain and 1% special purpose rice varieties. The top planted rice varieties and hybrids included CL153 (19.5%), CL111 (14%), Cheniere (11.9%), Mermentau (10.5%), CLXL745 (9.7%), Jupiter (5.8%) and XP753 (4.9%). Clearfield seed technology in both inbred and hybrid rice varieties made up approximately 59% of the acres. The new Provisia herbicide technology was available for the first time in 2018 in a variety named PVL01, and it was planted on approximately 10,000 acres, or 2.3%, of the total acreage.

In 2018, the statewide rice average yield was 7,211 pounds per acre (42.2 barrels or 152 bushels per acre), up from 6,840 in 2017. A total of 31.45 million hundredweight of rice was produced on 436,130 harvested acres in 2018. The gross farm value in 2018 for rice produced was $379.6 million in 2018, up from $297.6 million in 2017. When value-added activities of

$126.4 million are considered, the total economic impact of the rice industry was $506 million in 2018, up from $327.7 million in 2017.

Louisiana planted over 415,000 acres in 2019. Many factors contributed to the poor rice yields in 2019. One of the biggest things that reduced yield in 2019 was Hurricane Barry, which made landfall on July 11.

The gross farm value in 2019 for rice produced was $294.7 million, down from $379.6 million in 2018.

Crawfish:

Farm-raised crawfish continued to be the state's most valuable aquaculture sector in 2018, representing roughly 52% of the total gross farm value generated across all commercial aquaculture enterprises. Growth in demand, both within the state and regionally, has created increasing incentive for expansion of acreage and production over the last several years. Crawfish production has increasingly been incorporated into other farming operations in recent years as producers look to offset struggling rice markets. Estimates from the field in 2018 indicated farm-raised crawfish production occupied a record 237,234 acres, up 6.6% from the previous year. Total production was up almost 20% from the previous year at 151.8 million pounds, and gross farm value for farmed crawfish was $209 million, representing an all-time high.

Plant Nurseries:

The commercial nursery industry in Louisiana consists of fruit and nut tree nursery stock production, foliage plants, woody ornamentals (trees and shrubs) and floriculture/bedding plants. Commercial nursery crop production in Louisiana had a gross farm value of $115.2 million in 2019, compared to $110.3 million in 2018. Wholesale nursery sales in Louisiana have improved over the past several years. Increases in demand were experienced in 2017 as consumers began to replant in response to plant loss caused by two major floods and an extremely rainy growing season in 2016. A continuation of that demand, along with improvements experienced in the overall economy have led to strong demand again in 2019.

Wholesale production was $6.51 million for the growers of fruit and nut tree nursery stock in 2019. This category consists of citrus, blueberries and figs, among others. Bedding plant and floriculture crop production was $43.02 million in farm gate sales in 2019. The largest segment of the nursery industry continues to be woody ornamentals, primarily trees and shrubs. At the wholesale level, woody ornamental growers sold products worth $62.54 million during 2019. Wholesale production of foliage plants increased somewhat from 2018 and accounted for $3.14 million in sales in 2019. Including value-added activity of $63.36 million, the total value of the Louisiana nursery industry at the wholesale level was $178.57 million in 2019.

Corn:

There were 544,802 acres of corn harvested in 2019, which compares to 431,316 in 2018. Gross farm value of corn production in 2019 was 386.2 million, up significantly from the 2018 value of $298.8 million. Sharply larger acreage and moderately higher prices helped to offset a slight reduction in per acre yield to create a larger gross farm value.

Strawberries:

In 2018, the Louisiana strawberry industry involved 47 commercial growers who produced berries on 218 acres for a gross farm value of $8.74 million. While average prices were up slightly in 2018, lower acreage, lower yields and lower production all helped to generate a gross from value that was nearly $5 million lower in 2018. Tangipahoa Parish continues to be the leading strawberry producing parish, with 73% of the total acres in the state and accounting for 78% of the state's total gross farm value.

The majority of the Louisiana strawberries were sold commercially. Growers delivered berries to grocery store warehouses, individual grocery stores and fruit stands. The remaining portion of the crop was sold at farmer's markets and roadside stands. Louisiana strawberries are generally available as early as November, December and January. These early berries often bring premium prices and play a large part in the high returns for the crop in Louisiana.

Sweet Potatoes:

Louisiana sweet potato acreage decreased slightly in 2018. Producers harvested 7,682 acres in 2018, compared to 9,194 acres in 2017. Prior to 2018, Louisiana acreage had remained steady, in the 9,000-acre range. Louisiana remains fourth in sweet potato production acreage in the United States behind North Carolina, Mississippi and California.

Louisiana's total gross farm gate value for sweet potatoes in 2018 is estimated at 53.99 million, compared to $52.90 in 2017. Total value of sweet potato production, including value added of $40.49 million, was $94.48 million.

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 top five labor-intensive crops are:

Crop	**Peak Season(s)**	**Geographical Area(s)**
Sugarcane	Planting: July through October Harvest: mid-September through early January	Eastern Acadiana Parishes and River Parishes from Avoyelles to Lafourche
Soybeans	Planting: early April through mid-June Harvest: early September through late November	Central parishes
Crawfish	Harvest: March through June, variable	South Central to Southwestern LA
Rice	Planting: mid-March through May 31th Harvest: late July through early October	South Central to Southwestern LA
Plant Nurseries	January through mid-November	Rapides and St. Tammany Parishes

Many Louisiana communities depend on agriculture, forestry, fisheries and wildlife for local jobs and their economic well-being. However, for those who work in it day in and day out, agriculture, forestry and fisheries are far more than a business, a major contributor and an

economic engine. It truly is a way of life. Families have lived on many of these farms, forest lands or fishing villages for generations following a preferred way of life even though it means hard work, many hours, high risk and sometimes low incomes.

The general employment trend in rural Louisiana has been for workers to leave agricultural work for higher paying or less labor intensive jobs in other occupations. While many workers enjoy agricultural work, very few can adapt to living on a seasonal income. As a result, agricultural employers have a difficult time finding reliable local workers. The H-2A temporary agricultural foreign worker program has become increasingly popular among Louisiana agricultural employers, following the national trend. Today, H-2A workers dominate the agricultural labor force in the state.

Louisiana H-2A statistics show an increase in the number of positions requested and certified by ETA, US DOL, Office of Labor Certification.

2016 – 8,301 H-2A positions certified

2017 – 8,875 H-2A positions certified

2018 – 10,079 H-2A positions certified

2019 – 10,816 H-2A positions certified

2020 – 11,332 H-2A positions certified

2021 – 12,473 H-2A positions certified

None of the employers expressed an interest in the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) beyond searching for workers locally through the HIRE system. This job order activity is consistent with the growing trend for agricultural employers to seek H-2A workers. This indicates the level of demand for agricultural workers within the state.

Agricultural employers repeat four common challenges in obtaining a secure and stable workforce:

1. Most workers lack interest in seasonal work.
2. Most workers are not interested in farm work.
3. An increasing number of workers do not have the stamina for farm work, especially in extreme climatic conditions.
4. A lack of workers who will show up for work every day or on time when they do.
5. A lack of reliable workers who will stay with the job more than a few weeks, sometimes abandoning the job without notice.

Louisiana has experienced significant disaster events since 2020, which include the COVID-19 pandemic, and Hurricanes Laura, Delta, Zeta, and Ida. The unprecedented hurricanes caused significant wind damages and flooding across multiple parishes affecting the growing and harvesting seasons. Wet conditions in the spring and during planting along with high river levels caused difficulty for many commodities and either forced acreage to be shifted to other commodities or totally left unplanted resulting in lower yields.

In addition to the production difficulties experience since 2020, producers also faced an uncertain market environment. Trade disputes and tougher trade policies helped to create a great deal of volatility in commodity markets. Significant slowdowns in export sales were experienced for most row crop commodities and some livestock commodities. Despite relatively strong and stable domestic demand, the uncertainty regarding trade and trade policy did slowly start to impact commodity prices. Some commodity prices were able to remain mostly

unchanged from the previous years, but this was primarily a function of lower overall production and supplies in the United States and not a function of strong demand.

Each new production season has risks associated with commodity prices, trade agreements and higher costs as well as uncertainty related to the weather. For these reasons, agriculture in Louisiana will continue to see future difficulties.

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

Seasonal Shifts and Farmworker Origins - During the most recent year, FY 2021, Louisiana hosted 12,473 Non-Migrant seasonal farmworkers. The peak season ended in September with a quarterly total of 4,099 and the low season ending in June with 1,704. These workers come predominantly from Mexico and Central America who generally speak a variation of Spanish, with some from the Indus Valley and Southeast Asia, speaking the most common language of their region. This is not an exhaustive list.

It is estimated that, in Louisiana, there are currently 900 MSFWs in the following agricultural industries. (This estimate does not include H-2A non-immigrant agricultural temporary workers.)

50 – Sugarcane

50 – Corn

40 – Crawfish and Soybean

100 – Nursery

60 – Animal Farms and Other Crops

600 – Other seasonal farmworkers

Although some of these MSFWs are Spanish-speaking Mexican or Central American immigrants or descendants, the great majority of MSFWs in the state are local seasonal workers. According to best estimates the number of migrant workers is very small compared to the size of the LA agricultural industry. Three areas comprise the largest concentrations of MSFWs; Ouachita, southern Rapides, and western Tangipahoa Parishes.

From the best estimates, based upon MSFW contacts by LWC, Motivation, Education and Training, Inc. (MET, Inc., the state Section 167, National Farmworker Jobs Program [NFJP] grantee), and the High School Equivalency Program (HEP) at Delta Community College, the number of migrant farmworkers is very small. According to MET, Inc., (using the broader definition of MSFWs under the NFJP grant) migrant farmworker clients are rare. In PY2017 thru PY 2019 100% of MET, Inc. clients were local seasonal workers. The first language is of most of those clients was English. Approximately 2,000 people enroll in HEP annually. Of that number an average of 100 enrollees have engaged in farm work and approximately 50% of them would

be categorized as a MSFW. An estimated 75% of that number are local English-speaking seasonal or year-round workers and 25% are local Spanish-speaking seasonal or year-round workers. Almost 100% of the Spanish-speaking workers are from Mexico or of Mexican descent. A few HEP participants each year are H-2A workers who wish to obtain a high school equivalency and learn English. The peak participation period for HEP are the winter months, the off-season for most farm work.

The following characteristics of Louisiana NFJP participants for calendar year 2018 were provided by MET, Inc. and derived from MET's NFJP database:

"Seasonal Farmworkers represent the following: 66% Black, 28% White, 21% Hispanic, 10% born in Mexico, 88% born in the USA, 216 Families and Individuals served, Average 142 Days Worked in Farm Work, 50% Female, 42% School Dropout, 2% Limited English, 2% Veteran, 47% Long-Term Agricultural Employment, 29% Reading Skill Below 8.9 Grade Level."

Both NFJP and HEP program operators stated that over 90% of their MSFW participants do not rely primarily on agriculture for their income at the time of participation, but that agricultural work happens to be part of their past or present experience combined with work in other non-agricultural occupations. Of those that do rely upon agricultural income at the time of participation or within the two years before participation, very few regard agricultural work as a vocation, but one of many different occupations they may work in the course of their careers, especially in rural labor supply areas.

Most participants in both NFJP and HEP utilize the One-Stop System to some degree. The most common needs of MSFWs are employment, increasing income, food assistance, transportation, and training.

4. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

In 2019, One-Stop Centers contacted 173 MSFWs, of which 24 were referred to jobs. During the past two years, due to the pandemic, Louisiana has been under a declared state of emergency. One-Stop Centers were closed to the public. Services were provided via social media platforms Online. During the Plan period, LWC intends to increase the number of MSFWs by ten percent as staff is better trained to increase their outreach to MSFWs and to recognize MSFWs who enter the Business and Career Solutions network and register in HIRE. LWC estimates that at least 150 staff days annually may be required to achieve the number of contacts required by the regulatory guidance. Louisiana continues to provide the qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate level of services to MSFW, compared to non-MSFWs.

During PY 2021 the SWA have hired one full time MSFW Outreach Worker. The outreach worker plans and coordinates visits to agricultural employers. The outreach worker locates and contact MSFWs who are not being reached by the normal intake activities conducted by the ES offices.

The Outreach Worker, explains to MSFWs at their working, living, or gathering areas (including day-haul sites), by means of written and oral presentations, in the language readily understood by them, the services available at the local one-stop centers (which includes the availability of referrals to training, supportive services, and career services, as well as specific employment opportunities), and other related services; Information on the Employment Service and Employment-related Law Complaint System; Information on the other organizations serving MSFWs in the area; and a basic summary of farmworker rights, including farmworker rights with respect to the terms and conditions of employment.

Local offices commonly engage in job related outreach to the public through job fairs and coordination and outreach to schools (e.g., career days). Staff attempts to reach as wide an audience as possible when promoting these events and activities, often coordinating outreach with partners (e.g., HEP, MET, Inc.) who are able to contact members of the public who may

prove difficult to contact. Where the NFJP provider MET, Inc. operates, One-Stop Centers make cross referrals of prospective MSFW program candidates. One-Stop Centers will also make employment and training services information available to MSFWs through other organizations and programs that provide services to MSFWs, e.g., HEP and MEP. Where possible, cross referrals are made with these providers and combined services are utilized. Staff members in offices with a higher number of MSFWs or Spanish-speaking clients provide Spanish language materials on jobs, job training, education, job safety, and healthcare. Where possible, local offices provide bi-lingual services or have access to translators through partners. Additionally, the HIRE online labor exchange system is available in a Spanish language version.

Because of funding and manpower limitations, the SWA must rely greatly upon the SMA, One-Stop partners, and MSFW organizations for outreach to MSFWs. However, One-Stop Center staff will assist as much as possible. Additionally MSFW contacts will be sought through networking opportunities where MSFWs are more likely to congregate, grocery stores, community centers, public events, and medical clinics. Social media continues to be explored and will be utilized where possible and proven effective. The SMA and On-Stop Center staff will continue distributing materials and information of interest to MSFWs at these locations and to agricultural employers. Through our networking activities, new outlets for MSFW outreach will continually be sought and utilized.

The SMA will work with LWC administrative and local One-Stop Center staff on issues of concern (identification of MSFWs, compliance with equivalency of service and equity indicators, reviving local interest, proper documentation of services, etc.). This technical assistance is provided to all One-Stop Center staff as needed, during field office visits, SMA monitoring reviews, and OWD state training seminars and conferences. Any deficiencies the SMA discovers during daily business or reviews will be addressed upon discovery. The primary emphasis will be placed upon properly identifying MSFWs, meeting the needs of MSFWs, and recording the services provided to them.

The SMA will provide quarterly training at each of the state's American Job Centers to all partner staff, including but not limited to WIOA funded staff and Wagner-Peyser Employment Services staff. This training is tied to and follows outreach and provision of services to MSFWs. The staff will be encouraged to query clients to better identify MSFWs and record them in the HIRE system. Staff will provide the full range of One-Stop services, including the HIRE labor exchange system, of which the ARS is a part. The labor exchange system provides job openings in both agricultural and non-agricultural employment. Other services, such as training or supportive services, provide a pathway for MSFWs to transition to higher wage jobs & permanent year round employment in non-agricultural work.

LWC utilizes a variety of methods for staff training for the delivery of core services. The most effective is through a combination of training seminars, group sessions, and the provision of self-paced training materials. Training on the identification of and the provision of services to MSFWs will be provided through a combination of training at annual state conferences, on-site training, webinars and conference calls to be determined after an assessment of effectiveness and feasibility, with training to staff statewide by the end of PY2022. The training will be conducted in conjunction with WIOA training to as great a degree as possible, to foster a seamless delivery of services to MSFWs as compared to non-MSFW populations. MSFW partner organizations will be invited to participate so they may learn more about One-Stop services and develop more ways to coordinate services with the SWA. Likewise, partners will be invited to conduct training on their programs and services to promote and enhance MSFW services.

Providing services to target groups, e.g., MSFWs or veterans, is incorporated into the training. The LWC University, a set of online staff training modules, is one method of self-paced training for the provision of services to MSFWs.

The State of Louisiana provides an online platform Louisiana Employees Online (LEO), for Civil Service, programmatic, and professional training. LWC has professional training courses on LEO for each of its major programs and requires at least 20 professional training hours per year for each employee. The modules in HIRE are available to all SWA staff and partners. Workforce GPS provides access to various other MSFW materials and information, e.g., ES Complaint System forms and instructions, posters, and the Migrant and Seasonal Protection Act. During training sessions, staff will be directed to these training modules for further training and encouraged to retake the training occasionally to refresh their knowledge.

For many decades, the state Unemployment Insurance (UI) program was co-located in offices that also provided Wagner-Peyser and WIA services. This arrangement created a situation where offices activities were dominated by UI activities, to the detriment of job training and placement services. This system also required UI claimants to travel, sometimes long distances, to an office for services.

In 2005, the LWC implemented a centrally operated UI system utilizing an online computerized system and a statewide Call Center. UI services have been removed from Louisiana One-Stop Centers to allow the Center staff to focus solely upon job training, job placement, and related career services. Since a claimant can gain access to the UI system from anywhere, the need for a local presence was no longer needed.

The UI system initially operated separately from the SWA labor exchange system, but continued the requirement that UI claimants register for work and conduct a job search or engaged in training. For the last several years, LWC has been integrating UI and Workforce Development (WD) system services through the Helping Individuals Reach Employment (HIRE) online labor exchange and training services system. Upon registering in HIRE, the WD and UI systems are tied into certain automated support activities. For example, upon registration, a UI claimant is automatically profiled for job matching (e.g., the last occupation) and a list of potential employment opportunities within a 25-mile radius is sent to them for consideration. This feature alone has resulted in an average shortened period of unemployment.

UI claimants may file online or by phone at One-Stop Centers. One-Stop Center staff provide instruction to UI claimants on how to apply for UI services and assist claimants while filing their claims. Further UI services, such as eligibility issues, are provided through the UI Call Center. The online UI application system is available in Spanish. The UI Call Center has bi-lingual staff that offers translation services in Spanish.

All One-Stop staff and workforce partners have been thoroughly trained on the integrated HIRE system (OWD/UI). One-Stop workers regularly provide UI eligibility awareness and may incorporate UI claims income into their individualized service plans.

The Staff Online Resources is available to merit staff and all partners. Additionally, other MSFW resources are available through the Staff Online Resources; Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (MSPA), the MSPA poster in English, Spanish and Vietnamese, CFR Part 653 – Services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers, Job Service Complaint System, One-Stop Center Complaint Referral Record ETA Form 8429 and instructions. The SMA will attempt to include the four training modules in the training section of the Louisiana Employees Online (LEO) human resources services portal. State merit employees receive professional development credit for courses taken through LEO. The state uses "Workforce GPS" system for training.

In addition, training will be conducted on a weekly basis with all staff members either in person or via social media platforms. The emphasis will be on ES services, identification, and registration, follow up, and job referral of MSFWs to include the ES Complaint System.

LWC has partnered with the NFJP provider MET, Inc. to assist Louisiana in providing increased services to MSFWs and farm worker employers. One MET, Inc. office is co-located in the

Hammond One-Stop Center. MET, Inc. encourages all of their customers who need workforce services to register in HIRE. Likewise, the local One-Stop staff keeps MET staff informed of upcoming events, and hiring and training opportunities for their customers, co-enrolling when the service plans are complementary. For additional methods see the previous section 2. Outreach Activities, A. Contacting Workers Not Being Reached By Normal Intake Activities.

Additionally, other MSFW resource are available through Staff Online Resources in HiRE, which is available to all state and local merit staff. Other resources available include Workforce GPS and professional development courses taken through LEO (Louisiana Employee Online).

5. SERVICES PROVIDED TO FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

All job seekers who come into the One-Stop system are offered the same services at the same level, tailored to meet the customer's career goals. During intake and assessment, staff will ascertain whether the client is an MSFW. MSFWs will then be identified on their registration. The MWFW is informed of the full range of one-stop services MSFWs is also informed of partners who provide MSFW services for which they may qualify. MSFW may be put into an individualized career services track incorporating partner organization services.

Regional Business Teams, as part of their regional service strategies, and the SMA will reach out to agricultural employers to inform them of One-Stop employer services, including the ARS, partner employer services, and services to employees. The Teams will encourage agricultural employer engagement in employment and training opportunities and Rapid Response services. The SMA continually disseminates to agricultural employers and their agents information on One-Stop employment and training services to MSFWs, MSFW employment rights, worker safety and health, housing, and MSFW partner services.

Locally, One-Stop Centers will coordinate the services of one-stop partners, community based organizations, the state MSFW contacts, MSFW groups, state cooperative extension service, and parish (county) agents, and other agencies and organizations listed above to do the following:

1. Give local presentations on One-Stop services, including the My Life, My Way online self-assessment tool and the LWC Star Jobs portal, both accessible online and through smartphones,
2. Set up and utilize an integrated referral system to provide maximum services to MSFWs,
3. Inform agricultural employers of MSFW services and rights,
4. Encourage agricultural employers to utilize the Agricultural Recruiting System (ARS),
5. Promote the hiring of MSFWs to employers in all sectors, including agricultural,
6. Provide required employer posters and other handouts in the English language and in Spanish,
7. Meet on a regular basis to exchange information, discuss problems, and coordinate efforts,
8. Offer to distribute their information pamphlets during outreach contacts and provide materials for them to distribute to MSFWs,
9. Offer services that are relative to their needs, and
10. Advise them of all employment changes affecting their community.

The SMA will continue an ongoing relationship with the LA Farm Bureau Federation and participate in its annual Mid South Labor Seminar, providing materials or conducting presentations on agricultural labor issues.

One-Stop Centers display the Employment Security (ES) Complaint System poster in the languages most likely spoken by the customers seeking workforce services. The public is also informed of the ES Complaint System during outreach events. The SMA keeps workforce partners informed of the service and coordinates complaint activities with them.

American Job Center front line staff maintain and report alleged MSFS violations via a complaints log to the SMA as necessary. The SMA then conducts that appropriate investigation through a partnership with the Local Workforce Development Board and state leadership.

Violations are published annually with access to employers and the result reported to the USDOL Wage and Hour Division as appropriate.

All complaints from MSFWs alleging violations of employment-related standards and laws shall be taken in writing by One-Stop Center staff. The staff will attempt a timely resolution, if possible. In the event the staffs are not able to resolve the complaint, the complainant will be timely referred, as appropriate, to agencies and organizations that may play a role in resolving the complaint. The complaint records will be made available to the SMA and reported quarterly to the LWC Office of Human Rights. One-Stop staff will consult the SMA in cases where they have questions on the proper resolution of complaints or factors of the complaint indicate the complaint may need the assistance or intervention by the SMA.

Annually, the Louisiana One-Stop system receives zero non-H-2A agricultural job orders. Although offered to agricultural employers several times each year, none have expressed interest in the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) and prefer to search workers locally through the HIRE system. In the past two years, no agricultural employers have agreed to use the ARS.

Even considering this lack of interest, the SMA will continue to promote the ARS to both H-2A and non-H-2A agricultural employers and farmer organizations. The SMA will continue to encourage One-Stop staff to promote the ARS during their outreach to agricultural employers.

6. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. COLLABORATION

As a non-significant MSFW state, the local One-Stop Centers cooperate and work closely with MET, Inc. in three geographical areas; Franklin Parish and surrounding areas, Tangipahoa Parish, and Iberia Parish and surrounding areas.

A MET, Inc. office is co-housed in the One-Stop Center in Iberia Parish. MET, Inc. encourages all customers and requires all NFJP trainees to register into HIRE, the state's labor exchange system. The SMA developed and assisted MET, Inc. and local WOIA providers in developing MOUs which were signed in February 2019.

The coordinated services will focus upon:

- Coordinated outreach to MSFWs,
- Properly identifying MSFWs,
- Assessments of needs,
- Coordinated individual service plans designed to leverage funds from each program,
- Co-enrollment when appropriate and advantageous,
- Coordination and referrals to supportive services.

SWA staff and the SMA will maintain contact with the LDOE Migrant Education Program (MEP) to promote the program for the children of migrant parents (whether MSFWs or non-agricultural migrants) and to promote One-Stop services to the parents of MEP students and youths in the program. Likewise, the MEP operators may refer people to the One-Stop Centers.

The SMA has made contact with the Catholic Charities Louisiana Office for Refugees (LOR). Although their clients would rarely, if ever, qualify as MSFW, it is possible some may become eligible after resettlement. Also, some may be referred to agricultural employment.

The SMA has made contact with the Migrant Clinicians Network and with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and is working on preparing memorandums of understanding with both. The Migrant Clinicians Network offers free clinic services as well as free vaccination to migrant and seasonal workers free of charge. The Hispanic Chamber of Commerce helps with advertisement of and referrals to agricultural jobs. Contact with partners and stakeholders is ongoing, at a minimum quarterly meetings are conducted with NFJP partners and supporting organizations.

The SMA will promote and encourage the provision and coordination of MSFW services to the One-Stop Centers with MET, Inc., state and local agricultural agencies, farm organizations, and other agricultural stakeholders. The SMA will encourage One-Stop Centers to engage in relationships with these organizations for outreach and the provision of services. These organizations will include:

- Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Migrant Clinicians Network
- Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry,
- Louisiana State University (LSU) AgCenter,
- Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation,
- American Sugar Cane League,
- Louisiana Alligator Advisory Council,
- Louisiana Crawfish Farmers Association,
- Latino Farmers Cooperative of Louisiana, Inc.
- Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) Migrant Education,
- University of Louisiana Monroe (ULM) Continuing Education/Delta Community College DeltaLinc,
- Louisiana Primary Care Association, Inc.,
- USDOL Wage and Hour Division (WHD),
- USDOL Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA),
- U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission,
- The Louisiana Association of Cooperatives
- Legal aid organizations,
- Migration and refugee centers,
- Other service or advocacy organizations.

The SMA will continue to coordinate with the LWC Occupational Safety and Health Administration Consultation (OSHA Consultation) section to provide outreach and safety information and training to agricultural employers and employees. Some of the training may be provided either on the job site or in the local area. Safety information and resources will be provided to partners and organizations to hand out to their agricultural clients. LWC will continue to disseminate safety and employment related information through the agricultural network.

B. REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT

During the development of the Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP) information and suggestions were solicited through survey of information from the MET, Inc., Delta Community College DeltaLinc HEP, and the Louisiana Department of Education (DOE) MEP. All required partners, including NFJP and agricultural state agencies were notified of the 2022 AOP modifications and of the review and public comments requirements. No comments were received.

C. DATA ASSESSMENT

Program Years (PY2015 – PY2018) were analyzed to determine whether LWC met its goals in the provision of quantitatively proportionate and qualitatively equivalent level of services to MSFWs compared to the whole population of LWC customers. LWC provided services to an average of 173 MSFWs each year. In PY2015, LWC met all Equity Ratio Indicators. In PY2016, LWC met three (3) of the five (5) Equity Ratio Indicators. In PY2017 and PY2018, LWC met five (5) of the five (5) Equity Ratio Indicators.

Program Years (PY2018– PY2021) were analyzed to determine whether LWC met its goals in the provision of quantitatively proportionate and qualitatively equivalent level of services to MSFWs compared to the whole population of LWC customers. LWC met all Equity Ratio Indicators in 2018, 2019, 2020. In PY2021, LWC met three (3) of the five (5) Equity Ratio Indicators. The two equity ratio indicators not met was due to coding changes made to the PIRL system and have been corrected.

Louisiana American Job Center staff treat any job seeker who is currently working in an agricultural field, who could be identified as an MSFW as if they are. At the present time the SMA will continue to train and encourage American Job Center staff to identify and record services to MSFWs.

The poor use of the ES Complaint System and reporting of complaints has been corrected. When a complaint arises, the issue is often resolved in-house or the complainant is referred to an organization that can assist in the complaint. Further staff training and promotion of the use of the ES Complaint System as described in Outreach Activities (2)(B) have improved and alleviated any weaknesses in these two areas.

D. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Since the previous Agricultural Outreach Plan identification and reporting of services provided to MSFWs has experienced qualitative and quantitative improvement. This is due to the SMA collecting collecting and reviewing monthly/quarterly data from various sources including, but not limited to HiRE. Use of the ES Complaint System and reporting of complaints should continue to improve for the next few years.

Upon reviewing and implementing the AOP, the SWA continues to face some challenges at the local level. The SWA continues to reinforce, and provides specific training to the local staff in reference to the identification, registration, and follow up of MSFWs. These challenges can be attribute to new staff hires and seasoned staff transferring out of the SWA.

E. STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE

The State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved the 2022 Agricultural Outreach Plan.

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 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.	Yes

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)	56.0%	56.0%	56.0%	56.0%

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	58.0%	57.0%	58.0%	57.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000
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

Effective July 1, 2016, the Louisiana Community and Technical College (LCTCS), WorkReady U (WRU) aligned the adult education content standards with the Louisiana College and Career Readiness Standards and the state-mandated, Academic Standards + Grade Level Expectations curriculum for public schools under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended [20 U.S.C. 6311 (b)(1)] through the adoption and implementation of the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) for Adult Education. The standards alignment provides rigorous content standards that specify what learners should know and be able to do in the areas of reading and language arts, mathematics, and English language acquisition and also takes into consideration alignment with other standards, including high school equivalency, enrollment in non-remedial, for-credit courses in postsecondary educational institutions, and occupational and industry skill standards and certifications widely used and recognized by business and industry.

B. LOCAL ACTIVITIES

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES (SECTION 203 OF WIOA)

The Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS), WorkReady U (WRU), is responsible for administering Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funds to eligible providers and providing program/performance oversight to grantees. As the administrative/fiscal agency, LCTCS/WRU conducts a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) Grant Application process to provide funding to eligible local entities for the provision of adult education services as described in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014: Title II: Common Elements under Distribution of Funds. The RFP is the statewide procurement method through which WRU identifies, assesses, and awards multi-year grants to eligible providers throughout the state for the delivery of adult education services that include academic instruction and educational services to eligible individuals. An eligible individual, defined in WIOA, Title II, is an individual who: has attained 16 years of age; is not enrolled or

required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law; 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 with skills below the postsecondary level in need of services that increase the individual's ability to:

- Read, write and speak 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.

The full and open competition is consistent with the standards of 34 CFR Part 463 Subpart C. All activities funded under WIOA are authorized, approved, and administered by the LCTCS, WorkReady U. WorkReady U ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants. The grant competition is publicized through a variety of print and electronic media throughout the state. Information is shared through the LCTCS communications office via posting on the LCTCS website and other means of available communication.

LCTCS uses the same application process for all eligible providers for sections 225, 231, and/or 243. This ensures that all applications are evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria. LCTCS ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for grants. See Title I, Common Elements, (III.b.5.B.ii) Direct and Equitable Access.

As required in Section 427 of GEPA, each applicant provides a description of the agency's process to ensure equitable access to and participation in the WIOA Title II adult education program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. LCTCS has approved state policies that provide for equal opportunity for all qualified persons without regard to disability in the recruitment of, admission to, accessibility to, participation in, treatment in, or employment in the programs and activities operated and sponsored by the Louisiana Community and Technical College System.

WIOA, Title II defines an eligible provider as an organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals and may include:

- A local education agency;
- A community-based or faith-based organization;
- A volunteer literacy organization;
- An institution of higher education;
- A public or private nonprofit agency;
- A library;
- A public housing authority;
- A nonprofit institution with the ability to provide adult education and literacy services;
- A consortium or coalition of agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described above; or
- A partnership between an employer and an entity described above.

All applications received are evaluated using the 13 considerations in WIOA section 231(e). The evaluation of each grant application involves an intense assessment of the ability of the eligible

provider to comply with the expectations and statutes described within the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act inclusive of (a) meeting the literacy needs of the area and (b) demonstrating past effectiveness in improving the literacy of eligible individuals, especially those individuals who have low levels of literacy, participants with disabilities; refugees, dislocated youth and foster care youth, individuals with low literacy skills, displaced homemakers, ex-offenders, individuals with cultural barriers and individuals with a variety of barriers to employment. The grant cycle is a minimum of four years, and all providers are subject to the same funding cycle: Year One - July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022; Year Two - July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023; Year Three - July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024, and Year Four - July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. Eligible providers apply to receive adult education funding for the delivery of any of the following adult education and literacy activities:

- Adult education;
- Literacy;
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities;
- English language and acquisition activities;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- Workforce preparation activities;
- Integrated education and training.

Federal Definitions and Allowable Services/Activities

In Louisiana, adult education consists of 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 and/or transition to postsecondary education and training and obtaining employment.

Literacy is defined as 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.

Workplace adult education and literacy activities are 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 through the improvement of literacy skills.

An English-language acquisition program is designed to help eligible individuals who are English-language learners achieve competence in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension of the English language leading to the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and transition to postsecondary education and training or employment.

Integrated education and training (IET) is a service approach that provides three components simultaneously, concurrently, and contextually: (1) adult education and literacy (2) workforce preparation activities, and (3) workforce training. The IET must be a part of a career pathway with a single set of learning objectives for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement which may be any one of the approved WIOA training services defined in section 134(c)(3)(D) of the Act.

The Louisiana Career Pathway model provides a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that align with the skill needs of industries in the region. The model prepares adults for success by organizing education, training, and other services to

support their particular needs including: counseling to accomplish goals; educational training and workforce preparation that is offered simultaneously, concurrently, and contextually within a specific occupation or occupational cluster; opportunity for attaining a recognized high school equivalency credential; and entrance or advancement within a specific occupation or occupational cluster. Integrated education and training services of sufficient quality and intensity will be designed based on the most rigorous research available and successful applicants are required to provide the following services/activities:

- a minimum of two career pathway programs that provide the opportunity for students to earn college credit;
- basic skills services that are concurrently integrated and contextualized with the workforce training program of study and aligned with a single set of learning objectives and specific integrated activities;
- basic skills, workforce preparation activities, workforce training, and other services designed to accelerate the educational and career advancement of participants to the extent practicable;
- a logical progression/sequence of courses that are applicable to the target credential;
- the attainment of industry-based and/or academic credentials;
- partnerships with business and industry as well as regional economic development partners in order to meet both current and future sector needs; and
- multiple entry and exit points, flexible scheduling, alternative class times and locations, stackable and portable credentials and/or credit hours, and the innovative use of technology customized for the needs of adults.

Each funded program must demonstrate a commitment to provide appropriate wrap-around support services to students enrolled in the IET program. These services will include but are not limited to tutoring or other academic supports, college navigation support, and career planning.

Integrated English literacy and civics education (IELCE) refers to education services provided to English-language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enables them to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. 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. See Title II – Adult Education and Literacy Programs (d) Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program.

Workforce-preparation activities include 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 a successful transition into postsecondary education, training, and/or employment.

Federal funds may be used to increase the level of non-federal funds that would be available in the absence of federal funds and, in no case, replace those non-federal funds. Federal funds must not be used for the purpose of supplanting, only for supplementing.

Louisiana is focused on performance to ensure that funds are used effectively to serve customers and produce positive results. WRU uses a funding formula for state/federal adult education funds. The formula is designed to consider the scope of services provided in the local program and performance as compared to established benchmarks as a basis for an increase or decrease in funds. Performance benchmarks and performance standards are established with

the expectation that grantees will maintain or exceed performance standards through effective service delivery and innovation.

Evaluating the RFP

The assessment of each grant application involves 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. Additionally, an eligible provider must **demonstrate program effectiveness** by providing performance data on its record of improving the skills of eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy, in the content domains of reading, writing, mathematics, English language acquisition, and other subject areas relevant to the services described in WIOA §463.24. An eligible provider must also provide information regarding its outcomes for participants related to employment, attainment of secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and transition to postsecondary education and training. There are two ways an eligible provider may meet the requirements:

- An applicant that has been previously funded under AEFLA, under WIOA, must submit performance data required under Section 116 to demonstrate past effectiveness.
- An applicant that has not been previously funded under AEFLA, under WIOA, must provide performance data to demonstrate its past effectiveness in serving basic skills deficient eligible individuals, including evidence of its success in achieving outcomes.

Applicants applying as a consortium must submit demonstrated effectiveness data for each member of the consortium to determine if each member is an eligible provider of demonstrated effectiveness.

Application review consists of a multi-tier process: (1) applications are pre-screen for all required components, including performance data to demonstrate effectiveness in serving eligible individuals; (2) reviewers are comprised of at least one WRU state staff, representative(s) from core partner entities, and internal/external reader(s) with adult education experience; and (3) local workforce development boards (LWDBs) review the application to determine whether the activities in the application are consistent with and align to the approved local plan and provide recommendations to promote further alignment when applicable in accordance with Section 107(d)(11)(B)(i)(I, II) of WIOA and 34 CFR §463.21(b)(1, 2). Training and technical assistance are provided to each reviewer by the WRU staff. Each reviewer receives the local application, access to the local and regional workforce development plan, and a scoring rubric to evaluate the applications.

All applications are scored based on the applicant's ability to comply with the expectations and statutes described within the thirteen (13) federal evaluation factors required under WIOA and described in Title II, Sec. 231 (e) listed below:

1. The ability of the eligible provider to meet the literacy and English-language needs identified for the population in the area, including individuals who have low levels of literacy skills or who are English-language learners. Particular emphasis is given to the provider's ability to provide targeted service to individuals with barriers to employment.
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 instructional practices that include the essential components of reading instruction. Attention is given to the extent to which the eligible provider incorporates rigorous research for attaining substantial learning gains in the grant proposal and the development of the literacy program itself.
6. The extent to which the eligible provider's program is based on intense research, best practices, and effective educational practice.
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 is 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 a minimum, a post-secondary degree and participate in the WorkReady U instructor-certification program within one year of employment. 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 have the means to establish, meaningful partnerships with elementary schools and secondary schools, post-secondary educational institutions, institutions of higher education, local workforce investment boards, One-Stop Centers, job training programs and social service agencies, business, industry, labor organizations, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and intermediaries for the development of career pathways.
11. The flexibility of program schedules offered by the eligible provider, including coordination (when available) with federal, state, and local support services such as childcare, transportation, mental health services, and career planning.
12. The eligible provider's management information system; the expectation will be that the eligible providers will use the state-administered designated Management Information System (MIS) 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.

Special Rule

LCTCS 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.

C. CORRECTIONS EDUCATION AND OTHER EDUCATION OF INSTITUTIONALIZED INDIVIDUALS

From funds made available under Section 222(a)(1), LCTCS, WorkReady U conducts a full and open competition specifically for Corrections Education funding (Section 225) that is consistent with the standards of 34 CFR Part 463 Subpart C. All activities funded under WIOA are authorized, approved, and administered by the LCTCS, WorkReady U. Applicants must establish

that Section 225 funds are utilized to serve criminal offenders in a correctional institution as defined in WIOA as any prison, jail, reformatory, work farm, detention center, halfway house, community-based rehabilitation center, or any other similar institution designed for the confinement or rehabilitation of criminal offenders.

WorkReady U ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants. See Title I, Common Elements, (III.b.5.B.ii) Direct and Equitable Access. The grant competition is publicized through a variety of print and electronic media throughout the state. Information is shared through the LCTCS communications office via posting on the LCTCS website and other means of available communication.

LCTCS uses the same application process for all eligible providers for sections 225, 231, and/or 243. This ensures that all applications are evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria. LCTCS ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for grants. See Title I, Common Elements, (III.b.5.B.ii) Direct and Equitable Access.

As required in Section 427 of GEPA, each applicant provides a description of the agency's process to ensure equitable access to and participation in, the WIOA, Title II adult education program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. LCTCS has approved state policies that provide for equal opportunity for all qualified persons without regard to disability in the recruitment of, admission to, accessibility to, participation in, treatment in, or employment in the programs and activities operated and sponsored by the Louisiana Community and Technical College System.

The review of proposals includes rating responses to the 13 considerations in Title II of WIOA in addition to the description of how programs will design academic programs to support the following services/activities:

1. Adult education and literacy activities;
   See VI.b – Local Activities, Federal Definitions, and Allowable Services/Activities.

2. Special education;
   Funded programs must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and partner with mandatory partners such as Louisiana Rehabilitation Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, and secondary partners, such as the Louisiana Department of Education to eliminate barriers to education and/or employment.

3. Secondary school credit;
   Title II resides under the jurisdiction of LCTCS while secondary school credit falls under the jurisdiction of the Louisiana Department of Education. LCTCS partners with the Louisiana Department of Education and the Louisiana Office of Juvenile Justice (OJJ) to ensure that all eligible students receive Title II educational services. Funded programs must provide instructional services/activities that will prepare students to earn a high school equivalency credential.

4. Integrated education and training;

5. Career pathways;

6. Concurrent enrollment;
   See VI.b – Local Activities, Federal Definitions, and Allowable Services/Activities

7. Peer tutoring; and
   Funded programs provide training for specified offenders to serve as peer tutors in adult education and career and technical education (CTE) classes.

8. Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post-release services with the goal of reducing recidivism. Allowable activities to assist with reducing recidivism may include:

(a) providing educational counseling and/or case management; (b) developing plans for post-release education program participation; (c) assisting students in identifying and applying for participation in post-release programs; and/or (d) performing direct outreach to community-based program providers on behalf of re-entering students.

Funds may not be used for the cost of participation in post-release programs or services.

LCTCS will use, at minimum, 82.5 percent of the grant funds to award grants and contracts under section 231. No more than 20 percent of that amount shall be available to carry out section 225, Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals.

Through the RFP procurement process for Section 225 funding, described in the Common Elements: Distribution of Funds, the successful applicants must show demonstrated program effectiveness in serving eligible individuals and the ability to provide services that support correctional education activities as defined in WIOA.

Programs that do not meet established minimum standards in the first year are expected to demonstrate and document substantial improvement toward meeting those standards. Using the approved statewide data management system, monitoring results, and other documentation, WRU determines and applies requirements for program improvement in the subsequent grant cycles. Minimum standards are determined initially based on data collected during the first year and will be raised with each new grant cycle. Programs that do not demonstrate and document substantial improvements during each year of the multi-year grant cycle may not be eligible to receive funding in subsequent years of the cycle.

Each eligible provider that receives funds provided 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.

D. INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM

WorkReady U will establish programs under Section 243 of WIOA that offer Integrated English literacy and civics education programs through the competitive, multi-year request for proposal process specified for integrated literacy and civics education funds using the process described in the Common Elements: Distribution of Funds; Title II. Through the RFP procurement process, the successful applicants must demonstrate the ability to provide integration and alignment of services that support the following literacy and English language acquisition activities:

- **Civics** education instruction that assists eligible students to become active and informed parents, workers, and community members;
- **Rights and Responsibilities of citizenship;**
- **Integrated education and training** that provides training opportunities to eligible individuals seeking workforce training for the workplace in combination with English Literacy instruction; and
- **Advanced English literacy** instruction that provides training opportunities to eligible individuals seeking workforce training, including professionals with degrees and/or credentials from outside the United States. State-approved English Language Proficiency Standards will be utilized for literacy instruction.

WorkReady U will provide available funds under Section 211(a)(2)(b) for the delivery of integrated English literacy and civics education in combination with integrated education and training activities to adults seeking workforce training.

The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program engages students in purposeful use of the language. The skills provided through this funding source assist students in obtaining citizenship, achieving basic life skills needed to enhance employment, and functioning effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States.

Each funded program under this section shall be designed to provide the following services.

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.

English language learners seeking English language proficiency and civics education, but not seeking workforce training, should not be excluded or discouraged from participation in the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program.

In the evaluation of applications, WorkReady U considers if the provider has demonstrated the need for IELCE services in a designated service delivery area. Applications must include data that demonstrates the need for IELCE services in their respective areas of the state. Data sources that may be cited are the US Census Bureau, reports from the Office of Immigration Services, documentation of prior effectiveness in the delivery of this type of service, or other data.

LCTCS' full and open competition is consistent with the standards of 34 CFR Subpart C. All eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants. See Title I, Common Elements, (III.b.5.B.ii) Direct and Equitable Access. The grant competition information is shared through the LCTCS communications office via posting on the LCTCS website and other means of available communication. LCTCS uses the same application process for all eligible providers for sections 225, 231, and/or 243. This ensures that all applications are evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria.

As required in Section 427 of GEPA, each applicant must provide a description of the agency's process to ensure equitable access to and participation in, the WIOA Title II adult education program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. LCTCS has approved state policies that provide for equal opportunity for all qualified persons without regard to disability in the recruitment of, admission to, accessibility to, participation in, treatment in, or employment in the programs and activities operated and sponsored by the Louisiana Community and Technical College System.

LCTCS uses the 13 considerations specified in section 243 of WIOA to fund eligible providers by incorporating each of the considerations into the narrative portion of the application. Successful applicants must provide a narrative that demonstrates the program design and service delivery model to deliver each consideration.

Funds are used to support the operational expenses of the local IELCE programs, including teacher salaries and benefits, classroom supplies, textbooks, and other AEFLA allowable expenditures, to carry out instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation all in combination with integrated education and training. LCTCS issues guidance and technical assistance to funded providers to assist in ensuring that all required components as set forth in 34 CFR Part 463 Subpart G of the regulations are included in the program's design.

The term "integrated English literacy and civics education" (IELCE) means education 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. 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.

IELCE funded applicants must deliver services in combination with integrated education and training activities by: (1) using funds provided under section 243 to support integrated education and training activities as cited in subpart D; or (2) co-enrolling participants in integrated education and training as described in subpart D that is provided within the local or regional workforce development area from sources other than section 243.

English language learners seeking English language proficiency and civics education, but not seeking workforce training, should not be excluded or discouraged from participation in the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program.

The program design for each funded IELCE provider must demonstrate the capability to: (1) deliver education services/activities under WIOA 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; (2) provide instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation. The Section 243 funds are used in combination with integrated education and training.

Additionally, the IELCE program is designed with the purpose of improving productivity and obtaining gainful employment through the improvement of skills of non-native English learners. Working with employers throughout their community, integrating services/activities with the local workforce development system, programs identify the in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

LCTCS uses the same application process for all eligible providers for sections 225, 231, and/or 243. This ensures that all applications are evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria. LCTCS ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for grants. See Title I, Common Elements, (III.b.5.B.ii) Direct and Equitable Access.

LCTCS' full and open competition is consistent with the standards of 34 CFR Subpart C. All eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants. The grant competition is publicized through a variety of print and electronic media throughout the state. Information is shared through the LCTCS communications office via posting on the LCTCS website and other means of available communication. LCTCS adheres to all State and Louisiana WIOA Combined Plan laws regarding awarding grant funds and the expenditure of public funds. During the initial period of the grant submission process, any eligible agency that contacts LCTCS with an interest in participating is provided the information needed.

LCTCS uses the 13 considerations specified in section 243 of WIOA to fund eligible providers by incorporating each of the considerations into the narrative portion of the application. Successful applicants must provide a narrative that demonstrates the program design and service delivery model to deliver each consideration.

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

From funds made available under section 223, LCTCS, WorkReady U will provide statewide leadership activities through the following services/activities.

Aligning Activities with Core Programs and One-Stop Partners
WorkReady U will work with core programs and one-stop partners to facilitate new methods of service delivery, increase secondary credential attainment opportunities, expand instructional content and delivery techniques to include college and career readiness standards, leverage technology to enhance educational opportunities, and transition from career pathway pilot initiatives to Integrated Education and Training (IET) opportunities through Louisiana Career Pathways.

High-Quality Professional Development Programs
LCTCS, WorkReady U will provide varied professional development opportunities through:

1. Direct WRU professional development opportunities;
2. Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE) Conference; and
3. Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS) Conference; and
4. Louisiana Association for Public, Community, and Adult Education (LAPCAE) Conference.

WorkReady U is committed to providing high-quality professional development opportunities by facilitating training opportunities for local program instructors, administrators, and support staff. Each year's focus areas will arise from national trends and challenges, state goals, and program/partner needs to better prepare students, staff, partners, and programming for the new landscape in adult education.

Targeted training based upon needs assessments is beneficial to an individual's professional growth, a program's improvement, and core partner relationships. WRU prefers a three-pronged approach to PD in which:

- participants are provided with the material beforehand,
- training occurs, and then
- there is follow-up after the training in the form of
    - Communities of Practice, or
    - Training of Trainers.

Participant evaluations are collected for all professional development activities. Participants respond to items regarding:

- the training as a whole
- objectives
- materials
- environment
- presentation
- the immediate application in
    - classrooms
    - programs
    - workforce

State staff review this information to plan for future training and potential technical assistance. The team looks at:

- cost-effectiveness;
- return on investment;
- transferability of skills/knowledge; and
- benefit of students/clients from Professional Development outcomes.

WorkReady U supports both the LCTCS and LAPCAE (Louisiana Association for Public, Community, and Adult Education) annual conferences geared towards adult education in Louisiana. Professional development opportunities for instructors (full-time, part-time and/or volunteers), supervisors, partners, and employers consist of:

- development and implementation of technology applications, and/or distance education, including supporting the use of instructional technology;
- development and dissemination of curricula, including curricula incorporating the essential components of reading instruction for adult learners;
- development of contextualized curricula and effective models for integrated education, training and career pathways;
- development and implementation of a comprehensive model that assists in the transition from adult education to postsecondary education;
- integration of literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training, including promoting linkages with employers;
- activities to promote workplace adult education and literacy activities;
- identification of curriculum frameworks and aligning rigorous content standards that specify what adult learners should know and be able to do in the areas of reading and language arts, mathematics, and English language acquisition, taking into consideration the following:
    - College and Career Readiness Standards;
    - The current adult skills and literacy assessments used in the State;
    - The primary indicators of performance described in section 116 of WIOA;
    - Standards and academic requirements for enrollment in nonremedial, for-credit courses in postsecondary educational institutions or institutions of higher education supported by the State; and
    - The content of occupational and industry skill standards widely used by business and industry in the State;
- development and pilot of strategies geared towards improving teacher quality and retention; and
- development and implementation of programs and services to meet the needs of adult learners with learning disabilities or English language learners based on valid research.

Each conference committee collects evaluations from participants to:

- guide the direction and focus of the following year's event; and

- inform the state staff of underlying needs.

Technical Assistance
WorkReady U will use established techniques for providing technical assistance to local programs. The procedures included: performance target requirements, continued use of a risk assessment model, and continued data review. Program performance negotiations jointly analyzed individual program data and established baseline performance goals for the fiscal year. The risk assessment model will be used to identify programs with low-performance data and guide the State in providing targeted technical assistance. Enhanced database dashboards are used to assist programs in tracking their progress in meeting the benchmarks and standards. Local programs are ranked in the state by benchmarks, pre-post testing, and recruiting to help both WRU and local program staff identify strengths, areas for improvement, technical assistance opportunities, and professional development needs. State Leadership funds will be used to enhance the web-based data collection/management system that is used by all federally funded adult education programs.

Technical assistance activities focus on:

1. aligning adult education and literacy activities with core partners and program services
2. onboarding new instructors, administrators, and support staff on the vision and mission of WorkReady U and the goals of adult education
3. improving the overall service delivery to students, including –
    a. online instructor courses
    b. teacher observation/evaluation training
    c. teacher-leader cohorts working with national experts to capture research-based best practices for instruction
    d. supervisor training
    e. support staff (including data entry and intake/orientation employees)
4. improving adult education and literacy activities, with regard to—
    a. the development and dissemination of instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous or scientifically valid research available and appropriate, in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition programs, distance education, and staff training;
    b. strengthening partnership at the local level to provide access to employment, education, and training services; and
    c. effective uses of technology to improve system efficiencies
5. training on the monitoring and evaluation of program quality and adult education and literacy activities
6. certification and recertification on the administration of NRS approved assessments adopted in the WRU Assessment Policy guide
7. training on the WRU Recipient Grant Management Handbook
8. collecting and disseminating best practices both at onsite meetings and virtually via –
    a. online forums/discussion boards

b. virtual meetings/calls

Monitoring and Evaluation
LCTCS operates a statewide compliance team that conducts an analysis of data and program performance through monthly data submissions and desk reviews. Based upon desk reviews, state staff request local data documentation according to a risk assessment determination. Follow-up onsite visits are conducted when warranted.

WorkReady U's compliance team uses a risk-assessment model that incorporates six vital modules -- data, recruitment/retention, classroom activities, records/reports, partnerships, and finance -- in an effort to model the USDE/OCTAE instrument and place emphasis on what is valued and consistent with the WRU mission. Onsite program visits include an examination of student files, student attendance records, and program data submitted through the statewide data management system. Monitoring reports are prepared after each onsite monitoring visit. Sites that are non-compliant/had findings receive recommendations for program improvements. Programs are given 30 days to prepare and submit a written plan of action describing the plan of resolution. WRU staff members are assigned to ensure all plans are adhered to and non-compliance addressed in a detailed follow-up process to ensure that a resolution has been determined and put into effect. Monitoring and evaluation outcomes are always tied to technical assistance efforts with local programs.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT PERMISSIBLE STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA, IF APPLICABLE

From funds made available under section 223, LCTCS, WorkReady U will provide permissible statewide leadership activities through the following services/activities.

1. Provide grants to local programs to scale innovative practices in distance education and the use of instructional technology.
2. Develop and disseminate curricula, including curricula incorporating the essential components of reading instruction, that meet the following criteria:
    a. incorporation of workforce preparation standards;
    b. alignment with College and Career Readiness Standards;
    c. incorporation of digital literacy standards and activities;
    d. designed to be delivered in face-to-face, hybrid, and distance classroom settings; and
    e. developed to be an Open Educational Resource (OER) that is shareable across the WorkReady U network.
3. Operate a statewide framework for the development, growth, and implementation of models for integrated education and training that are aligned with local and regional workforce development plans.

F. ASSESSING QUALITY

Local providers are accountable to LCTCS, WorkReady U to meet the standards of quality for administration and instruction as outlined by WorkReady U. Program effectiveness, services, and activities of local recipients of funds are assessed through a systematic evaluation of local programs. Performance outcomes for each provider must meet or exceed the established levels of performance for each core measure each fiscal year to ensure the highest quality service to adult learners who participate in WorkReady U programs. WRU assesses the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities through data reviews and on-site program reviews.

Performance Accountability assesses the effectiveness of grantees in achieving continuous improvement of adult education and literacy activities. The performance outcome measures shall consist of the following core indicators:

1. Measurable Skills Gains (MSGs);
2. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
3. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;
4. The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
5. The percentage of program participants who obtain either a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year of exit from the program;
6. 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 towards such a credential or employment; and
7. The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers established pursuant to clause (iv).

Setting Performance Targets
Every two years, Louisiana negotiates proposed target percentages for each of the core indicators of performance with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE). Each local eligible program is responsible for meeting or exceeding the negotiated performance targets. Each program shall analyze progress towards meeting the targets on an ongoing basis. Each program must utilize Louisiana-approved standardized assessments that provide the framework needed to measure program effectiveness.

Data Collection and Analysis
Local programs are required to collect data on the program's performance and are required to analyze it to determine progress towards meeting the targets and areas of improvement. Analysis should include a review of academic, employment, secondary credential, and postsecondary measures. Local programs must assure that the National Reporting System of Adult Education data quality standards are met.

Program Evaluation
The State evaluates the effectiveness of the adult education and literacy activities, based on the core performance measures, through activities and processes listed below. Strategies, processes, and barriers to attaining the performance levels are reviewed, as well as qualitative and quantitative data. The annual evaluation addresses the extent to which local providers implement the activities specified in Sections 225, 231, and 243 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

The purpose of these activities, strategies, and processes is to assess the effectiveness of the State to achieve continuous improvement of adult education and literacy activities and to optimize the return on investment of Federal funds in adult education and literacy activities. The results of the evaluation will provide relevant information to determine the achievement of levels of performance for each of the core indicators for the local providers.

a. Data Collection. The state-approved Management Information System (MIS) shall be used by all eligible entities receiving funds under this title. Providers shall enter data monthly during a program year. Data will be reviewed for compliance with performance measures and

expectations for the delivery of services as approved in the individual application. LCTCS and Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) will data match placement/wage data for students entered in the state-approved MIS.

LCTCS has instituted a comprehensive data system, Enterprise Resource Planning System (ERP), for all colleges. The ERP system will provide the capability to match data from disparate sources and produce analytical and actionable information to drive programmatic decisions.

b. Review Process.

Desk Monitoring: Desk monitoring is conducted once a year, at a minimum, by WRU staff. Desk monitoring relies primarily on data that is collected and reported by local programs in the statewide approved data management system. Using a structured format, local programs provide monthly data to the state office where state staff can review the data to guide program review activities, inform technical assistance, identify risk-assessment areas, and promote program improvement. The system can produce a series of reports that allow WRU staff to examine demographic, assessment, and academic information.

Programmatic/Fiscal Onsite Monitoring: WRU staff conduct formal monitoring visits of funded programs on a prescribed schedule each year. Programs are identified for onsite monitoring through a comprehensive risk analysis based on the following factors: (1) desk monitoring; (2) data quality and program expenditures; (3) consistent low performance on core indicators in several categories; (4) prospective non-compliance with grant requirements identified through review of programmatic and fiscal reports, or ongoing communications with the program; (4) unresolved audit findings; (5) ongoing lack of progress in resolving required actions from prior monitoring visit; (6) significant staff turnover in the program; and (7) recent or newly established programs.

The goals for State onsite monitoring visits are to (1) ensure that implementation of the program service/activities as outlined in the RFP have been fully executed; (2) ensure that programs meet AEFLA requirements; (3) improve the quality of federally-funded activities; (4) provide assistance identifying and resolving accountability problems; and (5) ensure the accuracy, validity, and reliability of data collection and data reporting as well as policies and procedures for program accountability.

Corrective Action Plan
Upon completion of the review, a formal written report will be provided to the program administrator. If a program fails to meet performance goals or other state and/or federal programmatic requirements, a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) will be required to outline the course of action for program improvement. The local program will be given a period of 30 days to respond in writing to the findings. WRU provides technical assistance throughout the corrective process and by the end of a designated time frame, programs should be able to correct the identified issues, end their respective CAP and improve the quality of the program. WRU provides ongoing technical assistance, professional development, and other support until the required steps of the plans are completed.

Programs that fail to comply with grant requirements and regulations may not be eligible to receive funding in subsequent years of the cycle and/or funds may be terminated.

Evaluation of Professional Development
WorkReady U will assess the quality and effectiveness of its professional development activities through the feedback of its local programs (instructors, administrators, and support staff). Participant evaluations will be collected for all professional development activities. Participants will respond to items regarding:

- the training as a whole

    - objectives
    - materials
    - environment
    - presentation
- the immediate application in
    - classrooms
    - programs
    - workforce

State staff will review this information to plan for future training and potential technical assistance. The team will assess all professional development activities for:

- cost-effectiveness;
- return on investment;
- transferability of skills/knowledge; and
- the benefit of students/clients from Professional Development 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 certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan;	Yes
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	Louisiana Community and Technical College System
PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	**Enter information in this column**
First Name	Erin
Last Name	Landry
Title	Executive Director of Adult Education
Email	erinlandry@lctcs.edu

SECTION 427 OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA)

As required in Section 427 of GEPA, each applicant provided a description of the agency's process to ensure equitable access to and participation in the WIOA Title II adult education program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. LCTCS has approved state policies that provide for equal opportunity for all qualified persons without regard to disability in the recruitment of, admission to, accessibility to, participation in, treatment in, or employment in the programs and activities operated and sponsored by the Louisiana Community and Technical College System.

At the state level, all expended AEFLA funds for leadership activities, including professional development and technical assistance, are inclusive of GEPA requirements. The State takes into account measures for ensuring equal access, providing accommodations, including inclusive instructional strategies, and allowing for multiple modes of communication and training. Adherence to GEPA is monitored on a regular basis through technical assistance visits and/or on-site visits. Monitoring of GEPA includes, but is not limited to, reviews of enrollment data, intake processes, assessment practices, classroom instruction, hiring practices, and personnel training. Professional development opportunities ensure that faculty and staff of AEFLA-funded programs are exposed to materials and processes that align with GEPA. Because of these efforts at the State, all faculty and staff are aware of and able to implement the necessary supports for those with special needs whether they be students or program personnel.

LCTCS approved state policies are mandates for the LCTCS state office and all programs and activities funded by LCTCS, inclusive of WIOA Title II grantees.

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)	40.2%	31.0%	40.3%	31.2%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	37.2%	31.0%	37.3%	31.2%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$3510	$3100	$3515	$3150
Credential Attainment Rate	30.2%	21.5%	30.3%	22.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	47.2%	42.5%	47.3%	43.0%
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 Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC), which is the State Rehabilitation Council, met with Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) quarterly as a part of the council meeting. During these meetings, LRS provided quarterly updates, and LRC provided input and recommendations to LRS. The LRC incorporates public forums, consumer/counselor interviews, etc., to ensure the services provided by LRS meet the needs of Louisiana's citizens with disabilities. The LRC uses a committee structure to provide focused review and comment to LRS. These committees are: Executive, Eligibility and Planning, Employment, and Transition. Most of the interaction in these committees include the exchange information to achieve greater clarity and understanding. While the detail work is done in the committee structure, all comments and recommendations received by LRS are made from the full LRC.

The following is a list of activities and accomplishments of LRC for the period from July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021:

- The LRC produced the FFY 2019-2020 Annual Report on the status of the vocational rehabilitation program operated within the state.
- LRS staff made numerous presentations to Council for education of programs and services offered.
- The LRC advised and assisted LRS with the VR Services portion of the Combined State Plan.
- Council members received an in-depth report from the LRS Director on federal, state, and departmental issues of interest. LRC members engaged with the LRS Director to ask questions, provide input, discuss challenges, and identify opportunities.
- LRC provided feedback and input regarding proposed changes to the LRS Technical Assistance and Guidance Manual.
- The Louisiana Workforce Commission webpage continues to be utilized to distribute information about Council activities to include quarterly meeting locations and public forums.
- LRC ensured public comments were welcomed and encouraged by including a public comment period on the agenda at all meetings.
- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) consumers are invited to speak to the Council to discuss their experiences regarding VR service provision. The LRC provided a forum allowing consumers and the public the opportunity to openly discuss LRS services and offer suggestions for improved service delivery. The Council provided feedback to LRS on these ideas and concerns.
- The Executive Committee of the LRC continued recruitment of new members, filling seats vacated by outgoing members.

- LRC educated State Legislators during the 2020 Legislative Session on the VR program and the services that benefit the State of Louisiana and its citizens with disabilities.
- LRC provided feedback and input regarding the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment.
- LRC reviewed copies of due process hearing decisions.

LRC members are active with other boards and groups statewide that include, but are not limited to, the Statewide Independent Living Council, Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs, Developmental Disabilities Council, Workforce Investment Council, Blind Vendor Trust Fund Advisory Board, Brain Injury Association of Louisiana, Advocacy Center of Louisiana, Metropolitan Human Services District and Governor's State as a Model Employer Task Force.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

The following is a summary of the input and recommendations made from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. Recommendations are transmitted to LRS both verbally at LRC meetings and in writing throughout the year by committee reports and the LRC minutes.

LRS appreciates the input, partnership, and ongoing dialogue with LRC throughout the year, and will continue to provide updates to LRC on progress made toward implementation of recommendations.

LRC Input: The LRC commends the collaboration LRS has demonstrated with providers/partners and the improvement of service delivery as evident in the state plan materials and policies in a number of areas benefiting Louisiana citizens with disabilities.

Recommendation: The LRC recommended that LRS continue to increase and improve services for transition students; especially Pre-Employment Transition Services.

Response: LRS accepted the recommendation. Counselors continue to attend Transition fairs, IEP meetings and other events at the schools throughout the state and provide information about the benefits of Pre-Employment Transition Services. Additionally, informative Pre-Employment Transition Services flyers and booklets were distributed to entities and students throughout the state including school boards, charter schools, and other Local Education Associations (LEAs).

Recommendation: The LRC suggested that LRS improve vocational exploration for adults with disabilities to include work-based evaluations and learning experiences.

Response: LRS staff and LRC members are collaborating together to research what vocational exploration services are provided by other states and how successful the services are to individuals with disabilities.

Recommendation: LRC recommended that LRS continue to work on improving employer awareness of Louisiana Rehabilitation Services and the services that LRS can provide to individuals with disabilities.

Response: LRS accepted the recommendation. Through collaboration with the LRS Rehabilitation Employment Development Specialists (REDS) and Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP's) throughout the state, LRS continues to develop strong relationships with local businesses.

3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

LRS has not rejected any of the Council'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;

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services is requesting approval for a waiver of statewideness in accordance with 34 CFR Section 361.26 for the following Third Party Cooperative Arrangements:

LRS has fourteen (14) Third Party Cooperative Arrangements (TPCA's) established with the following school districts and charter schools: Bossier, DeSoto, Evangeline, Franklin, Grant, Livingston, Natchitoches, Sci Academy, Livingston Collegiate, GW Carver, Collegiate Baton Rouge, New Harmony, Educators for Quality Alternatives, and Rosenwald Collegiate. Transition Specialists are funded through these arrangements to provide the required Pre-Employment Services to students with disabilities within their school or school district.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

All Vocational Rehabilitation services provided under this waiver are specified in the Third-Party Cooperative Arrangement contract. Services are not initiated until the consumer has been approved by the Rehabilitation Counselor for services and required services documented on either the Pre-Employment Transition Services application or an approved VR Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

3. REQUIREMENTS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN WILL APPLY TO THE SERVICES APPROVED UNDER THE WAIVER.

The Third Party Cooperative Arrangement (TPCA) Contractors assure that all State Plan requirements, including the potentially eligible Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) or Order of Selection will apply to all individuals receiving services through the agreement. Currently, all TPCAs are for the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services.

TPCAs are monitored monthly to determine that students meet the definition of a student with a disability and services provided meet the definition of Pre-Employment Transition Services required activities. TPCA contractors are required to provide monthly invoices and supporting documentation (Attendance and Progress Reports). TPCA contractors are monitored annually to insure they are meeting all contract deliverables.

Regional Managers, District Supervisors, Rehabilitation Counselors and Rehabilitation Counselor Associates assure VR service requirements are met according to the LRS Technical Assistance and Guidance Manual procedures written and updated by LRS State Office personnel and monitored by LRS Quality Assurance division.

C. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH AGENCIES NOT CARRYING OUT ACTIVITIES UNDER THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

1. FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS;

LRS has appropriate cooperative arrangements with, and uses the services and facilities of, various federal, state, and local agencies and programs. LRS coordinates with other agencies and programs to ensure individuals with disabilities receive appropriate services.

These agencies and programs include:

- Louisiana Department of Education, Division of Special Populations - Collaboration, outreach, responsibilities and means between LRS and LDOE for which every student with a disability is informed of, offered and/or provided VR services.

- Louisiana Department of Health, Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) – Collaboration and responsibilities of LRS and OBH who are jointly responsible for meeting the needs of consumers with mental illness, including youth with most significant disabilities, for whom supported employment is the most appropriate service.
- Department of Veteran Affairs – Collaboration to improve employment outcomes for disabled veterans through providing maximum benefits and services.
- Louisiana Workforce Commission, Unemployment Insurance – Collaboration to exchange wage data and import into AWARE.
- Louisiana Department of Health, Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) - Collaboration and responsibilities of LRS and OCDD who are jointly responsible for meeting the needs of consumers with intellectual/developmental disabilities, including youth with most significant disabilities, for whom supported employment is the most appropriate service.
- Governor's Office of Disability Affairs – The interagency agreement with GODA to support the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) ended December 31, 2021. LRS currently contracts with New Horizon's Independent Living Center to serve as the fiscal agent for the SILC to provide support for SILC operations, staff salary, travel, and activities of the SILC. New Horizons will serve as the fiscal agent until the SILC becomes a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.
- Social Security Administration – Collaboration to exchange data with SSA for Ticket to Work cost reimbursement purposes.
- Louisiana Workforce Commission, Employment Network, Partnership Plus Agreement – Collaboration to provide services and supports to assist individuals with disabilities in achieving long-term employment success.
- Central Louisiana Intertribal Vocational Rehabilitation Program (Title 121) – Collaboration and responsibilities of each party in providing VR services to tribal members with disabilities.
- United Houma Nation (Title 121) – Collaboration and responsibilities of each party in providing VR services to tribal members with disabilities.
- Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana (Title 121) – Collaboration and responsibilities of each party in providing VR services to tribal members with disabilities.
- U.S. Department of Labor State Wage Interchange System - Collaboration to exchange U.S. wage data and import into AWARE.

2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

LRS partners with the Louisiana Assistive Technology Access Network (LATAN) under the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 to provide consumer referrals to their Assistive Technology Market Place, peer-to-peer information sharing, and information and referral for other assistance such as the secured loan financing program that helps consumers obtain financing for assistive technology.

3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

At this time, Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) is not aware of any interagency cooperation on the utilization of services and facilities of the programs carried out by the

Undersecretary for Rural Development of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Please be advised, that if such agreements are initiated, LRS will amend this section.

4. NON-EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

At this time, Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) is not aware of any interagency collaboration with non-educational agencies serving out-of-school youth. However, LRS will be determining potential collaboration with the local American Job Centers who are serving out-of-school youth to assist with increasing successful employment outcomes within the state for youth with disabilities. LRS is not currently working with any juvenile justice youth programs serving out-of-school youth.

5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

The LRS Director serves on the State Use Council and attends scheduled meetings. Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) will be exploring the possibilities of collaborating with the State Use programs to utilize their services and facilities. If such agreements are initiated, LRS will amend this section. LRS does not currently have an active agreement with the State Use program.

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

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) continues to provide transition or post-school training services to youth with disabilities leaving the secondary education system and are pursuing employment opportunities in adult life. This is accomplished by reviewing, updating, and renewing the formal interagency agreement between LRS and the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) as needed based upon both agencies' policy and/or procedure changes; ongoing collaboration; joint development and evaluation of goals, and specialized training for both LRS and LDOE staff.

LRS policy requires the development and approval of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for eligible students who have official transition plans in place with the state education system. The IPEs are to be developed as early as possible in the transition process, but at the latest, by the time each Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) eligible student leaves the high school setting.

The formal interagency agreement provides for initial contact to be made with the transition student as early as age sixteen. This is accomplished by the development of criteria and timelines for an effective and efficient referral process; provision of orientation and information sessions for students and their families; and LRS counselors determining transition students' eligibility for VR services within the timelines established by policy.

For each student determined eligible for VR services, every effort is made to ensure those who are in an Order of Selection (OOS) Category currently being served by LRS leave the school system with an approved IPE in place that incorporates appropriate segments of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and projected employment needs, as applicable.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC)/LRS and the LDOE will establish and maintain communication with appropriate agency stakeholders regarding necessary collaborative efforts that improve the quality of transition services at the state, regional, and local levels. Parties will exchange records and information on mutually served students/consumers as needed in strict

compliance with all applicable policies governing consent and confidentiality including any and all polices established with individual Local Education Agencies (LEAs).

LWC/LRS and LDOE, in accordance with the terms of this agreement, recognize the need to provide Pre-Employment Transitions Services on a cooperative basis for students with disabilities who are applicants for, or recipients of, LRS services, attending LDOE secondary schools, who fall under the Order of Selection Group that is currently being served by LRS, as stated in the State Plan. The aforementioned students should only receive Pre-Employment Transition Services if they are potentially eligible for VR services, if the LDOE has received certification from LRS that the student has been determined eligible for Pre-Employment Transition Services, and students meet the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) definition of Student with Disability described as follows:

1. eligible for, and receiving, special education or related services under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1411 et seq.); or

2. individuals with a disability, for purposes of section 504; and

3. eligible or potentially eligible for VR services.

LWC/LRS and LDOE will collaborate to provide outreach information to all eligible students with disabilities, including but not limited to, a description of the vocational rehabilitation program, eligibility requirements, application procedures and the scope of services provided.

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;

LRS continues to renew and revise existing local Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's), as applicable, with all Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in Louisiana.

Consultation and technical assistance are provided to educational agencies in a variety of ways. VR Counselors attend IEP meetings to provide recommendations/guidance on adult services available to transitioning students, provide information relative to the VR process, and relay information regarding various training options available within the community. LRS has access to alternative means for meeting participation (such as video conferences and conference calls) through LWC and a ZOOM™ agreement, to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities.

The State Office Transition Program Coordinator provides consultation and technical support statewide to the field Transition VR Counselors in a variety of methods - to include information on webinars, conference calls, and video conferences - updates of best practice techniques gathered from Transition Core Team meetings and national Technical Assistance Centers such as NTACT:C, VRTAC-QE, VRTAC-QM, and AIVRTTAC . The Transition Program Coordinator also updates LRS' procedures for provision of transition services/activities and conducts training of staff statewide.

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 LRS Transition Program Coordinator works collaboratively with the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) Transition Coordinator in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities including VR services. Both agencies share responsibility to coordinate the provision of services, conduct outreach, and identify financial

responsibility as needed. The LDOE will assure that all students with disabilities and their families have knowledge of LRS policies and services including brochures and promotional information supplied by LRS. Information dissemination begins with the writing of the transition service page and continues through referral to LRS. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) also invite LRS representatives to:

- attend IEP meetings at the students' request, when a transition service page is being written for a student with a disability who may be eligible for and/or interested in VR services;
- facilitate appropriate orientation meetings among LRS staff, student and family members;
- provide time for LRS staff to meet with teachers, guidance counselors, and other appropriate personnel for such purposes as information sharing/gathering at both the individual and agency levels; and
- assist in the development, provision, and evaluation of interagency vocational assessment processes and functional vocational transition programs.

School Districts who have entered into Third-Party Cooperative Arrangements with LRS provide coordination and required Pre-Employment Transition Services activities to students with disabilities, as determined by LRS Rehabilitation Counselors to be eligible to receive Pre-Employment Transition Services, through a Transition Specialist funded by the contract and under the administrative supervision of LRS.

LRS has current Third-Party Cooperative Arrangements with Bossier, Grant, Franklin, Evangeline, Livingston, Desoto, and Natchitoches parishes, as well as with Collegiate Academies Charter Schools, Sci Academy, Livingston Collegiate, GW Carver, Collegiate Baton Rouge, New Harmony High, Educators for Quality Alternatives and Rosenwald Collegiate, in the implementation of third-party cooperative arrangements to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services.

C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;

Current LRS policy and guidelines address the allocation of 15% of State's VR federal allotment for the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services to high school students with disabilities between the ages of 16 - 21 who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services. The required Pre-Employment Transition Services include: workplace readiness training, job exploration counseling; work-based learning experiences; counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary education programs at institutions of higher education; and instruction in self-advocacy. LRS makes Pre-Employment Transition Services available to students with disabilities statewide through Third-Party Cooperative Arrangements, fee for services agreements with Community Rehabilitation Programs, and direct services provided by Rehabilitation Counselors.

LRS and LDOE have a State-Level Memorandum of Understanding outlining agency responsibilities regarding the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services for students with disabilities within the Louisiana Public School System that are potentially eligible or eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation, as well as the provision of VR services related to the achievement of agreed-upon vocational goals for students who are also eligible participants of the VR program who are placed in an Order of Selection Category currently being served. The agreement does not reduce the obligation under IDEA of a Local Education Agency (LEA) or any other agency to provide or pay for transition services, including Pre-Employment Transition Services. The LDOE and LEA will use appropriate federal, state, and local funds for the

provision of educational services on the approved IEP that relates directly to the achievement of the agreed-upon educational goal. LWC/LRS and LDOE agreed to the use of available federal, state and local funds to accomplish the transition goals in the State-Level Agreement between LWC/OWD/LRS and LDOE, dated July 1, 2019.

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

Outreach is conducted by VR Counselors to identify students with disabilities through the following methods:

LRS Transition Counselors in each region meet with a school liaison, typically a Guidance Counselor or Transition Coordinator, to provide information regarding LRS services. The school liaison relays the information to students with disabilities and coordinates the student's initial meeting with the LRS Transition Counselor.

LRS Transition Counselors conduct outreach by hosting transition meetings at area high schools to provide information about VR services and to accept referrals. Information disseminated at these meetings includes LRS brochures, client handbooks describing the VR processes/services, and referrals to other community resources students may need to access. Counselors work with the students, parents, and educators to plan services needed for successful transition from school to work from the point that the student with a disability is identified.

Counselors attend "Career Days" at the high schools to share information with transition students on available services that may identify career goals and to share information regarding services available to assist them in reaching their goals.

E. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

The Office of Workforce Development/Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) establishes fee-for-service cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers and/or Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) through a vendorship approval process. This process is initiated at the Regional Office level when it is determined the services are needed in the region.

The potential service provider is given a copy of the CRP standards and vendorship approval guidelines and must agree to comply with these guidelines. The guidelines include adherence to 504 and 508 Accessibility, education and training certifications and other procedural standards related to quality services and payment for services. The application for vendorship is submitted to State Office by the Regional Manager, along with a recommendation of approval or disapproval of the program.

The need for new, improved or expanded services is identified through a variety of methods. These include needs identified through the comprehensive statewide needs assessment, regional shortages of service providers, increases in specific service needs, and needs identified as a result of changes in processes.

All rates are set by a rate-setting process in the fiscal section, are consistent statewide, and are reimbursed through a fee-for-service.

F. ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) will maintain cooperative agreements on file with the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) and Office of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD), which ensures proper utilization of resources under the Title VI, Part C Program. These agreements are written to comply with the content

requirements in 34 CFR 363.50(b) outlining each agency's responsibility in reference to the supported employment program.

A description of each agreement follows:

OFFICE OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH (OBH)

LRS and the OBH are jointly responsible for meeting the needs of consumers with mental illness, including youth with the most significant disabilities, for whom supported employment is the most appropriate service. OBH will refer individuals with behavioral health conditions in need of LRS services in order to achieve a competitive and integrated employment outcome. LRS will fund the Job Coach Model and Evidenced-Based Employment Service Model for the chronically mentally ill to provide supported work services that will assist these consumers in achieving competitive integrated employment. These services will be provided, either directly or through a service provider, to these individuals and will include: (1) ongoing support services including customized employment, (2) assessment of employment stability and transition to extended services and, (3) extended follow-along services for youth with the most significant disabilities in supported employment for a period not to exceed four years or until the youth turns age 25. LRS is working with partner agencies to amend and update agreements.

Approximately two hundred and fifty (250) consumers could be referred to LRS by OBH for employment services during each fiscal year. Once eligibility for supported employment services has been determined and an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for supported employment services has been developed by LRS, there is continued collaboration with OBH to ensure that services are provided in an effective manner. OBH assists with the provision of training on behavioral health services upon request by LRS to enhance the quality of services provided to individuals with behavioral health conditions seeking competitive integrated employment. The IPE shall specify the responsibilities of all parties involved in the supported employment program for the individual and shall include reporting requirements for both agencies.

While consumers are being served by LRS under an IPE, LRS is responsible for the provision of services as outlined in the IPE. The consumer and VR counselor must determine when the individual is ready to transition to extended services and must maintain employment for a minimum of 90 days after transitioning to extended services before the case can be closed. The LRS vendor chosen by the consumer using informed choice will provide on-going supports and follow-along services, which includes extended follow-along services not funded by LRS, as well as extended services funded by LRS for youth with the most significant disabilities up to four years or until the youth turns age 25 when other public funding through OBH is not available. Any problems which might impact the ultimate success of job placement shall be immediately brought to the attention of LRS and OBH. LRS shall maintain an open, active case on each consumer in accordance with guidelines which has been established for each of the job placement program models.

LRS agrees to re-open a consumer's case at any point where additional long-term intensive training is needed, (i.e. consumer loses job and must be retrained, consumer promoted or consumer assigned new responsibilities).

OFFICE OF CITIZENS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (OCDD)

LRS and the OCDD are jointly responsible for meeting the needs of consumers with intellectual/developmental disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities, for whom supported employment is the most appropriate service. LRS will fund the Job Coach Model and Evidenced-Based Employment Service Model for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities to provide supported work services that will assist these consumers in achieving competitive integrated employment. These services will be provided, either directly or through a service provider, to these individuals and will include: (1) ongoing

support services including customized employment, (2) assessment of employment stability and transition to extended services and; (3) extended follow-along services for youth with the most significant disabilities in supported employment when funding from waiver services are not available, for a period not to exceed four years or until the youth turns age 25. The OCDD will provide extended services for consumers who receive Medicaid Waiver services and have identified extended services as needed on their plan of care, if this service is available through their waiver. When individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities who receive waivers and are interested in competitive integrated employment are denied LRS services, or are determined eligible for LRS services in an Order of Selection category not currently being served, the OCDD will provide Supported Employment services.

Approximately three hundred (300) consumers could be referred by OCDD for supported employment services during each year. Once eligibility for supported employment services has been determined and an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for supported employment services has been developed by LRS, there is continued collaboration with OCDD to ensure that services are provided in an effective manner. If extended services are not confirmed, there must be a reasonable expectation that supports, including natural supports will become available. The IPE shall specify the responsibilities of all parties involved in the supported employment program for the individual and shall include reporting requirements for both agencies.

The LRS counselor, the service provider, and the consumer are principal participants in the provision of services prior to job placement. OCDD is available for consultation and referral, etc. The LRS counselor will attend Person-Centered Planning meetings as needed.

While consumers are being served by LRS under an IPE, LRS is responsible for the provision of services as outlined in the IPE. The consumer and VR counselor must determine when the individual is ready to transition to extended services and must maintain employment for a minimum of 90 days after transitioning to extended services before the case can be closed. The LRS vendor chosen by the consumer using informed choice will provide on-going supports and follow-along services, which includes extended follow-along services not funded by LRS, as well as extended services funded by LRS for youth with the most significant disabilities up to four years or until the youth turns age 25 when other public funding through OCDD is not available. Any problems which might impact the ultimate success of job placement shall be immediately brought to the attention of LRS and OCDD. LRS shall maintain an open, active case on each consumer in accordance with guidelines which has been established for each of the job placement program models.

LRS agrees to re-open a consumer's case at any point where additional intensive training is needed and is justified in writing, subject to availability of funds. LRS is working with partner agencies to amend and update agreements.

MONITORING AND EXPANSION

1. LRS will monitor the services provided within the guidelines of the existing cooperative agreements and evaluate if modifications will be needed when they are renegotiated.
2. LRS will endeavor to provide access to these individuals by establishing agreements with non-profit organizations and/or community or state agencies including the following:
    a.
        i. Social Security Administration
        ii. Louisiana Department of Education
        iii. Office of Workforce Development

iv. Employment Networks of Louisiana

v. Associations for Citizens with Disabilities

vi. Title VII, Independent Living Centers

vii. Other volunteer organizations and/or resources

3. LRS will work towards establishing relationships with employers through the National VR Business Network, Community Rehabilitation Program - Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program, Business Advisory Committees, Business Leadership Networks, other Networks, and Councils to establish collaboration with businesses and corporations in order to facilitate natural supports at the job site.

G. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

1. VR SERVICES; AND

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services will continue to uphold the achievement of competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities. Our Vocational Rehabilitation Program sets out to accomplish this task by building relationships with employers in the communities and various cities in the state of Louisiana. In order to form these connections, LRS Rehabilitation Employment Development Specialists (REDS) meet with various employers to gain an understanding of their workforce needs and determine if LRS has any consumers that could be recommended for potential employment opportunities.

LRS staff are also involved with the Workforce Development Area Board meetings and have formed relationships with LWCs' Industry Sector Coordinators to help identify workforce needs in various sectors. The Industry Sector Coordinator analyzes and acquires knowledge about the full range of existing business solutions and identifies and defines talent pipelines and skill paths to promote sector employment to job seekers. The Program Coordinator over employment initiatives provides further technical assistance to the REDs to assist them in outreach efforts to businesses. Outreach efforts include attendance at local and regional job fairs, Chamber of Commerce meetings and the Society of Human Resource Management monthly meetings. REDS are also responsible for contacting numerous employers every month and determine if LRS has consumers who meet the qualifications for the positions available. After the REDS place the consumers in competitive and integrated employment, they continue to work with the business and the consumer, ensuring the employment opportunity is a good fit for both.

2. TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

LWC/LRS and LDOE, specifically the LEAs, are responsible for coordinating transition services in Louisiana. LRS is required to make Pre-Employment Transition Services available statewide to students with disabilities, and this is done through collaboration with the local school districts to coordinate these activities. Pre-Employment Transition Services are provided in various ways across Louisiana to comply with the needs and desires of the LEAs. Services are provided through Third Party Cooperative Arrangements (TPCAs), fee for service agreements with Community Rehabilitation Programs, and direct services provided by LRS Rehabilitation Counselors.

LRS has thirteen (13) TPCAs established with school districts in Bossier, DeSoto, Evangeline, Franklin, Grant, Livingston, and Natchitoches parishes; and the following collegiate academies or charter schools; Sci Academy, Livingston Collegiate, GW Carver, Collegiate Baton Rouge, New Harmony, and Educators for Quality Alternatives. Through these TPCAs, a Transition Specialist provides the required Pre-Employment Transition Services to students with disabilities.

LRS assigned Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) to each public high school statewide not having a TPCA with LRS, including Charter schools, to make Pre-Employment Transition Services available to students who receive special education services through IDEA funds or students who are considered individuals with disabilities for the purpose of section 504 of the Act (29 U.S.C. 794). Assigned CRPs provide the five required Pre-Employment Transition Services as identified as needed for each consumer by the consumer and Rehabilitation Counselor, and CRP's also identify employers in the area to give students opportunities for work-based learning experiences.

Through all of these formats, students with disabilities are provided access to local employers through Work Based Learning Experiences, both paid and unpaid, Employer Site Visits, Job Shadowing and Internships.

In PY 2021, LRS partnered with DOW Chemical, The Iberville ARC and the Iberville Parish School System to provide the first Project SEARCH program in Louisiana. DOW hosted 8 transition students with disabilities as interns and provided a minimum of three different work environments to enable these students to learn while on the job. Project SEARCH expanded the students' skill sets and allowed them to have work experience in their community. LRS has another potential employer interested in starting a Project SEARCH site.

LRS also has been part of the State as a Model Employer (SAME) initiative which was started to increase the number of persons with disabilities employed in State government. A point of contact has been established with each state agency to coordinate hiring of individuals with disabilities. This initiative will benefit students with disabilities by enabling them to participate in Work Based Learning Experiences at state agencies and to interview for and be considered for state employment once they are job ready.

H. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

1. THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT;

LRS maintains an MOU with the Louisiana Department of Health's (LDHs) Office of Behavioral Health and Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities. These offices administer Medicaid services to individuals with disabilities in the state of Louisiana; and LRS collaborates with these offices to ensure participants interested in obtaining competitive integrated employment are referred for Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) works collaboratively with the Office of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) housed within the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH). LRS will maintain a Memorandum of Understanding with LDH in order to ensure proper utilization of resources and continue to explore all available opportunities for employment in integrated settings. This collaboration will provide a means to identify individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities who are interested in achieving competitive integrated employment and who require intensive services and supports to achieve an employment outcome.

LRS and (OCDD) share a common goal to increase opportunities for employment in the community with competitive wages and opportunities for advancement, for the citizens of Louisiana who have intellectual/developmental disabilities, that is sought by mutual cooperation, shared resources, elimination of procedural barriers that impact respective goals, and increased understanding and communication across service systems.

3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) works collaboratively with the Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) housed within the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH). As part of the Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program (EFSLMP) Vision Quest (VQ) grant, LRS and OBH developed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to improve collaboration amongst offices and employment outcomes for individuals with mental illness. Facilitated discussions about existing services systems and potential service barriers, encouraged input from engaged stakeholder organizations such as LDH Medicaid, LA Office of Workforce Development, LA Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, Developmental Disabilities Council, LA Governor's Office of Disability Affairs and the Advocacy Center. In PY 2019, LRS, OBH, and other state partners received technical assistance under the US Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (USDOL/ODEP) Initiative: Visionary Opportunities to Increase Competitive Employment (VOICE) to increase integrated employment for individuals with mental health disabilities. Additionally, OBH and LRS, under the funding auspices of the USDOL/ODEP, hosted a webinar in May 2021. LRS, OBH, and Local Governing Entities (LGEs) received training focused on improving employment outcomes for joint clients of LRS/LGE facing challenges due to their behavioral health issues. The webinar focused on several key areas such as researched based best practice in employment services, the importance of rapid engagement in employment service delivery, the most effective ways for clinical/ community support staff to advance employment as a goal for their clients, and how to achieve more effective collaboration between OBH/LGEs/LRS. LRS and OBH continue to discuss ways to further develop specific employment related service delivery options statewide. Specifically, OBH is developing a plan to implement Individual Placement Support in an effort to increase competitive integrated employment for individuals with mental health disabilities in collaboration with LRS.

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 order to assess the need for qualified personnel, LRS has developed and maintains a database which includes information on the number of rehabilitation personnel providing VR services, and the ratio of the number of personnel needed to adequately provide VR services statewide.

LRS is geographically divided into eight (8) regions within the state. In PY 2021, LRS had a staff of 167, of which 69 were Rehabilitation Counselors with an average caseload size of 158 consumers. LRS provided services to 12,605 VR and 2,985 Pre-Employment Transition Services consumers. Of the individuals receiving services, the Rehabilitation Employment Development Specialists (REDS) provided direct job placement services to 116 consumers. One thousand, two hundred and five (1,205) consumers exited the VR program achieving an employment outcome.

II. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CURRENTLY NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY; AND

At the end of PY 2021, in an effort to adequately serve and meet the needs of consumers in all Order of Selection categories currently open, LRS needed additional staff that would consist of 15 Rehabilitation Counselors and 6 Rehabilitation Counselor Associates. LRS continues to assess human resources available to determine most effective structure to meet the service needs of individuals with disabilities statewide. The table provided in section iii details staffing numbers and needs by job title/category.

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.

ROW	JOB TITLE	TOTAL POSITIONS	CURRENT VACANCIES	PROJECTED VACANCIES OVER NEXT 5 YEARS
1	Rehabilitation Counselor (Client Services)	69	15	10
2	Rehabilitation Employment Development Specialist (REDS) (Client Services)	6	2	3
3	Support Staff/Paraprofessionals (Client Services)	36	5	7
4	Field Managers (Client Services)	8	0	3
5	District Supervisors (Client Services)	15	0	3
6	Administrative (Administrative and Executive Staff)	24	1	8
7	Support Staff/Paraprofessionals (Administrative and Executive	4	1	1
8	Randolph Sheppard Management Analyst	5	0	0

LRS will need to increase its staff statewide to be able to meet the growing needs of individuals with disabilities in the coming five years. Currently, LRS has 15 Rehabilitation Counselor vacancies and has identified 10 more that will be eligible for retirement in the next five years. Also, some Rehabilitation Counselors may promote to supervisory or executive positions within LRS and their vacancies will need to be filled.

B. PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

I. A LIST OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE THAT ARE PREPARING VR PROFESSIONALS, BY TYPE OF PROGRAM;

Louisiana has two universities with CACREP/CORE accredited graduate programs in rehabilitation counseling; Southern University (SU) in Baton Rouge, a Historically Black University, and Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center (LSUHSC) in New Orleans. SU offers an undergraduate rehabilitation counseling program. Neither SU nor LSUHSC offers a doctoral degree at this time.

II. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS, BROKEN DOWN BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; AND

Louisiana State University-Health Science Center (LSUHSC) is in the process of changing their educational department that facilitates the Rehabilitation Counseling Graduate-level program. Once the current student enrolled in this program exits, LSUHSC will cease to offer a Master's degree for Rehabilitation Counseling; it will be changed to Clinical Mental Health Counseling. LSUHSC has not offered the RSA grant to students for the Rehabilitation Counseling program since 2019.

Row	Institution	Students Enrolled	Employees sponsored by Agency or RSA	Graduates sponsored by Agency or RSA	Graduates from the previous year
1	Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA - Undergraduate	117	0	0	34
2	Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA - Graduate	46	0	0	11
3	Louisiana State University Health Science Center, New Orleans, LA - Graduate	1	0	0	0

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.

All graduates from the Master's program at both of the institutions are eligible to meet the national certification requirement and sit for the national licensure of Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC). Southern University's Graduate Program is focused on CRC obtainment and encourages all graduates to achieve their CRC prior to graduation. Louisiana State University Health Science Center graduates are prepared to meet all requirements to sit for the CRC examination and are also eligible for licensure in Louisiana as a Licensed Rehabilitation Counselor (LRC) and Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC).

2. PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

RECRUITMENT

LRS continues to be committed to the development and continued growth of professional staff members. In an effort to meet the current and projected needs for qualified personnel, the following process and activities are utilized. All strategies noted below for LRS' Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) program encourages the hiring of staff members from minority backgrounds and individuals with disabilities.

In an effort to work cooperatively with institutions of higher education in the area of recruitment, the agency participated in Career Day activities at Southern University. To ensure recruitment of individuals from minority backgrounds, LRS works closely with SU, a Historically

Black University. Students are provided information on the application process for employment and information regarding advancement opportunities with the agency. LRS provides internship opportunities for graduate students in both assessment and counseling settings.

The universities provide program updates throughout the year, which are shared with agency staff members. Notification of agency professional position vacancies is provided to department heads at the universities to assist graduates pursuing employment.

As a method of recruiting individuals with disabilities, Rehabilitation Counselors advise consumers about the career opportunities in the field of rehabilitation. LRS also utilizes cross-training of our Workforce Partners to assist in providing information to potential candidates regarding careers in the field of rehabilitation. LRS works with the State Civil Service and universities to notify potential candidates of vacancies in the field of rehabilitation services.

PREPARATION

Annually, LRS maintains a Re-Training Plan to monitor the number of Rehabilitation Counselors who do not meet the highest CSPD qualifications. To encourage LRS' Rehabilitation Counselors meet the higher CSPD requirements, LRS continues the strategies noted below:

- When hiring new staff members who do not meet the highest guidelines for "qualified" personnel, the agency encourages the individual to commit to pursuing the higher educational requirement.
- LRS' CSPD Re-Training Plan is maintained by the Training Section. This plan is utilized to track LRS' progress toward meeting the highest CSPD requirement which is closely monitored and updated annually. All professional staff members listed on the Re-Training Plan who do not have a master's degree in rehabilitation or a degree in a closely related field are considered to be in a "re- training priority" category. LRS has established two categories - higher and lower priority groups for re-training. The lower priority group consists of the "non-masters degreed" employees that are either currently eligible for retirement or within five years of retirement eligibility. The higher priority group consists of the remaining "non-masters degreed" employees on the re-training list.
- The Program Manager responsible for coordination of the CSPD initiative assists the "non- masters degreed" employees to address and resolve any barriers that may be preventing them from pursuing the Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling degree.
- LRS has procedures in place to assist Rehabilitation Counselors with funding for tuition, textbooks, and when necessary, travel and educational leave to be retrained in accordance with the agency's CSPD Re-Training Plan. This policy prioritizes funding for staff members in the high priority re-training group.
- LRS staff members participate in training annually, such as are presented by the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR), and the Technical Assistance Centers, to obtain information and professional training to meet the standards for CSPD. Internal training is provided, but in addition to that professional and paraprofessional staff members also regularly attend training workshops delivered by other agencies, state universities, including the two state universities offering degrees in rehabilitation counseling, and organizations for service providers promoting the enhancement of employment for persons with disabilities. LRS encourages professional development of all staff members through community involvement and membership in state associations such as the Louisiana Rehabilitation Association (LRA), a chapter of the National Rehabilitation Association (NRA).

LRS collaborates with local universities providing training for the rehabilitation professions and offer suggestions based on the agency's needs to strengthen academic preparation and ensure that curriculums develop the necessary job-related competencies of their students.

LRS collaborates with the universities to support their research efforts in an attempt to obtain information to improve rehabilitation services and service delivery. This allows staff members to participate in studies that may bring more effective practices to the field.

RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

To provide opportunities for advancement and encourage retention of qualified personnel, LRS provides professional and paraprofessional staff members the opportunity to promote. For professional staff, promotions are based on work performance and the attainment of specific job-related competencies.

The Rehabilitation Counselor position is a career progression series, and Rehabilitation Counselors can reallocate to higher positions within the series once certain qualifications are met. Counselors start at the Rehabilitation Counselor-Entry position, which requires one year of professional level experience, and once the counselor has gained at least one year of rehabilitation counseling experience and needs less one-one one intense supervision, the counselor can reallocate to the Rehabilitation Counselor position. If a Rehabilitation Counselor possesses a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling or a closely related field, the individual also has the opportunity to be reallocated into the Rehabilitation Counselor-Master position once the individual has gained at least two years of professional level rehabilitation counseling experience. A similar career progression series is also available for the Rehabilitation Specialist position, which is a Rehabilitation Counseling series for staff that specialize in assisting individuals who are blind and/or deaf. If administrative opportunities are desired, professional staff may apply for positions to include District Supervisor, Regional Manager, and various State Office level positions.

Administrative support staff who desire to promote within the agency can apply for the Rehabilitation Counselor Associate position once specific competencies have been achieved. This position works closely with the Rehabilitation Counselor in managing caseload activities and in provision of services to consumers.

To retain qualified staff members, LRS coordinates training with local universities, business professionals and professional associations to assist in obtaining training and the necessary continuing education units (CEUs) required for maintenance of certification and licensure. The LRS training section is certified by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) to provide CEUs for qualifying training events coordinated or conducted by LRS.

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

LRS continues to encourage professional staff to attain the highest CSPD standard for qualified rehabilitation professional, a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling or a related field. This is in accordance with the academic degree requirement for the national Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) licensure offered by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification and the state degree requirement for the Licensed Rehabilitation Counselor (LRC) licensure offered through the Louisiana Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors Licensing Act and issued by the Louisiana Licensed Professional Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors Board of Examiners.

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.

To ensure Rehabilitation Counselor positions have an adequate background to successfully enter the profession, LRS requires the following minimum qualifications:

- A baccalaureate degree plus one year of professional level experience in social services, teaching, counseling, human resources, nursing, recreation therapy, music therapy, physical therapy, art therapy, rehabilitation instruction, rehabilitation evaluation, worker's compensation dispute resolution, or job placement/job development involving persons with disabilities.
- A baccalaureate degree in rehabilitation counseling, vocational evaluation/assessment, social services, social work, psychology, sociology, counseling, guidance and counseling, family and child counseling, education, vocational education, deaf or blind education, rehabilitation education, rehabilitation teaching, nursing, mental health, human services/resources, speech therapy or biomedical engineering will substitute for the one year of required experience.
- A master's degree in any field will substitute for the one year of required experience

LRS decided not to change the qualification requirements for the entry-level Rehabilitation Counselor positions as there are only two universities in Louisiana that have accredited rehabilitation programs. Changing the entry-level Rehabilitation Counselor qualification requirements would have dramatically affected the ability to fill these positions, particularly those located in more rural areas. To further align with the changes in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and to increase the applicant pool, LRS is in the process of adding Business Administration as one of the accepted degrees for the Rehabilitation Counselor position.

Rehabilitation Counselors at the highest priority for retraining are encouraged to achieve the agency's CSPD standard per 34 CFR 361.18(c)(1)(ii)(B). Counselors are routinely provided with information on Colleges and Universities offering Master's in Rehabilitation along with scholarships. LRS offers assistance with books, supplies, registration fees, and outstanding tuition fees not covered by scholarships. LRS also offers an additional Master Counselor level upon completion of a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation, a case review, and additional criteria. This comes with a pay increase of 7%.

The following depicts the educational breakdown of Rehabilitation Counselors on board as of June 30, 2021:

Rehabilitation Counselors - 69

- Has a Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling or a related field - 35
- Lower priority for retraining - 3
- Higher priority for retraining - 31
- Currently enrolled in a Master's Program - 1
- Those needing to begin training – 30

The agency recognizes that some employees in the higher priority retraining group will not be able to either pursue their master's degree or complete all requirements of a master's degree program. These individuals will not be eligible for advancement to the Master Counselor positions. In addition, to recruit individuals meeting the highest standard, vacancy announcements are shared with local universities and posted on the State Civil Service website.

Universities frequently refer students to LRS for internships that may lead to full-time employment and to apply for vacant Rehabilitation Counselor positions. LRS is also in the process of hiring student workers from local universities to provide students in rehabilitation counseling experience at LRS to promote future hiring of these individuals once they graduate and qualify for Rehabilitation Counselor positions.

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

LRS utilizes several methods of identifying training needs of professional and paraprofessional staff members, to include a Training Needs Assessment form which is available to staff statewide. In addition, Regional Managers and State Office Program staff members may identify and request training. The Quality Assurance staff members may also request training when trends are noted during the case review process. All agency training ends with the completion of an evaluation form to allow for comments and/or to request further training.

LRS staff members take advantage of training opportunities provided through webinars and teleconferences as well as on-site training. Numerous types of training and support continue to be provided and/or coordinated by State Office staff members to support the field staff. Such training for PY 2021 included AWARE software training, Leadership 101, Ethics, Integrated Resource Teams, Financial Capability, Case Management, Pre-ETS & Transition, Job Development, Customized Employment, Regional Manager and District Supervisor training.

Additionally, the agency has specific monthly in-service training requirements (4 hours per month), which are conducted by the regional field offices to ensure continuous education for all professional and paraprofessional staff members. This training is provided by experienced staff members or by knowledgeable community providers who specialize in the area of training required. Rehabilitation Counselor Associates (RCAs) are required to attend all in-service training with the Rehabilitation Counselors and also attend separate training as needed.

Examples of training topics include assessment, guidance and vocational counseling, eligibility, planning, disability related issues, assistive technology, disability services at colleges and universities, ethics, community-based employment outcomes, mental health, and employment related issues.

Louisiana Assistive Technology Access Network (LATAN), who is the recipient of the AT Act funding, conducts training with staff regarding updates and expansion of its core AT program services, including the newly funded Alternative Financial Program (under mandates of Section 101). This year, training was conducted in four LRS regional offices throughout the state (Regions IV, V, VI, and VIII).

Career Enrichment/Development

The Bureau of Program Planning & Resource Development researches, develops, implements, and maintains standards to ensure staff development. In addition to the training coordinated by this Bureau, classes are offered through the Comprehensive Public Training Program (CPTP) to all state employees at all levels to further enhance their professional skills and development. Through this program, specialized training is available in areas such as management development, supervisory techniques, skill training for non-supervisory personnel, web-based computer skills and professional development training. LRS encourages all agency staff members to participate in applicable CPTP training classes.

B. PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE FROM RESEARCH AND OTHER SOURCES TO DESIGNATED STATE UNIT PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS.

For the most up-to-date information, all staff members have laptops with access to the Internet to be used for research purposes. Information received on various rehabilitation topics are forwarded to staff statewide for their use. State office personnel subscribe to various websites, newsletters, and resources to stay abreast of current information. As information is received, it is sent to the Program Manager over training for review and is disseminated to staff via email, video conference, conference call, etc. Information may be sent to Managers, Rehabilitation Counselors, or all staff depending on the content of the information.

5. PERSONNEL TO ADDRESS INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS

Each office is authorized to obtain the services of a foreign language interpreter/translator as the need arises (i.e. LRS has consumers who speak Spanish, French, and Vietnamese). LRS has several staff members who are bilingual. In instances where bilingual staff members are not available, translators/interpreters are secured through community resources.

In order to insure that individuals who are deaf, deaf-blind, hard-of-hearing or blind are able to access services and offices, LRS has the following procedures:

- Staff statewide are equipped with ZOOM™ video accounts to aid in communication with consumers and have been trained in the use of this equipment.
- Specialists for the Deaf must be skilled or be participating in training to improve skills in sign language.
- All Specialists are encouraged to attend a graduate program such as Northern Illinois University, Western Oregon University, San Diego State University or other applicable program approved by the agency. There they learn about hearing loss and the Deaf culture, and are taught basic sign language skills, if needed.
- Specific needs are assessed on an individual basis and appropriate training is obtained for each Specialist in their respective region.
- The agency has implemented a series of coursework for the Specialist for the Deaf position, which requires the completion of specific training for advancement.
- To move to the Specialist 2 level, an individual must have obtained sign language skills equivalent to a minimum of the intermediate level on the sign communication proficiency interview, (SCPI) or other applicable evaluation instrument approved by the agency, or interpreter certification equivalent to a minimum of the state's Level III level certification and attend the orientation to deafness training or orientation to deaf-blindness training at the University of Tennessee, Northern Illinois University, Western Oregon University, or other applicable program approved by the agency.
- To advance to the Master level Specialist for the Deaf, an individual must have a Master's degree plus sign language skills equivalent to a minimum of the advanced level on the Sign Communication Proficiency Interview, (SCPI), or other applicable evaluation instrument approved by the agency, or interpreter certification equivalent to a minimum of the state's Level IV certification, and have taken a minimum of 9 hours of specialized college course-work in deafness or deaf-blindness related areas approved by the agency.

In order to ensure that individuals who are blind or visually impaired are able to access services and offices, LRS has the following procedures:

- Braille printers and Braille translation software is available to produce Braille translation in- house. Agency publications can be provided in alternative formats upon request.
- Specialists for the Blind complete introductory course work in Braille and continue to receive training in this area. The agency has a series of training for the Blind Specialist position, which requires the completion of specific training for advancement.
- To move to the Specialist 2 level, an individual must have a working knowledge of Braille, including Braille technology, orientation and mobility, and assistive technology.
- To move to Master-level Specialist for the Blind, a minimum of 9 hours of specialized college coursework must be completed in blindness related areas approved by the agency to include assistive technology and/or job accommodations.

6. COORDINATION OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

LRS continues to collaborate with the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) to jointly provide staff training for effective provision of transition services for those youth with disabilities leaving the secondary education system and pursuing successful employment opportunities in adult life. This is accomplished through the LRS/LDOE formal interagency agreement which includes specialized training for both LRS and LDOE staff members.

LRS' Program Coordinator for Transition and LDOE's Program Manager collaborate on joint agency training and meetings throughout the year to network and share information. They are also responsible for assisting in the coordination and provision of transition services within each agency to assure effective service provision and training through the support of local interagency core teams, cross-agency training, outreach, and other needed activities; capacity building of young adult and family outreach efforts; and continuous provision of information and technical assistance.

LRS has a Program Coordinator specializing in Assistive Technology who conducts in-service training annually to keep field staff members abreast of the most recent technology available to assist individuals with disabilities.

Specialized training is provided to our staff members working with low-incident disabilities to include such training as orientation to deafness, mobility training, sign language coursework, deaf-blindness training, and graduate level training specific to working with low-incident populations (i.e. visual impairment/hearing impairment/significant cognitive impairment).

Local Education Agencies work with LRS staff members to:

- provide training on the Individual Education Plan document;
- facilitate appropriate orientation meetings among LRS staff members, students and family members;
- provide time for LRS staff members to meet with teachers, guidance counselors, and other appropriate personnel for such purposes as information sharing/gathering at both the individual and agency levels.

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;

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) assists eligible individuals with disabilities to prepare for, achieve, and retain employment in an integrated community setting. LRS administers the general Vocational Rehabilitation program in Louisiana for the Rehabilitation Services Administration. This comprehensive needs assessment is conducted every three years and focuses on the Vocational Rehabilitation program and needs of individuals who are potentially eligible or eligible for services.

The purpose of the statewide comprehensive assessment, conducted jointly with the Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC), is to describe the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within Louisiana, particularly the vocational rehabilitation service needs as outlined in the 34 CFR 361.29:

1. Individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;

2. Individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program carried out under this part;

3. Individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce development system as identified by those individuals and personnel assisting those individuals through the components of the system; and

4. Youth with disabilities, and students with disabilities, including:

(a.) their need for pre-employment transition services or other transition services; and

(b.) an assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities for transition services and pre-employment transition services, and the extent to which such services provided under this part are coordinated with transition services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in order to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities.

It must also include an assessment of the need to establish, develop, or improve Community Rehabilitation Programs within the State.

As mandated, LRS and the LRC jointly plan and conduct the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. The analysis of this CSNA was completed in PY 2021 using the results of data collected during the periods of PYs 2018 - 2020.

METHODOLOGY

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) utilized a variety of modalities and methodologies to research and collect data to assess and identify the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities, as well as the need to establish, develop, or improve Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs).

Data from consumers, staff members, workforce partners/stakeholders, transition aged youth and the public at large was obtained. Survey Monkey, accessible survey software available through the internet, was used for all surveys. Surveys were accessible by mobile phone, computer, as well as in hard copy and alternate languages, upon request. The use of on-line surveys assisted LRS in keeping the cost of conducting the needs assessment within budget. Survey links were provided via state websites, newsletters, and social media to solicit participants.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission's (LWC) Communications Section solicited participation in LRS' statewide needs assessment survey utilizing social media. The survey link was published

in the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs' newsletter. The Louisiana Rehabilitation Council was also provided the link and assisted with circulation. An email account was set up to monitor any questions or comments provided. This email account was monitored by an LRS Bureau Administrator.

LRS stakeholders, consumers, staff members, and workforce partners were emailed a link inviting participation in the survey for themselves and the individuals they serve. All respondents were ensured of the confidentiality of information provided.

In addition to the surveys conducted by LRS, data was accessed from a wide range of publicly available resources including the United States Census Bureau, the American Census Surveys (ACS), and the 2020 Disability Compendium.

Eight hundred twenty-eight survey responses were received. In addition, one hundred and four LRS employees responded to total nine hundred and thirty-two respondents.

Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC) Joint Collaboration

In order to collaborate with the state rehabilitation council on the completion of the survey, LRS staff attended LRC meetings to discuss the needs assessment, requirements of 34 CFR 361.29 and the methods used to gather the data needed.

The LRC/LRS liaison distributed the draft survey instruments to LRC members soliciting their input. Comments and suggestions provided by the LRC contributed to the final version of the survey. The LRC also assisted LRS in the distribution of the surveys. As LRS continues to analyze the data obtained, the council will assist in determining goals and activities required to address areas of identified needs.

Target Populations

Target populations for the survey included consumers, transition aged youth, staff members, vendors, workforce partners, the LRC, stakeholders and the general public. The survey link was provided for access by the public through the Louisiana Workforce Commission and Governor's Office for Disability Affairs social media sites and newsletters. LRS solicited and received feedback from these target populations.

Consumer Surveys

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services emailed survey links to VR and Pre-ETS applicants and consumers statewide. The survey links were sent to individuals from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds, unserved/underserved populations and individuals with the most significant disabilities. Surveys were also sent to youth and students with disabilities to determine their specific needs.

Surveys included an introduction explaining the purpose and an invitation to participate. Recipients were ensured of confidentiality of all information submitted.

The consumer survey instrument was designed to:

- Be easily read and understood
- Be accessible
- Be completed by the individual or parent/guardian/advocate
- Encourage completion (online or mobile phone survey)
- Provide anonymity

Questions on the survey were developed with input from the LRC to access the needs of individuals with most significant disabilities, the unserved/underserved, those being served through workforce partners, students with disabilities and to determine the need to establish, develop, and expand CRPs within the state.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Consumer Survey

LRS received 532 responses from individuals currently receiving or that previously received LRS services. Of this number, 64.8% percent of respondents identified themselves as individuals with disabilities; 27.6% were identified as a parent, guardian or advocate of an individual with a disability; 6.7% as a youth or student with a disability in high school or post-secondary school;

Forty-five percent of respondents identified as male and 52% identified as female. One percent identified as non-binary and the remainder preferred to self-describe their gender. Four percent identified themselves as a veteran. Sixty-one percent of respondents identified themselves as Caucasian; 35% percent as African American; 2.7% as Hispanic or Latino; and 7% as American Indian, Asian, Native Pacific Islander or Other. Multiple races were selected for some.

The predominant age of respondents was between the ages 16-22 years (22%); followed by the ages of 41 - 50 (19%); ages 23 - 30 (18%); ages 31 - 40 years (17%); ages 51 - 60 (14.8%); ages 61 - 70 (8%); and ages 70 and over (1%).

Approximately 44% percent of respondents indicated living with parents or guardians; 19% percent of respondents indicated living with a partner or spouse; 20.6% lived alone; 14.5% lived with their children; 6.6% with a roommate or other adult. One percent indicated that they were homeless or incarcerated. The remainder listed various other living arrangements such as supported living, with relatives and on-campus in a dormitory.

The top disability categories respondents reported were: ADD/ADHD (17%); Intellectual Disability (16%); Mental Illness (16.5%); Autism (15.6%); Psychological/Behavioral (12.8%); Orthopedic/Mobility (12.6%); Hard of Hearing (12%); Specific Learning Disability (9%); and Blindness (8%).

Educational levels of respondents were as follows: 28% had either a high school diploma or a GED; 26% had some college training; 18.5% had a 4-year degree; 12% had a 2-year degree/technical college; 8% had either a master's or doctoral degree; and 5% indicated that they completed some high school. Less than two percent indicated having no formal education.

Thirty-seven percent of respondents indicated being employed; 26% were students; 20% were out of work/looking for work, and 11% noted that they are unable to work. Approximately 5% noted being self-employed and the remainder noted that they were retired, a homemaker or were not currently looking for work.

The primary source of income reported included SSI/SSDI (45%); own employment (30%); parent/guardian's income (19%), and public assistance (4.8%).

Twenty-nine percent of respondents reported an average household yearly income of less than $10,000; 20% reported an income of $50,000 and over; 14% received $15,001 - $25,000; 13.6% reported receiving $10,001 - $15,000; 10% received $25,001 - $35,000; 6% received $40,001 - $50,000; and 5% received $35,001 - $40,000.

When asked "If employed, are you earning minimum wage or above?" 37% of respondents answered that they did not earn above minimum wage and 35% indicated that they did earn above minimum wage.

Workforce Partner Agencies, Stakeholders & The General Public

LRS solicited input from identified workforce partners, stakeholders and the general public. Two hundred and fifty-eight individuals completed the survey.

Forty-one percent of respondents reported being a parent or guardian of an individual with a disability; 34% of respondents were service providers; 18.6% reported having a disability themselves; and 12% were advocates. All of the above respondents reported that they had never received services from LRS.

The gender of survey respondents was reported as 31% female and 64.7% male, with the remainder choosing to self-describe their gender. Approximately 4% indicated being a veteran. When asked about their race/ethnicity, 70.8% identified themselves as Caucasian; 24.7% as African American; 7% as American Indian/Alaskan Eskimo, Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander; and 4.7% Hispanic or Latino.

Nineteen percent of respondents were between 16 - 22 years old; 19% were between 31 - 40 years old; 19% were between 41 – 50; 15.6% were between 23-30; 14% were between 51 - 60 years old; 11% were between 61 - 70 years old; years old; 1% were 70 years of age or older.

When asked about their current living situation, respondents indicated the following: 34% live with a parent or guardian; 33% reported living with a spouse or partner; 22% live with children; 16% live alone; 4% live with a roommate/other adult and 1.5% indicated that they are homeless or institutionalized.

The educational level of respondents was noted as follows: those with a 4-year college degree (24.5%); with a master's or doctoral degree (20%); with either a high school diploma or a GED (17.7%); with some college training (9.6%); with a 2-year associates or technical college degree (8.6%) and those who indicated that they did not complete high school (6%).

Thirty-eight percent of respondents indicated that their primary source of income is from their own employment; 35.6% indicated receiving SSI/SSDI; 19% indicated relying on the income of a parent/guardian; 11% rely on their spouse's wages; 2.5% indicated that they are self-employed and all others indicated receiving public assistance or other income such as retirement income/pension.

The average household yearly income received was $50,001 and over for 44.5% of respondents; less than $10,000 for 20.6%; $40,001 - $50,000 for 9.7%; $15,001 - $25,000 for 8%; $10,001 - $15,000 for 7%; $25,001 - $35,000 for 5%; and $35,001 - $40,000 for 4%.

LRS Employee Survey

LRS sent survey links via email to all staff members (159) including administrative, support, and direct service delivery. The online surveys ensured staff of confidentiality and anonymity.

One hundred and four LRS employees from offices statewide responded to surveys. Of the respondents, 28% have worked for LRS for less than 5 years; 27% have worked for LRS for 11 - 15 years; 14% have worked for LRS for 16 - 20 years; 12% have worked for the agency for over 25 years; 11% have worked for the agency 21 - 25 years; and 8% have worked for the agency 6 – 10 years.

Sixty-two percent of respondents have a Master's degree; 25% have their Bachelor's degree; 5% have a two year Associates or technical college degree; 4% have some college; and 2% have a Doctoral degree; and less than 1% have their high school diploma or GED.

Primary respondents to the survey were Rehabilitation Counselors (41%); Counselor Associates (15%); and Program Specialists/Coordinators/Managers (15%).

General findings from Consumer Survey:

Survey respondents universally stated that training should be provided to LRS staff, vendors and legislators regarding the vocational rehabilitation program, service provision and budgetary needs; that more staff should be hired to increase capacity to serve; and that more vendors are needed. Respondents indicated that more consumers need LRS services and could be served if additional state dollars could be secured to match the federal funding available to the state.

Upon reviewing survey information of individuals receiving SSI/SSDI, the top needs identified by respondents included job placement (39%); vocational guidance and career counseling (30%); job readiness skills (30%); job coaching (27%); benefits planning (27%); equipment for work (27%) and transportation (26%). They identified barriers to employment as being the fear of losing their government benefits (54%), lack of employer acceptance of their disability (50%), lack of transportation (41%); lack of public services (40%); adjustment to disability (36%); and lack of long term support (34%).

Respondents receiving supported employment services identified the following as needs not being met, services after employed/post-employment services (22%); transportation (20%); training/tuition assistance (14%); job placement (13%); equipment for work (13%); mental health counseling (12%); and benefits planning (11%).

The barriers to employment identified by respondents receiving supported employment services included the fear of losing government benefits (48%); lack of transportation (37%); employer acceptance of their disability (34%); lack of public resources (32%); lack of long term support (33%); lack of housing (29%); personal adjustment to the disability (28%); and the lack of medical insurance/care (27%).

B. WHO ARE MINORITIES;

To assess the needs of individuals with disabilities who are minorities, unserved or underserved, LRS extracted information from various surveys including LRS consumers, workforce partners, stakeholders, the public and LRS employees.

When asked about barriers to employment, respondents reported the following needs: Employer sensitivity training for greater understanding and acceptance of individuals with disabilities in the workplace, better transportation services throughout the state to access employment, benefits planning to address individual's fear of losing government benefits and additional public resources. It was noted that services are needed for individuals living in rural areas as well as CRPs to provide services such as job skills and job readiness training, job placement assistance, and post-employment services. It was also noted that LRS needs to do more outreach to rural communities, students and employed individuals who may need accommodations such as assistive technology devices.

When asked how LRS can increase engagement with minorities with disabilities, the following recommendations were provided by LRS Employee Survey respondents: community outreach; participation in organizations for minorities, marketing, more LRS staff, a better relationship with schools and other educational facilities; and training for staff on diversity.

LRS will continue to develop strategies to address these identified needs in collaboration with the Social Security Administration, the Department of Transportation and other partners.

C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

Needs identified by unserved/underserved respondents were much the same as those who identified themselves as being a minority. These individuals can be living in rural areas, not have a significant disability, and/or not meet LRS' economic need criteria. CRPs were identified as being needed in rural areas to assist individuals in preparing for and obtaining employment. Transportation also continues to be a need in rural communities.

LRS Employee Survey respondents indicated the most common unserved and underserved populations to be individuals located in rural areas with limited to no access to transportation or public support services; diverse populations; individuals with a mental illness; and individuals with disabilities needing services to retain/maintain current employment.

LRS will develop strategies to address the identified needs in collaboration with the State's Department of Corrections, Department of Health, Department of Transportation and other partners. LRS will also assess the current economic need criteria to determine if changes can be made in an effort to provide more services to those individuals who are not currently being served.

D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

Respondents from other components of the statewide workforce investment system were given survey links to complete the survey online.

Needs identified by respondents included transportation; benefit planning; job coaching; post-employment services; transition from school to work; assistive technology devices/services; and job placement.

The primary barriers identified by respondents included the fear of losing government benefits; lack of transportation; lack of personal care attendants; lack of long-term support; employers' acceptance of disability; and the lack of public resources.

Seventy-eight percent (78%) of LRS Employee survey respondents are aware of services available through Business and Career Solution Centers (BCSC) with 42 % of respondents being overall or very satisfied when working with BCSC. Thirty-two percent (32%) of respondents indicated that they have not worked with a BCSC; however, thirty percent (30%) have worked in a BCSC in the last month to access/provide services to individuals with disabilities. Respondents provided the following recommendations on how LRS and BSCS can improve collaboration efforts to address the needs of individuals with disabilities: cross-training on appropriate referrals and VR services; continued increased collaboration efforts, information sharing, and referrals; and for BCSC to have meeting space/offices available for LRS Counselors.

E. WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

The primary needs of youth and students with disabilities, including students with disabilities receiving pre-employment transition services, were identified by responses of those receiving SSI/SSDI and those receiving supported employment services. Primary needs identified by those receiving SSI/SSDI included job placement (41%); job readiness skills (39%); transportation (38%); services after employed/post-employment services (38%); vocational guidance and counseling (36%); job coaching/supported employment (33%); benefits planning (31%); and Pre-Employment Transition Services (22% - 25%). Primary services identified as being needed by those receiving supported employment included transportation (22%) and post-employment services (15%)

For LRS to better serve students transitioning from high school to employment; the primary recommendations given by respondents of the LRS Employee Survey were to increase staff or return to having dedicated Pre-Employment Transition Services Counselors; for LRS to be more present in schools and increase their outreach/marketing efforts; increase parental engagement/participation; to have support from Local Educational Agencies (LEAs); and more or better transition service providers.

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

LRS received comments from the public, workforce partners/stakeholders and LRS staff members to determine the need to establish, develop, or improve CRPs within the state.

The LRS employee survey revealed that 83.3% of respondents felt that new CRPs were needed to adequately serve consumers and 81% agreed or strongly agreed that current CRPs should be improved or expanded. Thirty-six percent of LRS employees felt that the CRPs present in their region needed to provide greater range of services to meet the needs of their consumers. Forty-seven percent indicated that CRP staff needed more education/training to effectively serve individuals with disabilities.

Additionally, 45% of staff indicated that the quality of services provided to meet the needs of consumers could be improved. Sixty-two percent of staff responding felt that more CRPs are needed in their area to provide specific services or to serve specific disability populations. Populations that were identified as needing further CRPs services include transition aged youth, deaf, deaf-blind and blind/visually impaired, those with mental illness, individuals with cognitive impairments/intellectual disabilities, autism, paraplegic/quadriplegic, and traumatic brain injuries. In addition, it was noted that more CRPs are needed to provide services such as supported employment, customized employment, intensive services for individuals with most significant disabilities, Pre-Employment Transition Services, and that more training needs to be provided to the CRPs to insure that they are aware of LRS requirements, to CRP staff to ensure adequate training to ensure quality services provision and collaboration between LRS and the CRPs to work toward improved processes to serve consumers more quickly.

The survey provided to stakeholders, workforce partners and the public at large yielded the following results: Forty-one percent of respondents indicated that more CRPs are needed to provide services and 62% of respondents indicated that existing CRPs need improvement. More programs are needed in rural areas, more intensive career counseling is needed to assist with determining appropriate career goals, increased on-the-job training and job placement services, education and community awareness of services/programs available to individuals with disabilities is also needed. Respondents indicated that VR and CRPs need additional staff to provide services more quickly. Staff at both take too long to get consumer engaged and active in the training/job placement process. CRPs need staff who are knowledgeable about disabilities and are sensitive to each applicant's needs, and facilities need to be located in safe areas.

Some populations identified as needing more specialized CRP services include those having autism, psychological disabilities, intellectual disabilities, those who are recovering from addiction, traumatic brain injuries, and students transitioning from high school into employment.

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

Survey information was provided to the State Department of Education to distribute to students with disabilities and Transition Counselors assigned to work with the school districts also provided survey information. All students with disabilities having email addresses in the AWARE system also were emailed the survey and information was posted in multiple social media sites and newsletters for access.

Forty-nine percent of youth and students with disabilities who responded were receiving services from LRS. Most frequent disabilities indicated were autism (36%); intellectual disabilities (29%); Attention Deficit/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (26%); Specific Learning Disability (15.8%); and Speech/Language Disorder (13%). Sixty-one percent of

respondents were male and 36% female. Fifty-nine percent of respondents indicated that they were Caucasian; 34% Black/African American; 3.7% Asian, and 5% Hispanic/Latino. Less than one percent indicated being American Indian or Alaskan Eskimo.

Needs that were identified as not being met for this population include job placement (39%); job readiness (35%); job coaching (33%); post-employment services (31%); vocational guidance & counseling (31%); transition services (30%); and training/tuition assistance (29%).

When asked about what they considered to be the most significant barriers to employment, 43% indicated fear of losing government benefits; 42% indicated that employer acceptance of disability is a significant barrier and 38% indicated the lack of transportation.

To determine whether transition services were being provided or coordinated for students with disabilities, respondents ages 16 - 22 were asked to rate whether service needs were met or partially met through the school or other organization. Fifty-two percent of respondents indicated that their job exploration counseling need was met; 48% stated they were not met. When asked about Work-Based Learning Experiences 47% indicated that their need was met; 43% said that they were not met. Counseling on Post-Secondary Training Programs was met at 51%; 49% said they were not met. Work readiness training was met at 49%; 51% said they were not met. Self-Advocacy Training/Peer Mentoring was met at 49%; 51% said it was not met. Lastly, training and tuition assistance was met at 57%; while the percentage stating it was not met was 43%.

Students noted that more information needs to be provided to let people with disabilities know about services available through LRS. They also expressed a need for more life skills and social skills programs to assist them in becoming independent. More counselors are needed to increase presence in schools and aid students in getting services when exiting.

LRS staff were asked about coordination of services provided under IDEA they indicated that counselors work with transition and Special Education staff in the high schools, services are coordinated through LRS and specialized vendors as well as through Third Party Cooperative Agreements.

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There are many people in Louisiana with disabilities that could benefit from vocational rehabilitation services designed to help them achieve and retain employment in integrated community settings. To meet this need, LRS maintains eight regional offices located statewide; employs a skilled workforce to help individuals plan services needed; utilizes community rehabilitation programs to deliver services; and collaborates with multiple agencies and community businesses to promote employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Common trends discovered in this needs assessment included the necessity for more LRS and CRP staff, more CRPs, especially in rural areas, provision of skills training to work with specific disability populations, improved processes to expedite consumer services, and expanded outreach to insure community awareness of services available.

Counselors indicated that the following six services were the most readily available for consumers: Job Placement, Vocational Training/Tuition Assistance, Vocational Guidance and Career Counseling, Supported Employment, and Job Readiness Training. Counselors also reported to have observed consumers needing an increase in Pre-Employment Transition Services, Vocational Training/Tuition Assistance, and Job Placement; and a decrease in Home Modification, Maintenance, and Supported Employment services.

Employee respondents overwhelmingly feel that a lack of transportation is the most significant barrier to delay or prevent individuals with disabilities from obtaining or maintaining employment; followed closely by fear of losing government benefits, not sincerely wanting to

become employed, a lack of skilled personnel to provide employment services, and employer reluctance to hire individuals with disabilities.

When asked for recommendations on how LRS can better reach individuals with disabilities and address their employment needs, the following responses were provided by LRS employees: more LRS staff is needed; LRS needs to advertise or market their services; more outreach is needed in rural/unserved/underserved communities; there needs to be more connections with employers and Human Resource departments; Counselors need to engage integrated resources according to the needs of each consumer; and cultural diversity needs to be addressed with staff.

LRS will continue to analyze the findings from Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessments and use results as a tool to help develop LRS' strategies. The data will continue to be used to drive goals and initiatives. LRS will continue to work with staff members and the LRC to establish measurable timelines and tracking mechanisms to ensure that strategies are accomplished. In addition, LRS will continue to collaborate with other key workforce partners serving individuals with disabilities to determine improvements that can be achieved through collaboration and partnerships.

K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES

Per the 2020 Annual Disability Statistics Compendium, approximately 374,607 individuals with disabilities ages 18-64 were living in Louisiana in 2019. To qualify for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services, individuals with disabilities must be interested in obtaining or maintaining employment. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2019 the unemployment rate for persons with disabilities was 7%, more than twice the rate of those with no disability (3.6%). To be included in this rate, the person with a disability was unemployed, available for work and was actively looking for a job in the 4 weeks prior to the survey. Although, it would be difficult to determine how many individuals with disabilities would be eligible, based on these statistics, 8% or 29,695 of these individuals would be actively seeking employment in FFY 2023 and could potentially be eligible for VR services, including supported employment. This does not include the numbers that have been looking for work more than 4 weeks prior, so the number could be much greater.

2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

A. THE VR PROGRAM;

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) estimates that it will serve 13,895 individuals with in the vocational rehabilitation program during FFY 2023 and 13,895 individuals in FFY 2024. This includes all those clients with existing plans and those expected to be served under new plans/IPEs. See the following table in section C with a further breakdown of eligible individuals who will be served.

B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

Of the estimated 13,895 individuals receiving services, approximately 1,377 will receive supported employment services through funds provided under Title I and through Title VI program funds during FFY 2023.

C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION.

LRS concluded promulgation in March 2022 to change the Order of Selection from five (5) categories to three (3). As of August 15, 2022, all 3 priority categories will be open to serve all eligible applicants.

Order of Selection Priority Category	Title I or Title VI	Estimated Number to be Served
Category I - Most Significantly Disabled (MSD)	I	12,450
Category I - Most Significantly Disabled (MSD)	VI	162
Category II - Significantly Disabled (SD)	I	1,275
Category III - Non-Significantly Disabled (NSD)	I	8
Totals	I & VI	13,895

3. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VR SERVICES, BUT ARE NOT RECEIVING SUCH SERVICES DUE TO AN ORDER OF SELECTION; AND

The number of consumers on the waiting list by Order of Selection Category follows:

- OOS Category I - 0
- OOS Category II - 0
- OOS Category III - 0
- Total - 0

During FFY 2021 and FFY 2022, there were 4 individuals placed on a waiting list due to the closure of the Non-Significantly Disabled OOS Category. There are currently no individuals on the waiting list. Effective August 15, 2022, LRS will be able to serve all eligible applicants by opening OOS Category III.

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.

Cost for the VR Program:

LRS is projecting that for FFY 2023 the VR Program will have a total of $17,572,212 for direct service purchases for eligible consumers, and $26,046,346 to expend on Pre-Employment Transition services, staff salaries, and other administrative costs. Projected revenue is matching funds of $9,290,753 and Federal Section 110 Funds of $34,327,805. The numbers for each category below are projected using historical expenditures.

Projected cost to serve individuals with existing Individualized Plans for Employment:

Matching Funds: $1,917,000

Federal Section 110: $7,083,000

Total: $9,000,000

Projected cost for determining eligibility of new applicants:

Matching Funds: $99,064

Federal Section 110: $366,024

Total: $465,088

ORDER OF SELECTION

LRS concluded promulgation in March 2022 to change the Order of Selection from five (5) categories to three (3). Estimates of costs of services for each Order of Selection category are in the chart that follows. As of August 15, 2022, LRS will be able to serve all eligible applicants having opened OOS Category III. LRS will continue to provide services to those with plans of service in place as long as funding allows.

Category	Title I or Title VI	Estimated Funds	Estimated Number to be Served	Average Cost of Services
OOS Category I	I	$15,998,793	12,450	$1,284.96
OOS Category I	VI	$316,667	162	$1,954.73
OOS Category II	I	$1,249,952	1,275	$980.35
OOS Category III	I	$7,800	8	$975.00
Totals	I & VI	$17,572,212	13,895	$1,264.64

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

During the Louisiana Rehabilitation Council's quarterly meetings, the Director and LRS staff developed and reviewed agency goals and priorities. The Council provided input and feedback as part of State Plan development. The Council agreed to the state plan updates in order to carry out the vocational rehabilitation program and supported employment services. During the Council's meetings, the Director also provided up to date information on the progress of the vocational rehabilitation program in accomplishing goals and activities.

2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Goal & Priority I: To maximize opportunities for individuals with disabilities in achieving competitive integrated employment and promote self-sufficiency.

Goal & Priority II: To ensure that Louisiana Rehabilitation Services has necessary and qualified rehabilitation personnel, both professionals and paraprofessionals, to provide quality vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities to achieve competitive integrated employment and self-sufficiency.

Goal & Priority III: To increase the amount the state VR program draws down from the state's federal VR grant allotment.

The goals and strategies will remain aligned with the goals and strategies reported in PY 2020. New goals and strategies will be reviewed in PY 2022.

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;

The goals and priorities were based on an analysis of needs identified in the comprehensive statewide needs assessment, the SRC recommendations and performance accountability measures identified in WIOA. The needs assessment identified the need for expanded services

and outreach to youth with disabilities. After reviewing survey responses, strategies were developed for the following: (1) to utilize more web-based networks to reach more of this population who are tech-savvy and want to participate in services in more electronic methods; (2) to increase counselor presence statewide in the secondary education settings; (3) to provide more outreach to youth to make them aware of services available; (4) to collaborate with LDOEs and LEAs to expand services provision; and (5) to increase quality CRPs and collaborative programs to serve youth and prepare them for and assist them in obtaining employment.

Strategies were also developed to address needs identified such as lack of transportation, lack of providers for job readiness and job placement, and to provide additional training to staff to insure adequate knowledge to provide quality services.

If needed, the strategies reported from PY 2020 will be amended upon final development of revisions to agency goals and strategies.

B. THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

LRS is negotiating the following performance measures with our federal and core partners.

LRS updated the AWARE Case Management System to capture data on the following performance measures and completed an agreement with LWC's Unemployment Insurance section to import wage data for clients having employment data to assist in determining employment at the second and fourth quarter after exit.

1. Percent of program participants in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;

2. Percent of program participants 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; (baseline first year)

4. Percent of program participants obtaining a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program; (subject to clause (iii) Indicator relating to credential…program participants who obtain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent shall be included in the percentage counted as meeting the criterion under such clause only if such participants, in addition to obtaining such diploma or its recognized equivalent, have obtained or retained employment or are in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within 1 year after exit from the program.)

5. Percent 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

6. Determine the indicators of effectiveness in serving employers established pursuant to clause [(iv) Indicator for services to employers - Prior to the commencement of the second full program year after the date of enactment of this Act, for purposes of clauses (i)(VI), or clause (ii)(III) with respect to clause (i)(IV), the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education, after consultation with the representatives described in paragraph (4)(B), shall jointly develop and establish, for purposes of this subparagraph, 1 or more primary indicators of performance that indicate the effectiveness of the core programs in serving employers.])

Agency goals are intended to help increase performance and support the achievement of each WIOA performance indicator. The successful implementation of LRS Goals 1-3 can be measured by all WIOA performance indicators. Success of Goal and Priority #1, to maximize opportunities for individuals with disabilities in achieving competitive integrated employment and promote self-sufficiency, will be reflected in LRS meeting or exceeding all performance indicator targets. Strategies include collaboration with various entities that will assist individuals with disabilities in eliminating or reducing barriers to improve opportunities for success and employment and outreach to targeted populations. As LRS improves opportunities for the individuals it serves, performance will increase in all areas. The success of Goal and Priority #2, to ensure that LRS has necessary and qualified rehabilitation personnel to provide quality vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities to achieve competitive integrated employment and self-sufficiency, is also measured through data captured for all performance indicators. LRS strives to recruit and retain qualified staff to improve employment outcomes of individuals served. Identifying and providing training to improve the competencies of LRS counseling and Rehabilitation Employment Development Specialist staff will result in a positive impact to performance, as staff will be better equipped to provide quality services to the individuals they serve. Success of Goal and Priority #3, to maximize resources and pursue innovative means to leverage the state's full federal VR grant allotment, will result in the VR agency serving more individuals with disabilities, which will also improve the agency's performance in all areas. The development of goals and priorities is achieved through collaboration with the Louisiana Rehabilitation Council, training of staff, case management system updates, collaboration with state and nationwide wage databases, and collaboration with other partners. Through the goals developed, LRS seeks to increase employment outcomes statewide, support a more seamless transition for students with disabilities from high school to employment, ensure quality training and credentials to assist our customers in achieving higher wages in careers that they can advance in and to provide effective services to employers.

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.

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) completed a monitoring visit with Louisiana Rehabilitation Services in March 2018. The draft monitoring report has been received by LRS. The agency is in the process of addressing areas identified as needing improvement.

The FY 2018 monitoring process and final report provided the impetus for LRS to refocus on maximizing employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Prior to the monitoring, LRS focused on developing a robust method of delivering Pre-Employment Transition Services, however, the report helped LRS appropriately align staff and resources to maximize employment opportunities.

In addition, the Louisiana Rehabilitation Council provided input and recommendations to assist the agency in identifying areas of collaboration and opportunities for increased efficacy that contributed to the development of many of the goals and strategies identified in this plan.

The FY 2018 RSA Monitoring Report referenced above will be available in the near future on the RSA website. Information about the vocational rehabilitation program can be found at the following address:

https://rsa.ed.gov/sites/default/files/publications/fy2018-la-c.pdf

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

By March 2022, Louisiana Rehabilitation Services will conclude the promulgation process to change Order or Selection (OOS) by consolidating qualifying eligibility criteria from five (5) categories to three (3). The new Order of Selection (OOS) assures that individuals with the most significant disabilities receive priority for VR services. After determination of eligibility for VR services, each individual will then be classified by placement into one of the three following priority categories:

OOS Category I (Severe limitations in three or more functional capacity areas): An individual who has been determined eligible for VR services and:

1. Who has a significant physical or mental impairment which seriously limits three functional capacities (mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, motor skills, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome; and,

2. Whose VR can be expected to require multiple VR services over an extended period of time; and,

3. Who has one or more physical or mental impairments resulting from amputation arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, mental illness, mental retardation, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculoskeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), paraplegia, quadriplegia, other spinal cord conditions, sickle cell anemia, specific learning disability, end-stage renal disease, or another impairment or combination of impairments determined on the basis of an assessment for determining eligibility and VR needs to cause comparable substantial functional limitations.

*Definitions of terms in 2 above:

Multiple VR Services - are defined as vocational counseling and guidance and at least one other service needed to obtain, maintain, or advance in employment.

Extended Period of Time - Means that the individual requires VR services that are anticipated to extend three months or longer.

Order of Selection Category II (Severe limitations in one or two functional capacity areas): An individual who has been determined eligible for VR services, and:

1. Who has a significant physical or mental impairment which seriously limits one or two functional capacities (mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, motor skills or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome; and,

2. Whose VR can be expected to require multiple VR services over an extended period of time; and,

3. Who has one or more physical or mental impairments resulting from amputation, arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, mental illness, mental retardation, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculoskeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), paraplegia, quadriplegia, other spinal cord conditions, sickle cell anemia, specific learning disability, end-stage renal disease, or another impairment or combination of impairments determined on the basis of an assessment for determining eligibility and VR needs to cause comparable substantial functional limitations.

Order of Selection Category III An individual with a physical or mental disability:

1. Who has been determined eligible for VR services; and

2. Who does not meet the criteria of an individual with either a “most significant” or “significant” disability as defined in Categories I - II above.

An individual's placement in the Order of Selection shall not be based upon residency requirements; economic status; type of disability; age, sex, race, color, creed, or national origin; source of referral; or expected employment outcome.

Individuals shall be classified in the highest priority category for which they are determined qualified. Upon placement into a priority category, individuals shall be notified in writing of the priority categories, which category they have been placed in and their right to appeal their category assignment.

LRS shall provide for continuity of services once an otherwise eligible individual is selected for services and has begun to receive services under an IPE, irrespective of the severity of the individual’s disability. LRS will continue to provide needed VR services to all individuals with an existing Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

All services, including post-employment services, shall be available to individuals receiving services under an Order of Selection insofar as such services are necessary and appropriate to the individual's Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) in order to ultimately place them in successful employment.

All LRS policies and procedures governing the expenditure of funds, consumer financial participation, and use of comparable services and benefits are applicable to individuals receiving services under an Order of Selection.

LRS will review the above Order of Selection criteria and in collaboration with the LRC and CAP will determine changes needed to ensure that those individuals who are eligible to receive Supported Employment services are receiving them as long as funding is available to serve individuals with the most significant disabilities.

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER

The lack of full funding available from the state to match the total federal dollars available has impacted LRS’ overall ability to effectively serve many individuals with disabilities in Louisiana who could potentially become employed.

LRS continues to have difficulty maintaining adequate staff, resulting in reduced capacity to administer the program and serve consumers. In 1988, when the Order of Selection (OOS) was implemented, LRS had approximately 565 staff members on hand to administer the programs under the auspices of LRS. In PY 2021 this number declined to 157 (72% decrease). Specifically, Rehabilitation Counselors have decreased by 51% over the last sixteen years (from 142 in 2002 to 69 in 2021). LRS’ goal, as positions have been lost due to budget cuts, has been to maintain counselors above all other positions as indicated by the slower decline in counselor numbers as compared to other staff.

On March 20, 1988, LRS moved to providing Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services statewide through an OOS. This enabled LRS to continue providing services to those eligible, preserve its ability to accept applications, to provide diagnostic studies, to provide trial work experiences and to determine placement in the OOS.

LRS previously had five OOS Categories and the following numbers served fell under this classification system. On February 14, 2019, LRS opened Category IV and served 30 individuals in Category V. In October of 2019, 2 more were served from Category V. In January 2, 2020, 2 more individuals were served in Category V. As of March 2022, the Order of Selection was consolidated from five to three categories. Effective August 15, 2022, all 3 priority categories will be open to serve all eligible applicants. There are no individuals on the waiting list and all consumers who have been determined eligible are being served.

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS

LRS anticipates serving all individuals with existing plans of service. As of August 15, 2022, all Order of Selection Categories will be open for LRS to serve all eligible applicants.

Estimated Number of Individuals with Existing Plans of Service in the Next Program Year:

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services estimates that it will serve 13,895 individuals during Program Year 2023 in the Vocational Rehabilitation program. The estimated number of individuals who will exit with employment after receiving services is 1,303. The estimated number of individuals who will exit without employment after receiving services is 1,227. In addition, approximately 3,500 students with disabilities will be served through the Pre-Employment Transition Services program.

Projected Cost for the Vocational Rehabilitation Program in the Next Program Year:

LRS is projecting that the VR Program will need $17,572,212 for direct service purchases through plans of service in place for all priority categories. LRS will also have access to an additional $26,046,346 to serve potentially eligible students receiving Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), and to cover expenditures for staff salaries and other administrative costs. Projected revenue includes matching funds of $9,290,753 and Federal Section 110 Funds of $34,327,805.

D. TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER; AND

Priority Category	# of Individuals to be Served	Estimated # of Successful Closures	Average # of Days Services Provided for Individuals Exiting With Employment	Estimated # of Unsuccessful Closures	Average # of Days Services Provided for Individuals Exiting Without Employment	Time Within Goals are to be Achieved	Cost of Services
OOS 1	12,612	1,227	576	1,148	940	PY 2023	$16,314,460
OOS 2	1,275	76	593	79	819	PY 2023	$1,249,952
OOS 3	8	0	541	0	644	PY 2023	$7,800
TOTAL	13,895	1,303	575	1,227	932	PY 2023	$17,572,212

LRS notes that the average number of days that services are provided for individuals exiting with and without employment who are most significantly disabled are much less than those who are least significantly disabled. LRS will continue to investigate the causes for this, but in initial reviews discovered that participants in the least significantly disabled categories had IPEs/plans that were written for college training.

E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

All individuals within a higher priority category for services shall be served before individuals in the next lowest priority category are served. When it is impossible to serve all individuals within a priority category, individuals shall be placed on a deferred services waiting list and served in chronological order based on the date of application. In the event that the Order of

Selection is rescinded, individuals on deferred services waiting lists and in unserved categories will be contacted and served.

The number of consumers on the waiting list by Order of Selection Category follows:

- OOS Category I - 0
- OOS Category II - 0
- OOS Category III - 0
- Total - 0

In the last two PYs, there have been 4 individuals placed on a waiting list for OOS Category III (previously Category V). As funding would allow, periodically LRS opened the category in order to serve those individuals. Effective August 15, 2022, LRS will have opened OOS Category III, allowing all eligible applicants to be served without being placed on a deferred services waiting list.

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

Due to budgetary restrictions, Louisiana Rehabilitation Services does not elect, at this time, to serve eligible individuals in Order of Selection Categories not currently being served to assist them in maintaining employment.

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

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) will utilize Title VI funding to maintain the provision of intensive supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities, for the achievement of supported employment outcomes in competitive integrated employment.

The Order of Selection assures that individuals with the most significant disabilities receive priority for vocational rehabilitation services. Supported employment services will be provided to individuals with most significant disabilities in the following categories:

Order of Selection Category I - Severe limitations in four or more functional capacity areas.

The goals and plans of the program will be:

1. Expand the availability of customized employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.
2. Enhance the quality of supported employment services by improving the approval process and training requirements and options for contracted community rehabilitation programs and their staff.
3. To investigate and provide technical assistance and training opportunities for state office and field office staff to improve the supported employment service delivery system. The field staff will receive supported employment training directed at case management and quality supported employment services.
4. To coordinate with the Department of Health (Office of Behavioral Health, Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities- Support Waivers Program, and Medicaid Purchase Plan), the Louisiana Chapter of the Association for Persons in Supported

Employment (APSE), and the LSU Health Science Center Human Development Center in order to provide input to vendor agencies providing supported employment services and to solicit input from these agencies in the planning and implementation of quality supported employment services.

5. To coordinate with other agencies (public and private), employers and advocates to establish multiple options for extended services, including the use of natural supports, to ensure more successful supported employment outcomes.

Supported Employment Models Used by LRS:

LRS used an individual Job Coach model. It is estimated that approximately 130 individuals will be provided supported employment services with the funding available through the Title VI program in PY 2022.

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

LRS will use a milestone payment system to purchase services from Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) to provide intensive ongoing supports including customized employment, to assist individuals with the most significant disabilities to maintain competitive integrated employment by providing job placement, supported employment services, transition to extended services, and job stabilization.

Purchased supported employment services are identified and listed on the IPE and must be obtained through an approved Supported Employment CRP. Funding for extended services are provided by the CRP, or, sources other than LRS, except in the instance of a youth with a most significant disability when no other funding sources are available. In such instances, LRS will fund extended services for a period not to exceed four years (48 months) or until the youth reaches age 25, whichever comes first. IPE'S that include extended services for youth in supported employment services will be written for one year only and continued/amended annually until either services are no longer needed; another funding source is identified; services have been provided for 48 months or the youth reaches age 25.

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.

For youth in supported employment, other funding sources for extended services must be identified prior to the end of the 48 months or extended services provided by LRS and before the youth's 25th birthday. LRS will assist the youth with securing extended services funding through private pay, waiver funding through the Office of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, or Social Security Administration resources such as a Plan to Achieves Self Support (PASS) plan or Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWE) and any other identified sources available.

O. STATE'S STRATEGIES

1. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Goal I: To maximize opportunities for individuals with disabilities in achieving competitive integrated employment and promote self-sufficiency.

Objective A. Provide quality vocational rehabilitation services leading to competitive integrated employment outcomes for 1,500 eligible individuals with disabilities annually through PY 2023.

Strategy 1. Evaluate and monitor case record documentation to maintain at least a 90% average level of compliance with policy and procedures.

Strategy 2. Explore and utilize web-based networks in order to improve consumer employment outcomes.

Strategy 3. Identify and collaborate with employers to provide job development, on-the-job training and job placement.

Strategy 4. Increase Counselor presence in secondary education settings in order to improve provision of vocational rehabilitation services to transition students.

Strategy 5. Collaborate with Veterans program and Apprenticeship program at LWC to determine methods to increase outreach and successful employment outcomes.

Strategy 6. Increase resources for assistive technology assessments and devices to improve employment outcomes.

Strategy 7. Make all LRS documents available in accessible formats.

Strategy 8. Ensure LRS office buildings are 504 compliant.

Strategy 9. Expand employment opportunities though improved interfaces with professional organizations focused on employment.

Strategy 10. Increase outreach to targeted populations who are identified by the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment as being unserved/underserved, including those needing supported employment.

Strategy 11. Explore options for collaboration to provide transportation to consumers in rural areas.

Strategy 12. Explore options for collaboration to provide services to specific disability populations including those diagnosed with developmental/intellectual disabilities, autism, mental illness or addictive disorders, blind, blindness/deaf-blindness, deafness/hard-of-hearing or individuals who are students in transition.

Strategy 13. Explore strategies for certification of customized employment vendors statewide.

Strategy 14. Collaborate with LDH to determine if individuals receiving services in non-integrated settings or earning sub-minimum wages are interested in competitive integrated employment and eligible for VR services.

Objective B. To expend a minimum of 15% of LRS federal funding to make available Pre-Employment Transitions Services (Pre-ETS) to applicants and potentially eligible students with disabilities.

Strategy 1. Perform comprehensive statewide needs assessment to determine needs of students with disabilities.

Strategy 2. Expand outreach to students with disabilities to make them aware of VR services including Pre-ETS.

Strategy 3. Monitor the provision of Pre-ETS services to determine effectiveness and possible improvement to service delivery process.

Strategy 4. Collaborate with LDE and LEAs to expand service provision of Pre-ETS.

Strategy 5. Collaborate with employers to provide work based learning experiences to students with disabilities.

Strategy 6. Identify and collaborate with partners to provide support services to students in transition or receiving Pre-ETS services.

Strategy 7. Explore options to increase the number of Counselors dedicated to providing services to transition students.

Objective C. Increase the number of Randolph-Sheppard Managers earning at least $25,000 annually by expanding opportunities and enhancing consumer service delivery in the Randolph-Sheppard Program.

Strategy 1. Monitor all legislation, which might impact the program's preference (first choice at selecting to occupy available locations).

Strategy 2. Expand training opportunities for licensed blind managers to enhance skills, entrepreneurial abilities, and quality of service to customers.

Strategy 3. Consider merging locations with annual earnings below $25,000.

Strategy 4. Identify opportunities for new assigned and unassigned locations, including a Program Specialist staff position.

Strategy 5. Monitor existing Randolph Sheppard Managers to ensure they are completing the required paperwork and reporting properly.

Goal II: To ensure that Louisiana Rehabilitation Services has necessary and qualified rehabilitation personnel, both professional and paraprofessional, to provide quality vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities to achieve competitive integrated employment and self-sufficiency.

Objective A. Provide training resources to 100% of LRS staff in order to increase their efficiency in service provision through PY 2023.

Strategy 1. Implement upgrades to the Accessible Web-based Activity and Reporting Environment System (AWARE) software.

Strategy 2. Identify alternative methods of succession training for staff members interested in pursuing leadership positions.

Strategy 3. Provide in-service training to regional staff annually through a variety of methods as identified by training needs assessments/surveys and quality assurance reviews.

Strategy 4. Provide support for professional staff to obtain a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling.

Strategy 5. Develop and implement methods to increase recruitment and retention of qualified staff.

Strategy 6. Provide LRS staff with disabilities, written or electronic communication in accessible format(s) or provide other reasonable accommodations.

Strategy 7. Provide specialized training to Counselors working in caseloads serving consumers who are blind, deaf, deaf-blind, or hard-of-hearing.

Goal III: To increase the amount the state VR program draws down from the state's federal VR grant allotment.

Objective A. Work collaboratively with Partners to leverage funding in order to ensure that services to consumers with disabilities are accessed and utilized to the utmost extent by PY 2023.

Strategy 1. Continue collaboration with the Second Injury Fund (SIF) and request increase in funding to assist consumers in obtaining or maintaining employment.

Strategy 2. Explore and implement third party cooperative arrangements with public entities and/or establishment projects with Community Rehabilitation Programs and/or public/private non-profit entities based on the needs identified in the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment.

Objective B. Monitor and evaluate 100% of the Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) for quality and cost effectiveness of service provision in order to assure compliance with LRS standards through PY 2023.

Strategy 1. Monitor and evaluate CRPs through a Regional Biennial Renewal Process.

Strategy 2. Monitor and evaluate the cost effectiveness of service provision by reviews of a sample of CRPs through site visits on an annual basis.

Strategy 3. Annually measure consumer satisfaction with CRP services through a survey instrument.

Strategy 4. Conduct outreach to determine potential vendors who can collaborate to serve targeted populations in rural areas including, but not limited to, those who are veterans, have psychological disabilities, were formerly incarcerated, are recovering from addictive disorders or are individuals who are homeless with disabilities.

Strategy 5. Explore the use of a vendor quality instrument and/or questionnaire for counselors/consumers to be used to provide informed choice.

Objective C. Explore the use of technology to increase LRS' efficiency and any potential savings cost.

Strategy 1. Purchased necessary equipment and upgrade AWARE to go to a paperless case management system.

Strategy 2. Explore options to increase functionality of LRS staff in the community by utilizing new technologies and complementary work processes.

Strategy 3. Explore additional modules available as part of AWARE to increase efficiency.

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

In 2021, the AT Program Coordinator worked with Fiscal, Planning, and the CRP Bureau Administrator to update approved Rehabilitation Technology and Assistive Technology professionals, providers and vendors listed in our Technical Guidance and Assistance Manual for fee-for-service assessments and evaluations statewide. Innovations that have been introduced are PDF electronic signatures, ZOOM™ meetings between the AT Advisory Group, and plans to provide new AT Vendors & Providers with DocuSign™ formatted documents that will be filed and stored electronically, reducing turn-around time, corrections, and approvals.

LRS coordinates with Louisiana Assistive Technology Network (LATAN) on an expanded program, funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) to provide statewide demonstration, learning, lending, and purchasing assistance of assistive technology. LATAN is an approved vendor for providing a device rental service so consumers may have a more realistic trial use of an AT device before requesting that LRS provide them with said device.

LATAN also has a leasing & lease-to-own program as an added option to the loan financing program.

In the past two years, LATAN has been active in responding to the weekly Emergency Management for Disabled and Elderly Coalition (EMDAC) ZOOM™ calls with the Governor's Office of Disabled Affairs (GODA) and the Governor's Office for Homeland Security Planning (GOHSEP), Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS), Red Cross and FEMA. Calls identify the ongoing need to provide Assistive Technology (AT) assistance as indicated by the national disaster response system. This assistance includes responding to specific, mission requests for AT in the post evacuation, sheltering, and recovery phases of a declared Stafford Act, or local disaster.

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

LRS Counselors are required to conduct outreach to faculty and students statewide at high schools and colleges to educate consumers with disabilities, who are unserved or underserved, regarding available VR services. In addition, outreach is conducted at prisons for individuals in pre-release programs and at community functions regarding available services.

In rural areas, the counselors travel to meet with applicants/consumers in a convenient location to provide services and work with them to obtain employment. LRS Counselors are also using electronic means, including ZOOM™ meetings and electronic signatures, to provide enhanced and equal access to services for all applicants and provide services to consumers who either have difficulty with transportation or want to limit physical contact due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Based on needs identified in the needs assessment for transition students, outreach to local school districts continues to be conducted to identify those districts who are interested in a Third-Party Cooperative Arrangement for transition services to increase success and improve post-secondary outcomes for students with disabilities.

LRS maintains a strong collaboration with the Office of Behavioral Health, Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities and the Office of Aging and Adult Services to identify potential sources of referrals.

A Program Manager for LRS represents the agency as a member of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Professional Network (DEI-PN) through the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR). The DEI-PN's focus is to review opportunities to support State Agency requests for assistance with DEI initiatives; such as recommending or providing resources to help achieve goals (i.e. training material and reading lists), and recommend facilitators with expertise in DEI to assist in group discussions. The goal is to establish strategies and definable actions that foster equality of opportunity in the workplace; to better serve diverse consumers; and to gain an understanding the various challenges that historically marginalized social identity groups including Blacks, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), Asian / Pacific Islanders (AAP) and persons with disabilities, as well as other communities working to overcome adversities.

LRS works collaboratively with Section 121 VR programs to ensure that any service needs to Native Americans with disabilities are addressed. A Program Manager is assigned to provide technical assistance to the field concerning outreach to this population. Outreach is performed through presentations at events sponsored by Section 121 groups and at functions attended by Native Americans. A representative from Section 121 VR programs is on the State Rehabilitation Council and acts as a liaison between the two programs.

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)

LRS continues to review proposed ideas and initiatives for Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS).

The following strategies will expand and improve VR services for students and youth with disabilities who are transitioning from high school to postsecondary education and/or employment, and improve coordination with state and local secondary and postsecondary educational entities:

- In PY 2023, LRS will enter into a contract with an approved entity to pilot a program which will allow the contractor to hire and retain qualified vocational rehabilitation personnel to perform delegable case management functions for appropriate youth to receive Pre-Employment Transition Services and qualifying individuals with disabilities in need of Vocational Rehabilitation services.
- Continue to evaluate, revise, and develop policy, procedures, and staffing strategies to improve consistency and increase effectiveness in the provision of transition services.
- Continue to expand and increase partnerships with schools to facilitate the coordination and provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services to students with disabilities.
- Continue to expand and increase partnerships with state and local secondary and postsecondary educational institutions and organizations to facilitate the identification of best practices, leveraged resources, and improved coordination.

5. IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE

LRS monitors and evaluates 100% of the CRPs biennially for quality and cost effectiveness of service provision to determine what improvements may be needed as well as to assure compliance with established standards.

Based on the results of the last statewide needs assessment, LRS identified areas of the state where CRPs are unable to meet the current need or are not present to provide services. This information is used to explore funding options, facility and staffing needs to establish, develop or improve CRPs and LRS will consider these opportunities, as appropriate.

6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

LRS has created new layouts in the AWARE case management system for staff to better track and update cases that are in the denominator of certain performance indicators. Training has been provided to field staff statewide on the use of these layouts. Reports have been presented to field staff of regional performance to determine areas of better compliance with expectations. Areas of low compliance have been identified and field staff have been notified. LRS has agreements with the Louisiana Unemployment Insurance program and State Wage Interchange System(SWIS) for the receipt of wages on closed cases for reporting on second quarter after exit, median earnings for second quarter after exit and fourth quarter after exit.

7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

LRS continues to collaborate with LWC in identifying effective ways to integrate services and to be involved with the Workforce Commission and its fifteen (15) Workforce Development Areas. LRS is represented on each of the 15 boards and attends meetings as scheduled. There are fifteen (15) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) established with each of the 15 Workforce Development Boards (WDBs). Within the 15 Workforce Development Areas, 62 American Job Centers have been established. Fifteen cost allocation plans have been completed by the WDBs, and approved by all parties. LRS has a good working relationship with the American Job Centers and continues to pay expenses to the local American Job Centers for our participation, as per the local cost allocation plans. To improve knowledge regarding assistive technology and address other accessibility issues, LRS' Program Coordinator for Rehabilitation Technology continues to provide consultation to the American Job Centers. In addition, LRS' REDS serve as the LRS liaison for all American Job Centers within their region and include providing "LRS Public Awareness" as well as services to consumers such as job seeking skills techniques and employment development. LRS and LWC are committed to the success of the American Job Centers and work collaboratively to serve individuals with disabilities at assigned Centers.

As LRS continues to focus on increasing/enhancing quality employment outcomes, every Regional Office now has a REDS position that provides job development/placement assistance to consumers. This assistance may include direct job placement, job shadowing, work experience, on the job training, or custom solutions.

In addition, an Employment Initiative Program Coordinator serves as LRS' direct contact to the VR Business Network and distributes job leads and information to the regional offices. The Employment Initiative Program Coordinator continues to build relationships with employers by attending job fairs and other diversity meetings that may host employers. Through the State as a Model Employer (SAME) initiative launched in Louisiana, the LRS Employment Initiative Program Coordinator is tasked with contacting a state agency's Human Resource Director to inform them that a VR participant has applied for a vacant position with their agency. This initiative began in SFY 18-19, and a total number of 38 LRS consumers became successfully employed with the State of Louisiana. LRS continues to participate with Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) in the "Employment First" initiative, which was designed to provide employment as the first option for persons with developmental disabilities as an alternative to institutionalization, and to provide integration/independence in the community.

LRS continues to renew and revise existing local cooperative agreements, as applicable, with all Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in Louisiana. The LRS Transition Program Coordinator continues to collaborate and partner with LDOE, OCDD, Work Incentive Planning Program, Office of Community Services, LWC, and the Office of Youth Development in an effort to network, share information and utilize comparable benefits to enhance VR services to transition students. The primary focus of LRS' collaboration is to identify and address barriers (e.g. policies, eligibility process, resource allocation); assure effective service provision through the support of local interagency core teams, provide cross-agency training, outreach, engage in capacity building of young adults and family outreach efforts; provide continued support of innovative models and practices related to transition; and provide information and technical assistance. The Program Coordinator provides guidance and information to the Rehabilitation Counselors regarding specific transition issues. Training will continue to be provided statewide. VR Counselors are encouraged to provide services, when feasible, to students determined appropriate for workplace readiness training.

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) awarded Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) and Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) a five-year Disability Innovation Fund (DIF) grant to develop and use career pathways that will assist VR-eligible individuals with disabilities to obtain or advance in competitive integrated employment (CIE) in demand jobs in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine (STEMM). The Consortium seeks to remedy long-standing barriers to career advancement and expand economic opportunity for

workers with disabilities. LRS will partner with Southern University's (SU) Department of Rehabilitation and Disability Studies who will lead the efforts in the project, entitled Validation of Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) Interventions for VR Customers- A Career Pathway for Quality Employment and Upward Mobility in STEMM Fields: Project STEMM-UP, by providing needs assessments, intervention development, staff training, technical assistance, and evaluation. SU will employ Career Pathway Coordinators to assist LRS participants using SCCT interventions and career pathways for quality employment and upward mobility in STEMM fields. SU staff will also train LRS staff to use these interventions and techniques to provide widespread use of these methods across the state and for use after the project is completed.

8. HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

LRS will be conducting a strategic planning session in 2022 and the results of the triennial needs assessment that was conducted will be reviewed. At that time, LRS will update its strategic plan, and develop goals, priorities, and strategies to address the needs identified. The strategies were also reviewed by the LRC in order for them to participate and give feedback. These strategies will support collaborative efforts, identify initiatives needed, determine funding requests, and improve services to consumers with disabilities. Staff members will be appointed to coordinate and conduct activities to achieve identified goals and strategies.

B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

LRS will continue to explore opportunities to incorporate innovative methods of service delivery to improve consumer employment outcomes and expansion of opportunities. LRS will continue to utilize I & E funds for the SRC with a budget of $12,900 and SILC with a budget of $120,993 for each PY 2023 and PY 2024.

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.

Strategies to improve access include evaluation of all LRS offices, publications and all other electronic media utilized by consumers. LRS uses information from the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, as well as consumer, staff and vendor input to identify areas where access can be improved.

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

The following summarizes LRS' objectives/goals and the progress that has been made toward reaching them for PY 2022. State VR agencies submit a state plan annually to RSA to identify the goals and priorities of the state in carrying out the program.

Goal I: To maximize opportunities for individuals with disabilities in achieving competitive integrated employment and promote self-sufficiency.

Objective A. Provide quality vocational rehabilitation services leading to employment outcomes for 2,000 eligible individuals with disabilities annually through PY 2022.

Strategy 1. Evaluate and monitor case record documentation to maintain at least a 90% average level of compliance with LRS policy and procedures.

Progress: LRS quality assurance staff randomly selected and reviewed 228 consumer service records during the 2021 review cycle (January 1, 2021, through December 31, 2021). Samples were drawn statewide from records in *Service* and *Closed Rehabilitated* statuses to review the following areas of casework for compliance: Application, Eligibility, Assessment, IPE, Supervision, Closed Rehabilitated, and Fiscal. The statewide rate of counselor compliance with agency documentation requirements delineated in the QA-1 monitoring form was measured at 94.8% (≥90% is considered "Satisfactory") for the 2021 review cycle. This compliance rating represents a decrease (.6%) from the 2020 review year which was measured at 95.4%. The sample size for the 2021 review year was in compliance with RSA recommendations (2%) based on total consumer population.

Each of the eight regions achieved a "Satisfactory" rating during the 2021 review cycle for casework documentation compliance measured by the monitoring form. Regional scores ranged from 90% to 98%. Corrective action recommendations resulting from QA monitoring activities for the 2021 review year have been implemented. The QA-1 monitoring form was revised to incorporate changes in LRS guidelines implemented over the past 12 months.

Strategy 2. Explore opportunities for consumers to participate in Telework in order to increase employment outcomes.

Progress: Telework employment opportunities have increased since March of 2020 due to accommodations made by employers in response to the pandemic. While there is no certainty that the remote jobs being posted will be one of permanence, LRS Rehabilitation Employment Development Specialists (REDS) inquire about remote jobs if their consumer is a good fit for such positions. Currently, there are a number of various positions such as Customer Account Specialist, Clinical Care Coordinator, Health Insurance Navigator, Remote Call Center Representative, CSR, Service Representative, and Virtual Order Taking Specialist at companies such as TSD Global, Ochsner Health, Cox Communications, Central LA Area Health Education Center, and BHS.

Strategy 3. Identify and collaborate with employers to provide job development, Work-Based Learning Experiences, and job placement.

Progress: Through collaboration with the LRS Rehabilitation Employment Development Specialists (REDS) and local businesses throughout the state, 163 jobs were developed leading to successful job placements. Additionally, LRS vendors work with businesses throughout the year in developing jobs and placing consumers.

Strategy 4. Increase Counselor presence in secondary education settings in order to improve provision of vocational rehabilitation services to transition students.

Progress: Pre-Employment Transition Services counselors have been assigned to all public schools throughout the state.

Strategy 5. Coordinate with employers on transition services for youth and students with disabilities.

Progress: Pre-Employment Transition Services counselors and CRPs have identified employers and placed students with disabilities into Work-Based Learning Experiences.

Strategy 6. Increase resources for assistive technology assessments and devices to improve employment outcomes.

Progress: The state-approved list of assistive technology and rehabilitation technology providers/vendors is being updated, re-organized, and reformatted using hyperlinks and URL

addresses to access technical and clinical references and websites for Counselors and Administrators, and referral forms made available to the regional offices. Four new clinic-based rehabilitation providers have been added to provide mobility and transportation assessments and specifications to allow mobility impaired workers to access public and private transportation options while using a wheeled mobility system for their daily use.

Strategy 7. Make all LRS documents available in accessible formats.

Progress: All documents can be provided in alternative formats, such as braille, large print, alternate languages, etc. upon request.

Strategy 8. Ensure LRS office buildings are 504 compliant.

Progress: The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) Equal Employment Officer is the point-of-contact for issues related to Section .504 and .508 of Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended (ADAA) and Uniform Federal Access Standards (UFAS). LRS' ADA Program Coordinator assisted in providing technical assistance (TA) to the LWC Jobs mobile computer laboratory operations manager, which included access and egress, and computer workstations on board the mobile lab.

Strategy 9. Expand employment opportunities through improved interfaces with professional organizations focused on employment.

Progress: The Rehabilitation Employment Development Specialists and Employment Initiatives Program Coordinator participate in Job Fairs, Society of Human Resource Managers, Mayor's Commission on Disability, Business Service, Re-entry meetings and Chamber of Commerce meetings. The REDS meet various employers weekly; and, along with the Employment Initiatives Program Coordinator, participate in virtual and in-person job fairs to gather information about employment opportunities.

Strategy 10. Increase outreach to targeted populations who are identified by the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment as being unserved/underserved, including those needing supported employment.

Progress: The results of the most recently conducted Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment are in section (J) Statewide Assessment above. The results of this assessment are being used to target areas of outreach.

Strategy 11. Explore options for collaboration to provide transportation to consumers in rural areas.

Progress: The Louisiana Department of Transportation Development (DOTD) has re-established the Statewide Human Services Transportation Stakeholders Planning efforts. An LRS Program Coordinator serves on this multi-agency workgroup intended to provide improved coordination, inclusion, and connectivity between urban, rural fixed-route, and on-demand transit services statewide. DOTD will survey planners, providers, and passengers of the public transportation systems. Results from the survey will be used in planning systems improvements.

Strategy 12. Explore options for collaboration to provide services to specific disability populations including those diagnosed with developmental/intellectual disabilities, autism, mental illnesses or addictive disorders, blindness/deaf-blindness, deafness/hard-of-hearing or individuals who are students in transition.

Progress: LRS has a fee-for-service agreement with Southeastern Louisiana University, Nicholls State University, University of Lafayette, Baton Rouge Community College, Bossier Parish Community College, and the LSU Human Development Center to provide services to autistic and developmental/intellectual disability populations. LRS also has thirteen (13) Third Party

Cooperative Arrangements with Local Education Associations (LEAs) throughout the state to provide Pre-Employment services to students in transition.

Strategy 13. Explore potential of establishing a program in Baton Rouge mirroring Café Reconcile.

Progress: LRS investigated establishing this program in the Baton Rouge area and determined that a similar program was already established.

Strategy 14. Explore potential of establishing a program to provide training to individuals with autistic spectrum disorders.

Progress: LRS has developed fee-for-service agreements with Southeastern Louisiana University, Nicholls State University, University of Lafayette, Baton Rouge Community College, Bossier Parish Community College, and the LSU Human Development Center to provide services primarily to consumers with autism.

Strategy 15. Explore how to determine if vocational training programs for industry-based certifications are qualified or certified to provide quality vocational training that results in competitive integrated employment outcomes.

Progress: LRS will continue to work with the Workforce Investment Council to explore this further.

Strategy 16. Collaborate with Louisiana Department of Health to determine if individuals interested in competitive employment and in Sheltered Workshops are eligible for VR services.

Progress: LRS is in the process of renewing the Memorandum of Understanding with the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities to ensure a seamless referral process to LRS for individuals interested in competitive integrated employment. LRS Counselors provide information and referrals to individuals employed in Sheltered Employment to offer the opportunity to pursue competitive integrated employment. Whenever an individual or his or her representative informs LRS of their desire to obtain employment, an application for VR services is completed. If it is determined that the individual can benefit from VR services and an IPE is developed to provide necessary services for the achievement of an employment outcome. In the instance that an individual refuses services or is determined ineligible, a referral is made to other appropriate agencies for community-based services.

Objective B. To expend a minimum of 15% of LRS federal funding to make available Pre-Employment Transitions Services (Pre-ETS) to applicants and potentially eligible students with disabilities.

Strategy 1. Perform comprehensive statewide needs assessment to determine needs of students with disabilities.

Progress: Students with disabilities were surveyed to determine needs and the results are being used to assist with strategies, outreach, and activities. Please refer to Section j. “Statewide Assessment” for results from the most recently conducted comprehensive statewide needs assessment.

Strategy 2. Expand outreach to students with disabilities to make them aware of VR services including Pre-ETS.

Progress: Pre-ETS counselors throughout the state attend IEP meeting, career fairs, and other school functions to make them aware of LRS services.

Strategy 3 Monitor the provision of Pre-ETS services to determine effectiveness and possible improvement to service delivery process.

Progress: Pre-ETS counselors monitor vendor activities in the schools to ensure delivery of appropriate services and determine any improvements needed.

Objective C. Increase the number of Randolph-Sheppard Managers earning at least $25,000 annually by expanding opportunities and enhancing consumer service delivery in the Randolph-Sheppard Program.

Strategy 1. Monitor all legislation, which might impact the program's preference (first choice at selecting to occupy available locations).

Progress: This is monitored annually during the legislative session.

Strategy 2. Expand training opportunities for licensed blind managers to enhance skills, entrepreneurial abilities, and quality of service to customers.

Progress: Managers are provided upward mobility training annually. In the most recent program year, we began reimbursing registration fees for Randolph-Sheppard Managers who attend the National BLAST or Sagebrush conferences. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, the National Federation of the Blind and Randolph-Sheppard Vendors of America have conducted their conferences and training in a virtual environment utilizing ZOOM™ or similar technology. Since most of these conferences/trainings were offered free of charge, a concerted effort was made to forward all available offerings from national organizations to each blind vendor in the state.

Strategy 3. Consider merging locations with annual earnings below $25,000.

Progress: As managers exit existing facilities, a systematic evaluation of the facility and potential for earning $25,000 or higher is undertaken. For those facilities that are not deemed to fall within that category, opportunities for merging with existing facilities and/or converting them to unassigned vending locations are investigated.

The Randolph-Sheppard Program was able to make some progress concerning merging locations; however, these efforts were severely hampered by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The least affected locations were the postal processing centers, the vending machines at chemical plants, and the Federal City Marine headquarters. Most of our vending counters have re-opened; however, profitability has been a challenge with many of the facilities having no more than 30% of the population on location.

During the year, we combined the vending locations at the Shreveport Police Station and the Bossier Parish Courthouse. This resulted in an increase of over 37% in the manager's earnings.

In an effort to increase Randolph-Sheppard Manager income at existing facilities, we have worked to improve product selection by upgrading equipment at multiple locations, including the Chabert Medical Center and the Mineral Management Building locations.

Strategy 4. Identify opportunities for new assigned and unassigned locations, including a staff position.

Progress: We will continue to pursue this goal pending availability of funds and positions.

Goal II: To ensure that Louisiana Rehabilitation Services has necessary and qualified rehabilitation personnel to provide quality vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities to achieve competitive integrated employment and self-sufficiency.

Objective A. Provide training resources to 100% of staff in order to increase their efficiency in service provision through PY 2022.

Strategy 1. Implement upgrades to the Accessible Web-based Activity and Reporting Environment System (AWARE) software.

Progress: All upgrades were implemented through PY2020 to correlate with the state and federal guidelines. All staff were trained on the changes in AWARE and were instructed on the information needed to address these changes. Supervisors were given instructions on monitoring the new information and changes in AWARE. During the New Counselor Academy, the new Counseling staff were trained on various functions of AWARE including layouts, reports, activities due, and other case management tools to assist with managing timelines and case flow. Special attention was given to measurable skills gains, credentials, and educational goals.

Strategy 2. Identify alternative methods of succession training for staff members interested in pursuing leadership positions.

Progress: Succession training is provided through the State's Comprehensive Public Training Program, mentoring LRS provides, and cross training when applicable. Staff members participate based on interests and career advancement goals.

Strategy 3. Provide in-service training to regional staff annually through a variety of methods as identified by training needs assessments/surveys and quality assurance reviews.

Progress: LRS provides in-person training, live video training, video-recorded training, and archived training to accommodate staff needs. In-person training is a very effective training method that allows staff to communicate with state office personnel and to relay field concerns. Each region faces a variety of obstacles that differ from region to region. Video training has allowed more flexibility to reach staff across the state on a more frequent basis without requiring state travel. Archived video training is a vital resource for staff having scheduling conflicts who are not able to attend live video training or want to refresh themselves on methods or procedures. Having a variety of training methods has allowed LRS to reach more staff in various ways to communicate the necessary information.

Strategy 4. Provide support for professional staff to obtain a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling.

Progress: Professional staff are encouraged to complete their Master's Degree and are provided with information on Colleges and Universities that offer scholarships. In PY 2020, we had one Rehabilitation Counselor complete her Master's Degree through the University of Massachusetts in Boston. New Rehabilitation Counselors have expressed interest in obtaining their Master's Degree once they become more familiar with the VR process and more comfortable with their job duties.

Strategy 5. Develop and implement methods to increase recruitment and retention of qualified staff.

Progress: Staff are offered numerous opportunities to attend conferences and trainings to improve competencies and skills. Most of these were held virtually during 2020 due to the pandemic. Staff are encouraged to submit any training request they find on their own that they wish to participate to the training department for consideration. Job related trainings are highly encouraged to enhance skills and knowledge about disabilities. Continuing education units can be provided by LRS for internal training events to assist staff with maintaining certifications. We encourage staff to assist with hosting interns to provide insight and ground level training to potential recruits.

Strategy 6. Provide LRS staff with disabilities, written or electronic communication in accessible format(s) or provide other reasonable accommodations.

Progress: Staff are provided training materials via recording, in braille, or in other alternate formats upon request.

Goal III: To maximize resources and pursue innovative means to leverage the state's full federal VR grant allotment.

Objective A. Work collaboratively with Partners to leverage funding in order to ensure that services to consumers with disabilities are accessed and utilized to the utmost extent by PY 2020.

Strategy 1. Explore and utilize web-based networks in order to improve consumer employment outcomes.

Progress: LRS Counselors utilize LWC's HIRE database to assist consumers in locating employment. In addition, the State Wage Interchange System Agreement is used to allow LRS access to wages of consumers working out of state in order to report successful outcomes. The AWARE system updates improve the collection of performance data. In 2021, the Ticket Tracker System became available to LRS giving staff another means of accessing wages for those consumers that receive SSI or SSDI. LRS continues to look at more innovative ways to conduct activities more efficiently.

Strategy 2. Continue collaboration with the Second Injury Fund (SIF) and request increase in funding to assist consumers in obtaining or maintaining employment.

Progress: During Program Year 2020, LRS served 1026 consumers with SIF funds and spent the total amount allotted of $2,511,737. Quarterly reports are made to the SIF Board. In 2018 the Louisiana legislature approved the Second Injury Fund authorization bill and moved to remove the "sunset rule" that would have ended in 2020.

Strategy 3. Explore and implement third party cooperative arrangements with public entities and/or establishment projects with Community Rehabilitation Programs and/or public/private non-profit entities based on the needs identified in the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment.

Progress: LRS has negotiated Third Party Cooperative Arrangements with thirteen (13) entities throughout the state including school boards, charter schools, and other public entities to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services.

Strategy 4. Explore options to increase the number of Counselors dedicated to providing services to transition students.

Progress: All LRS Rehabilitation Counselors are trained to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services statewide.

Strategy 5. Collaborate with Veterans program and Apprenticeship program at LWC to determine methods to increase outreach and successful employment outcomes.

Progress: The Employment Development Program Coordinator works closely with counterparts of the state's Veterans program, and Apprenticeship programs. Dependent upon a consumer's chosen occupation, LRS staff encourage participation in Registered Apprenticeships as skills are learned through a structured program of supervised on-the-job training for 2,000 hours and involves the development of manual, mechanical, and technical skills broad enough to be applicable in like occupations in the industry.

Objective B. Monitor and evaluate 100% of the Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) for quality and cost effectiveness of service provision in order to assure compliance with agency standards through PY 2020.

Strategy 1. Monitor and evaluate CRPs through a Regional Biennial Renewal Process.

Progress: The Bureau of Community Rehabilitation Programs completed programmatic reviews of CRP's across the state. Of those found to have deficiencies, feedback was provided regarding non-compliant areas and corrective action was taken to enable the CRP to become compliant. The triennial renewal was completed. Non- compliant vendors were required to take corrective action prior to renewal. CRPs are continuously monitored at the regional level for quality performance as quality indicators must be met prior to payment for services. In an effort to make the renewal process more manageable in consideration of the number of vendors to LRS staff, the renewal process was changed from every three (3) years to every two (2) years. LRS serves eight (8) regions across the state. Regions assigned odd numbers (1,3,5 and 7) renew in years ending in odd numbers (e.g. 2021, 2023, 2025, etc.) and regions assigned even numbers (2,4,6, and 8) renew in years ending in even numbers (e.g. 2022, 2024, 2026, etc.)

Strategy 2. Monitor and evaluate the cost effectiveness of service provision by reviews of a sample of CRPs through site visits on an annual basis.

Progress: Most CRPs are paid on a fee-for-service basis. LRS reviews rates for services when it appears that a rate is too low or if a request for review is received.

Strategy 3. Annually measure consumer satisfaction with CRP services through a survey instrument.

Progress: Because this annual performance measure was removed from LWC's Operational Plan in 2019, the last survey was completed in SFY 2018 and indicated an approval rating of 75% for the CRPs.

Strategy 4. Conduct outreach to determine potential vendors who can collaborate to serve targeted populations in rural areas including, but not limited to individuals who are veterans, mentally ill, previously incarcerated, recovering from addictive disorders, or homeless.

Progress: Regional Managers determine areas of service in which vendors are needed within the regions that they serve. In the event that a shortage of service providers is identified within a region, the manager will conduct outreach to determine interest by the public or local service organizations qualified to provide the targeted services. Since the enactment of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, LRS has been working diligently to expand opportunities to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services to youth with disabilities. Additionally, in PY2020 LRS Administrative Staff participated in webinars and trainings in collaboration with staff from the Office of Behavioral Health in preparation for the implementation of Individual Placement Services (IPS) to individuals with behavioral health issues.

Strategy 5. Explore the use of a vendor quality instrument and/or questionnaire for counselors/consumers to be used to provide informed choice.

Progress: LRS has considered the use of a "report card" for vendors; however, the decision was made not to pursue this effort as the agency does not have the ability to create and maintain a report card and make it publicly accessible.

Objective C. Explore the use of technology to increase LRS efficiencies in processes to realize cost savings.

Strategy 1. Explore requirements to upgrade AWARE to a paperless system.

Progress: LRS has implemented the option to sign documents in AWARE electronically to assist consumers to complete paperwork during the pandemic. LRS also purchased digital signature pads for counselors to assist in becoming more paperless.

Strategy 2. Explore options to increase functionality of LRS staff in the community by utilizing Telework, new technologies, and complementary work processes.

Progress: In 2020, LRS staff received new laptops, signature pads, and ZOOM™ accounts to assist them in providing virtual services during the pandemic. These greatly aided the counselors and consumers in continuing services while offices were closed to the public. It also enabled Counselors to telework when needed.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

LRS continues to be unable to obtain the full state match to access all of the federal funding available to the state. However, the most significant challenges have been with retention and hiring of sufficient staff to serve the population of individuals with disabilities in Louisiana. Due to the disparity in the rates of pay between private and public vocational rehabilitation counselors, LRS frequently has Rehabilitation Counselors who have been in their positions for one or two years leave LRS once they have gained enough experience to be hired in private rehabilitation positions paying more.

The lack of sufficient staff that are available to provide the outreach and services needed in the state impacts the morale of current staff who are stretched to provide coverage for multiple vacant positions in addition to their own.

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

One thousand ninety-three (1,093) individuals received supported employment services in PY 2021. The supported employment goals and plans are identified in sections (n) Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI Funds and (q) Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services.

One hundred sixty-two (162) individuals were provided supported employment services with the funding available through the Title VI, Part B program in PY 2021. Individuals with the most significant disabilities in Order of Selection Category I will be served under this program.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

Factors that had a negative impact on reaching the goals include the following: (1) Insufficient state match to draw down the grant award, (2) Staff turnover due to a number of factors, (3) Challenges with recruiting and retaining staff due to low entry salaries, (4) Challenges with filling vacant positions that resulted from natural attrition; and (5) Disruption to service delivery due to relocation of State Office and a metropolitan regional office.

3. THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

Through strategies implemented by LRS, such as: layouts created in the AWARE case management system, training conducted for staff on the layouts and associating the relevance for capturing this data, regional reports on compliance or non-compliance, and Workforce Partner collaborations to retrieve necessary data, the following information was captured to indicate the effectiveness of LRS performance on these accountability indicators.

	PY 2019	PY 2020
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	40.5%	52.4%

	PY 2019	PY 2020
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	10.9%	47.2%
Median Earning 2nd Quarter after Exit	$3,703	$4,074
Credential Attainment	5.3%	36.7%
Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs)	44.4%	42.0%

Data was also captured for MSG's for PY 2017 to reflect 19.5%, and 21.2% for PY 2018.

4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED

During FY 2021, LRS used the following innovation and expansion funds per allowable expenditures identified in the federal regulations 34 CFR 361.35 to support the salaries, travels, and activities of the Louisiana Rehabilitation Council staff person and its members, and the Statewide Independent Living Council, as well as the AWARE case management system:

Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC): $1,938

Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC): $88,030

Total: $89,986

Innovation and Expansion funds (I&E) support the travel of the Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC) members to one day quarterly meetings. I&E funds support the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) Resource Plan as outlined in the Louisiana State Plan for Independent Living which includes SILC operations, staff salary, travel and activities of the SILC. The SILC holds two-day quarterly meetings and attends conferences consistent with the State Plan.

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

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services will provide and improve the quality of supported employment services through the Title VI Program, and the Title I, Vocational Rehabilitation Program to individuals with the most significant disabilities through the use of fee-for-service reimbursement, or LRS funded grants and/or contracts awarded to supported employment providers.

The goals of the program will be:

1. To fund the vendors necessary to provide supported employment services to eligible consumers. These vendors will provide services to a diverse population of individuals with significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.
2. To ensure the quality of supported employment services provided to eligible consumers by improving the approval process including training requirements and options for contracted community rehabilitation programs and their staff.
3. Expansion of the availability of customized employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

4. Provide technical assistance and training opportunities to state office and field office staff to improve the supported employment service delivery system. The field staff will receive supported employment training directed at case management and quality supported employment services.

5. To work cooperatively with other agencies (public and private), employers and advocates to assist in developing employment opportunities and multiple options for extended services to ensure more successful supported employment outcomes.

6. To coordinate with the Department of Health (OBH and OCDD -Support Waivers Program, and Medicaid Purchase Plan), University of North TexasWorkplace Inclusion and Sustainable Employment (UNTWISE), the Louisiana Chapter of the Association for Persons in Supported Employment (APSE), and LSU Health Science Center Human Development Center in order to provide input to vendor agencies providing supported employment services and to solicit input from these agencies in the planning and implementation of quality supported employment services.

Supported Employment Models used by LRS:

LRS uses an Individual Job/Job Coach model. It is estimated that at least 1,377 individuals can be provided supported employment services who are also eligible for long-term supports.

2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES

The time required for transition to extended services is as follows:

1. Supported employment models:

Individual Placement Model - Under the individual placement model, individuals may receive Supported Employment for up to 24 months unless the counselor and the individual determine that services need to be extended in order to assist and individual with maintaining employment, or if the individual is a youth. For youth with the most significant disabilities, they may receive up to four years of extended services or until the youth turns 25 years old, whichever comes first. At this point, the individual must remain stable in employment for a minimum of 90 days. Stabilization occurs when the consumer has made substantial progress toward meeting the hours per week goal indicated on an IPE and has reached a point where intervention is no more than 25% of the consumer's normal work time.

2. Extended Follow-along (transition):

The consumer must meet the following requirements before the Counselor can provide for the transition of the consumer from LRS to the provider of extended services:

a. Job placement is stable for the consumer;

b. The consumer has substantially met the goal for number of hours of employment as indicated on an IPE; and,

c. The Supported Employment Provider agency agrees to provide on-going support including the implementation of natural supports needed to maintain the consumer's employment. Once an individual has completed supported employment services for up to 24 months, or longer if agreed upon, the individual would transition to extended services. Youth with the most significant disabilities, may receive up to four years of extended services or until the youth turns 25 years old, whichever comes first. At this point, the individual must remain stable in employment for a minimum of 90 days.

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

The designated State unit is Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS).

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

The Office of Workforce Development (OWD)

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

Tavares Walker

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

Assistant Secretary, Office of Workforce Development, Louisiana Workforce Commission

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	Tavares Walker
Title of Signatory	Assistant Secretary, Office of Workforce Development
Date Signed	04/04/2022

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	

The State Plan must include	Include
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 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	

The State Plan must include	Include
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	
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)	No
4.d. Determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act	

The State Plan must include	Include
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 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	

The State Plan must include	Include
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 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	

The State Plan must include	Include
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
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	48.4%	53.5%	48.4%	55.3%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	43.2%	48.6%	43.2%	50.6%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$3,911	$4,169	$3,911	$4,252
Credential Attainment Rate	32.7%	38.0%	32.7%	39.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	38.0%	46.0%	38.0%	48.0%
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

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)

The Louisiana TANF programs are administered and supervised by the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services.

Needy families with, or expecting children, will be provided financial assistance and/or other services to include education, job preparation, work and support services under Louisiana's Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP), Kinship Care Subsidy Program (KCSP), and Strategies to Empower People (STEP) Program. A needy family is defined as a family residing in the state who meets the eligibility requirements listed below for FITAP and KCSP respectively.

For FITAP eligibility a dependent child must be: Under 18 years of age, or 18 years of age and enrolled in a secondary school or its equivalent.

For KCSP eligibility, a dependent child must be under 18 years of age.

Unborn children are not eligible for FITAP. A pregnant woman who has completed the fifth month of pregnancy may be certified if otherwise eligible (unborn is not eligible). To qualify for cash assistance, a child must reside in the home of a parent or other qualified relative who is responsible for the day-to-day care of the child. The following relatives are qualified relatives:

Grandfather or grandmother (extends to great-great-great);

Brother or sister (including half-brother and half-sister);

Uncle or aunt (extends to great-great);

First cousin (including first cousin once removed);

Nephew or niece (extends to great-great);

Stepfather or stepmother; and

Stepbrother or stepsister.

These may be biological or adoptive relatives.

Resources are assets or possessions that a household can convert to cash to meet needs. All resources are excluded when determining eligibility.

Income is any gain or benefit to a household that has monetary value and is not considered a resource. All income is counted when determining eligibility and payment amounts except income from certain sources determined not countable by the department.

Kinship Care Subsidy Program (KCSP)

Income is any gain or benefit to a household that has monetary value and is not considered a resource. All income is counted when determining pretest eligibility except income from certain sources determined not countable by the department. In order to meet this requirement, the gross countable income of the caretaker relative's KCSP income must be less than 150% of the federal poverty threshold for the family size. For purposes of this pretest, the caretaker's KCSP income unit is defined to include the child, the caretaker relative, and anyone residing in the home for whom the caretaker relative claims financial responsibility. Members who receive federal or state foster care payments or SSI are not counted in the family size. For purposes of this pretest, income is defined as countable income belonging to any member of the KCSP income unit.

Income After Pretest

The child is determined eligible for KCSP if the child's countable income is less than $450. If the child's income is $450 or more, the child is ineligible. Payment amount is $450 a month for each eligible child. A child who receives federal or state foster care payments or SSI is not eligible to receive KCSP benefits.

Strategies to Empower People (STEP) Program

To assist Louisiana families in becoming economically self-reliant so that their dependence on government benefits for basic needs is minimized, the department implemented the STEP program so that cash assistance recipients, with certain exceptions, are actively engaged in meaningful activities designed to enable their transition from cash assistance to self-reliance. It is further intended that cash assistance recipients demonstrate active and diligent personal responsibility in achieving self-reliance through employment and increased workplace literacy. All appropriate state agencies responsible for employment, training, and educating Louisiana's citizens are expected to cooperate in the pursuit of this goal.

Once an applicant is certified for assistance, a comprehensive assessment will be conducted if needed and may include workplace literacy, basic skills and educational attainment, interests and aptitude related to employment, barriers to employment, need for education, supportive services such as child care and transportation, and other supportive services. Specialized assessments can occur for issues that arise after an initial assessment has been completed and could include substance abuse, domestic violence, mental health screening, or others as determined by the department. STEP is using a research model of case management that develops Executive Functioning in participants through coaching and goal development. The case management model assists participants to develop goals that lead to identifying barriers to employment and plans to address these barriers.

Supportive services provided to clients include but are not limited to:

A full range of case maintenance and case management services designed to lead to self-sufficiency; Transportation assistance; Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits; Medicaid; Child care; and TANF-funded services and other services necessary to accept or maintain employment.

Services may be provided to persons participating in the Family Assessment and to persons referred by the analyst to other activities, such as drug counseling, prior to their participation in a work activity.

Supportive services also include providing services to FITAP recipients participating in approved activities necessary to meet exemptions to the FITAP time limits. Appropriate supportive services may also be provided to allow participation in educational activities for FITAP recipients who are exempt from STEP.

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)

To assist Louisiana families in becoming economically self-reliant so that their dependence on government benefits for basic needs is minimized, the department implemented the STEP Program effective October 1, 2003, so that all cash assistance recipients, with certain exceptions, are actively engaged in meaningful activities designed to enable their transition from cash assistance to self-reliance. In June of 2020, the Department of Children and Family Services developed a section specifically to focus on employment and training programs for

participants in the STEP program and the Department's other Employment and Training programs for participants receiving SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and for parents involved in the Child Support Enforcement Program. It is intended that DCFS will assist STEP participants in both addressing the barriers to employment and developing goals that demonstrate active and diligent personal responsibility in achieving self-reliance through employment and increased workplace literacy. All appropriate state agencies responsible for employment, training, and educating Louisiana's citizens are expected to cooperate in the pursuit of this goal. These state agencies can cooperate in these pursuits by collaborating in developing a career pathways model for STEP participants

Work-eligible members of cash assistance programs are required to participate in STEP activities when they are certified to receive cash assistance to gain readiness for work or when that member has received 24 months of such 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).

Work-eligible recipients shall participate in appropriate work activities as agreed upon in the Family Success Agreement. Work-eligible is defined as families containing an adult under 60 years of age, or teen head of household that is not disabled, incapacitated, or caring for a family member who is disabled or incapacitated as documented by a medical expert to which the status of disability is clearly established and explained.

Work-eligible excludes cases in which only the child portion of need that is unrelated to a sanction or penalty, known as a child only case, is considered in determining eligibility.

The work activities may include but are not limited to:

Unsubsidized employment; Subsidized employment; Unpaid work experience; On-the-job training; Job search/job readiness; Vocational education; Satisfactory attendance at a secondary school or in a course of study leading to a certificate of general equivalence, in the case of recipients who have not completed secondary schools or received a certificate; Education directly related to employment; Job skills training directly related to employment; Community service; and the provision of child care to an individual who is participating in community service. Participants who are found not to possess basic workplace or basic literacy skills, as determined by an assessment, shall combine employment and job readiness and job search activities with activities designed to increase their basic and workplace literacy skills.

DCFS enters into Memorandum of Understanding with Workforce Commission Partners to ensure that participants receive services through the WIOA funded programs that they are eligible for. Each Memorandum recognizes that TANF participants have unique needs and that services should be tailored to address this vulnerable population that frequently has difficulty accessing employment and training programs.

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

Work-eligible recipients are assigned a case manager who jointly performs an in-depth assessment of the participant's family strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and barriers. The assessment helps develop a strategy to determine the programs that the participant will need to become self-sufficient. A family success agreement is then prepared. The family success agreement is a mutually developed contract between the participant and the department.

The case manager, also known as a STEP coach provides services utilizing a research model of case management that develops Executive Functioning in participants through coaching and

goal development. This model emphasizes the need of the STEP coach to engage the participant. This engagement is marked by the assistance of the participant in developing goals that address barriers to poverty. The STEP coach recognizes that the participant has internal and external barriers related to poverty that must be addressed before the participant can successfully maintain and retain employment. Services referred to provide work activities and supportive services must also align with the particular needs of the participant, with the goal of creating a career pathway. A career pathway aligns State Workforce Agencies, State Adult Education Agencies and State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies to develop a framework, resources and tools to develop, implement and sustain incremental steps that lead participants to work experience, certifications and opportunities that lead to sufficient income to support their families.

The work-eligible recipient then participates in the appropriate work activities as agreed upon in the family success agreement.

STEP referrals include non-work eligible clients. Non-work eligible clients are also learning to use executive functioning to help them set goals in preparation for their futures and meeting current medical needs for themselves and their families.

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)

Client information may only be used for the administration of the program. Use and disclosure of information will be restricted in accordance with all applicable state laws and federal regulations. Use of information for commercial, personal, or political purposes is prohibited.

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)

Through an agreement with the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC), DCFS will fund the Jobs for America's Graduates Louisiana (JAG-LA) Program to keep in school those students at risk of failing in school, to capture out-of-school youth in need of a high school education, to provide an avenue for achieving academically, and to assist students in ultimately earning recognized credentials that will make it possible for them to exit school and enter post-secondary education and/or the workforce. Services provided will meet TANF Goal 3 to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock teenage pregnancies by providing intervention and improved life prospects for students who show evidence of failing, dropping out or engaging in negative behaviors that can lead to dependency, out-of-wedlock births, imprisonment, and/or other undesirable outcomes which may lead to the detriment and impoverishment of youth. Eligible participants in the JAG-LA Program face at least two designated barriers to success that include economic, academic, personal, environmental, or work related barriers.

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)

The Department of Children and Family Services funds the Family Violence Prevention and Intervention Initiative. The Department currently contracts with sixteen family violence prevention providers who are located in all areas throughout the State of Louisiana. In addition to providing immediate shelter for survivors of family violence, providers are tasked with outreach, education, and training. Family violence prevention providers regularly provide training and education on the problem of, and the laws pertaining to, statutory rape. These

training and educational activities are provided to law enforcement officials, schools, local community organizations, and targeted adult men's organizations.

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)

Needy families, through the FITAP, KCSP, and STEP programs will be provided financial assistance, job preparation, work and supportive services. Financial assistance is delivered through Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT). EBT Restrictions The department has promulgated rules to establish provisions necessary to prevent cash assistance provided under the FITAP and KCSP programs from being used in any electronic benefit transfer (EBT) transaction in a liquor store, gambling casino or gaming establishment, or any retail establishment that provides adult—oriented entertainment in which performers disrobe or perform in an unclothed state for entertainment purposes, or at any retailer for the purchase of an alcoholic beverage, a tobacco product, or a lottery ticket.

Louisiana continues to provide recipients access to their benefits and related services in each of the 64 parishes based on the policies and procedures in effect. All of the major ATM networks accept the Louisiana Purchase (EBT) cards and many carry the Louisiana Purchase logo on the machines to allow the recipient to know that the card is accepted.

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)

First time users of the EBT card are provided with a list of banks with no “out of network” surcharges. Information regarding transaction fees and surcharges, including a list of banks that assess no surcharge to recipients, is publicly available on the department’s website. Recipients may still access their benefits at grocery stores that sell both groceries and intoxicating liquors as long as the retail establishment does not sell exclusively or primarily intoxicating liquors. Also, recipients may still access their benefits at establishments that offer gaming activities as long as those gaming activities are incidental to the principal purpose of the business.

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)

The TANF Programs will be operated statewide in all political subdivisions of the state. No specific provisions will be applied to families moving to Louisiana from another state.

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)

Each recipient must be a United States citizen, a non-citizen national (person born in an outlying possession of the United States [American Samoa or Swain’s Island] on or after the date the U.S. acquired the possession, or a person whose parents are U.S. non-citizen nationals), or a qualified alien as defined below:

1. An alien who is lawfully admitted for permanent residence under the Immigration and Nationality Act;
2. An alien who is granted asylum under Section 208 of such act;
3. A refugee who is admitted to the United States under Section 207 of such act;
4. An alien who is paroled into the United States under Section 212(d)(5) of such act for a period of at least one year;
5. An alien whose deportation is withheld under §243(h) of such act (as in effect immediately before the effective date [April 1, 1997] of §307 of Division C of Public Law 104-208) or §241(b)(3) of such act (as amended by Section 305(a) of Division C of Public Law 104-208);
6. An alien who is granted conditional entry pursuant to §203(a)(7) of such act as in effect prior to April 1, 1980;
7. An alien who is a Cuban or Haitian entrant as defined in § 501(e) of the Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980;
8. An alien who has been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty in the United States by a spouse or parent, or by a member of the spouse's or parent's family residing in the same household as the alien if the spouse or parent consented to, or acquiesced in, such battery or cruelty. The individual who has been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty must no longer reside in the same household with the individual who committed the battery or cruelty. The agency must also determine that a substantial connection exists between such battery or cruelty and the need for the benefits to be provided. The alien must have been approved or have a petition pending which contains evidence sufficient to establish:
    a. The status as a spouse or a child of a United States citizen pursuant to clause (ii), (iii), or (iv) of §204(a)(1)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act; (INA); or
    b. The classification pursuant to clause (ii) or (iii) of Section 204(a)(1)(B) of the INA; or
    c. Cancellation of removal under section 1229b of the INA (as in effect prior to April 1, 1997); or
    d. The status as a spouse or child of a United States citizen pursuant to clause (i) of §204(a)(1)(A) of the INA, or classification pursuant to clause (i) of Section 204(a)(1)(B) of the INA;
9. An alien child of a battered parent or the alien parent of a battered child as described in §1223A.8;
10. An alien who is a victim of a severe form or trafficking in persons, or an eligible relative of a victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons; or
11. An alien who is an Iraqi or Afghani immigrant who has been granted Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) status. An alien who is a qualified alien and who enters the United States on or after August 22, 1996, is not eligible for any Federal means-tested public benefit for a period of 5 years beginning on the date of the alien's entry into the United States unless:

Exception for refugees and asylees:

- An alien who is admitted to the United States as a refugee under section 207 of the Immigration and Nationality Act [8 U.S.C. 1157;

- An alien who is granted asylum under section 208 of such Act [8 U.S.C. 1158];
- An alien whose deportation is being withheld under section 243(h) of such Act [8 U.S.C. 1253] (as in effect immediately before the effective date of section 307 of division C of Public Law 104-208) or section 241(b)(3) of such Act [8 U.S.C. 1231 (b)(3)] (as amended by section 305(a) of division C of Public Law 104-208);
- An alien who is a Cuban and Haitian entrant as defined in section 501(e) of the Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980;
- An alien admitted to the United States as an Amerasian immigrant as described in section 1612 (a)(2)(A)(i)(V)[1] of this title;
- An alien who is a victim of a severe form or trafficking in persons, or an eligible relative of a victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons;
- An alien who is an Iraqi or Afghani immigrant who has been granted Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) status.

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)

The DCFS Bureau of Appeals is responsible for providing a system of hearings that must meet the due process standards set forth in federal regulations, state laws and Goldberg vs. Kelly 397 US 254 (1970).

Each applicant is informed by the application form and by the appropriate notification forms (as decisions are made affecting his case) of his right to a hearing, of the method by which a hearing may be requested, and who may present his case.

The claimant may represent himself at the hearing or be represented by any authorized agent.

When a decision is made on a case, the client is notified and is allowed the following number of days from the date of the notice to request a Fair Hearing:

- FITAP 30 days,
- STEP Program 30 days,
- KCSP 30 days.

The client may appeal at any time during a certification period for a dispute of the current level of benefits. An appeal is timely requested if the appeal request:

- Is delivered on or before the due date; or
- Mailed on or before the due date. If the appeal request is received by mail on the first working day following the due date, there shall be a rebuttable presumption that the appeal was timely filed.

Recipients of FITAP and KCSP who request a Fair Hearing prior to the expiration of the Advance Notice of Adverse Action or within 13-days of the date of Concurrent Notice must have benefits continued at, or reinstated to, the benefit level of the previous month, unless:

- The recipient indicates he does not want benefits continued;

- A determination is made at the hearing that the sole issue is one of existing or changing state or federal law; or,
- Change unrelated to the appeal issue affecting the client's eligibility occurs while the hearing decision is pending and the client fails to request a hearing after receiving the notice of change.

A decision by the hearing authority shall be binding on the Department of Children and Family Services and shall summarize the facts of the case, specify the reasons for the decision, and identify the supporting evidence and the pertinent state or federal regulations. The decision shall become a part of the record. The household shall be notified in writing of the:

- Decision,
- Reasons for the decision,

Available appeal rights, and Right to pursue judicial review of the decision.

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.

DCFS assists individuals interested in training for occupations related to elder care. Referrals are made on behalf of individuals to the Louisiana Community College System and Health Professional Opportunity Grants (HPOG) programs.

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)

<u>State Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)</u>

The State EITC is provided to families with dependents and includes the amount of the State EITC that exceeds the taxpayer's tax liability (amount owed prior to application of any other credits). It is available to Louisiana residents who claim the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

These services meet TANF goal 2 to end the dependence of needy parent on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.

<u>Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA)</u>

The department through an agreement with the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA) collects information on tuition assistance expenditures provided to eligible low income students who are pursuing postsecondary education for the purpose of claiming eligible expenditures that may count as Maintenance of Effort (MOE) effective TANF State Plan FY 2011 for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) grant. The eligible tuition assistance expenditures that may be claimed as MOE are from the following programs:

- Louisiana Go Grants — A need based student financial aid grant that supports nontraditional and low income students in their pursuit of postsecondary education. To receive the Go Grants, a student must be receiving a federal Pell grant and have remaining financial need, as determined in accordance with a formula established by the Louisiana Board of Regents. The formula for determining financial need is subject to change on a yearly basis in order to ensure that the greatest number of students will benefit from the funds appropriated for the program by the Louisiana Legislature.

- Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) — A state scholarship program for Louisiana residents who attend Louisiana postsecondary institutions. These services meet TANF goal 3, to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies, by providing financial aid to eligible students who are pursuing postsecondary education. The services provide the students with the tools necessary to reduce risky behaviors and increase positive decision making.

Financial eligibility for these services attributable to TANF/Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funds is limited as follows:

Certification for TANF MOE for Go Grant expenditures will be those students who receive Pell Grants and have a remaining financial need and are defined as dependent by the U.S. Department of Education. The amount used for TANF maintenance of effort is not duplicated in determining match or maintenance of effort for any other program.

TANF eligibility for students receiving TOPS will be determined by receipt of a Go Grant. Certification for TANF MOE for TOPS expenditures will be for those students who simultaneously receive TOPS and Go Grants and are defined as dependent by the U.S. Department of Education.

Services are considered non-assistance by the department. State dollars associated with Louisiana Go Grants and TANF eligible TOPS expenditures may be applied to MOE funding requirements for Louisiana's federal TANF grant.

Louisiana State Child Care Tax Credit

This is an annual refundable tax credit for low—income individuals and families who have a qualified dependent who is under the age of 13, and the parent or qualified relative has paid someone to provide care so that they can work or look for work.

Eligibility is limited to those families with minor children who meet the Louisiana Department of Revenue Child Care Tax Credit eligibility standards.

These services meet TANF Goal 2, to end dependence of needy parents on government benefits, by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage.

Louisiana 4 Public Pre—Kindergarten Program (LA4)

The LA4 program provides high quality early childhood education for low-income 4-year-olds in participating public school districts and charter schools.

Services are for children of at risk families in which the child is one year younger than the eligible age for kindergarten and is financially eligible to receive free or reduced school lunch meals pursuant to the Federal Child Nutrition Program as documented by a completed application for such meals, whether or not such meals are sought.

These services meet TANF goal 3, to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and TANF goal 4, to encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families by placing children in learning environments at the preschool level to foster an interest

in learning, increase literacy levels, and increase the likelihood of developing responsible behavior.

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
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).—	

The State Plan must include	Include
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;

This plan presents Louisiana's proposal to use grant funding to meet the SNAP E&T requirements of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 and utilize 50/50 federal funds to serve participants in defined areas of the state as outlined in this plan. Policies are defined in Chapter 4 of the DCFS Policy Management System, SNAP E&T Handbook, and the Louisiana Administrative Code-Title 67, Social Services. Louisiana intends to meet the SNAP E&T requirements through contractual agreements with Community Based Organizations and Community and Technical Colleges known as SNAP E&T Providers. Louisiana has twenty-one SNAP E&T Providers which provide SNAP E&T services to SNAP recipients in the . • Liberty's Kitchen serves youth in the Greater New Orleans area. • The Calcasieu Parish Police Jury (CPPJ) Human Services Department offer services for residents of Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis, and Vernon parishes. • Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Louisiana (GWSELA) offer services to individuals in the Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard, St. Tammany, St. Charles, St. John, and Calcasieu parishes. • Covenant House serves youth in the Greater New Orleans Metropolitan area. • Reconcile New Orleans

(Café Reconcile) serves youth in the Orleans, Jefferson, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles. • HOPE Ministries offer services in Ascension, Assumption, Avoyelles, Bossier, Caddo, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberville, Lafayette, Livingston, Natchitoches, Pointe Coupee, Rapides, Red River, St. Helena, St. Landry, Webster, West Feliciana, and West Baton Rouge parishes. • Louisiana Green Corps offer services in Orleans and Jefferson parishes.• Youth Empowerment Project serve youth in the Greater New Orleans Metropolitan area. • New Opportunities Vision Achievement offer services for residents in Ouachita, Richland, Morehouse, Madison, Tensas, East Carroll, and West Carroll parishes. • Center for Employment Opportunities offer services to residents in Orleans, Jefferson, and St. Tammany parishes. • New Orleans Women & Children's Shelter offer services to residents in the Greater New Orleans Metropolitan area. • Café Hope offer services to residents in Greater New Orleans Metropolitan area. • Family Promise of St. Tammany offer services in St. Tammany and Tangipahoa parishes. • Louisiana Community & Technical College System offer services to residents statewide. • New Orleans Career Center offer services to residents in Greater New Orleans Metropolitan area. • Operation Restoration offer services to residents in Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard, Plaquemines, St. Charles, St. John, St. James, East & West Baton Rouge, and Madison.• New Orleans Family Justice Alliance offer services to residents in Jefferson, Orleans, St. Bernard, and Plaquemines parishes.• Operation Restoration offer services to residents statewide.• Project Lazarus offer services to residents in Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard, St. Tammany, Plaquemines, Tangipahoa, Washington, St. John, St. James, and Iberville. • Propel America offer services to youth statewide. • YouthForce NOLA offer services to youth in Orleans parish.The SNAP E&T provider services aligned to industry and employer career paths. Options include high-demand careers in hospitality, construction, healthcare, information technology, and others.The following components are offered through the SNAP E&T Program: Job Search Training, Job Retention, Education – Basic/Foundational Skills Instruction, Education - Career/Technical Education Programs or other Vocational Training, Education – Work Readiness Training, Work Experience – Internship, Work Experience – On-the-job Training, and Work Experience – Transitional Jobs – Subsidized by E&T.• Job Search Training is designed to enhance the job search skills of participants by providing instruction in job seeking techniques and motivation and self–confidence. Job Search Training activities may include, but are not limited to: Employability assessments, resume writing, job placement services, Instruction and support related to seeking employment, workplace etiquette workshops, and career planning. • Job Search Training not to exceed 120 hours per month unless the participant volunteer for additional hours. To get the most out of the component, participants would need to have the ability to read. Participants are not required to have a specific reading level however, participants are screened to determine reading level and complete an employability assessment by providers in order to determine the level of employability as well as a willingness to learn and adapt to changes in a work environment. Individuals would need to be habitually unemployed and/or difficulty maintaining employment. The estimated monthly cost is 410,405.00.• Job Retention is designed to assist participants in achieving satisfactory performance, retain employment and to increase earnings over time. Job retention services such as case management, job coaching, dependent care assistance and transportation assistance for a minimum of 30 days not to exceed 90 days to individuals who has secured employment. The participant must have secured employment after or while receiving other employment/training services under the E&T program. Only individuals who have received other employment and training services under the E&T program are eligible for job retention services. There is no limit to the number of times an individual may receive job retention services as long as the individual has re-engaged with E&T prior to obtaining new employment. SNAP Works has a validation that will not allow you to have less than a mimimum of 30 days and no more than 90 days. The SNAP E&T participant must have obtained employment after completion of a SNAP E&T component. The estimated monthly cost is $286,999.00.• Education – Basic/Foundational Skills Instruction is designed to offer 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. Such programs include Adult Basic Education (ABE), basic literacy, and high school equivalency (GED, HiSET). Participants must be out-of-school and at least 16 years of age and be willing to participate in test preparation or instruction, take the practice test to qualify for the HiSET exam, and take the HISET exam. Basic/Foundational Skills not to exceed 120 hours per month unless the participant volunteers for additional hours.The estimate monthly cost is $111,664.25.• Education – Career/Technical Education Program or other Vocational Training are organized activities at the post-secondary level that provide individuals with the academic and technical knowledge and skills necessary to prepare for further education and for careers in current or emerging employment sectors. Programs are primarily designed for those who are beyond the age of compulsory high school attendance. Ideally, such programs should be employer-driven and lead to industry-recognized certificates or credentials. Certificates or recognized credentials may include Certified Nursing Assistance, American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute (AHLEI) certificate, National Retail Federation (NRF) certificate, Certified Production Technician (CPT), Certified Logistics Associate (CLA), Louisiana Economic Development (LED) FastStart's Certification 4 Manufacturing (C4M), Manufacturing Skill Standards Council's (MCSC), National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) Core Education. Participants must be at least 18 years of age. SNAP E&T participants are assessed to determine their educational and training level and must score at an 8th grade level on the TABE. In addition, SNAP E&T participants are required to meet the prerequisites for the program of study. Career/Technical Education Programs or other Vocational Training not to exceed 120 hours per month unless the participant volunteers for additional hours.The estimated monthly cost is $291,929.25.• Education – Work Readiness is designed to include skill assessment and educational remediation services that prepare individuals for the workforce. Work readiness skills may include both foundational cognitive skills such as reading for information, applied mathematics, locating information, problem solving, and critical thinking and non-cognitive skills, or soft skills, which are defined as personal characteristics and behavioral skills that enhance an individual's interactions, job performance, and career prospects such as adaptability, integrity, cooperation, and workplace discipline. Participants are expected to engage in informational sessions with providers to get an understanding of the program. Participants are expected to be at an 8th grade reading level. To get the most out of the component, participants would need to have the ability to, comprehend as well as a willingness to learn, ready to accept employment, and adapt to changes in a work environment. Work Readiness Training not to exceed 120 hours per month unless the participant volunteers for additional hours.The estimated monthly cost is $230,559.50.• Work Experience – Internship is designed to have sustained interactions with industry or community professionals in real world settings to the extent practicable, or simulated environments at an educational institution that provides firsthand engagement with the tasks required in a given career field, that are aligned to curriculum and instruction. Work-based learning emphasizes employer engagement, includes specific training objectives, and leads to regular employment. In addition, internships is a planned, structured learning experience that takes place in a workplace for a limited period of time. Activities will provide participants with culinary skills to place them in culinary jobs; increase academic and critical skills in construction to prepare participants for employment along with industry certifications and credentials; assist participants in navigating educational barriers to develop social and professional skills needed in healthcare, automotive, customer service and graphic arts.SNAP E&T participants are required to complete the necessary education and training activities to gain skills in a real workplace environment. Successful completion of work readiness classes with is required for participants to participate in the internship component, with at least 80% attendance. The level of effort varies by providers. However, internships will not exceed 120 hours per month unless the participant volunteers for additional hours.The estimated monthly cost is $148,202.00.• Work Experience: On-the-Job Training is designed to have sustained interactions with industry or community professionals in real world settings to the extent practicable, or simulated

environments at an educational institution that provides firsthand engagement with the tasks required in healthcare, culinary arts, construction, landscaping, computer coding and IT and are aligned to curriculum and instruction. Participants will receive in-person tutoring to meet educational goals while training to training to enter the laboratory healthcare field, culinary arts, construction, landscaping, computer coding and IT. Upon completion of the training, the employer is expected to retain the individuals as regular employees. SNAP E&T Participants are expected to engage in informational sessions with providers to get an understanding of the program. Participants are expected to be at an 8th grade reading level. Participants are required to complete the necessary education and training activities to gain skills in a real workplace environment. After completion of On-the-Job Training, the SNAP E&T participants should be willing to accept suitable employment. Level of effort varies by providers. However, On-the-Job Training not to exceed 120 hours per month unless the participant volunteers for additional hours.The estimated monthly cost is $158,695.42.• Work Experience: Transitional Jobs – Subsidized by E&T is designed to have sustained interactions with industry or community professionals in real world settings to the extent practicable, or simulated environments at an educational institution that provides firsthand engagement with the tasks required in a given career field, that are aligned to curriculum and instruction. Work-based learning emphasizes employer engagement, includes specific training objectives, and leads to regular employment. In addition, Transitional Jobs is a work based learning program with a goal to establish a work history for individuals who are otherwise unemployable. Transitional jobs allow the individual to develop specific workplace skills necessary to attain and retain employment with paid wages subsidized by SNAP E&T. Transitional employment include specific training objectives and leads to the entry into, and retention in regular unsubsidized employment in landscaping. Training objectives include, project management as it relates to time, completing multiple tasks, and expectations for the job from the employer/Transitional Jobs partner; Professional presentation; Risk management and safety; Equipment operation; Customer service; Effective communication and Digital literacy. Participants are expected to work up to 8 hours per day for 3 to 4 days per week up for three to four months before securing unsubsidized employment.SNAP E&T participants are required to complete the necessary education and training activities to gain skills in a real workplace environment. SNAP E&T Participants are expected to engage in informational sessions with providers to get an understanding of the program. Participants are expected to be at an 8th grade reading level. The SNAP E&T participants should be willing to transition to suitable unsubsidized employment.Transitional Jobs – Subsidized by E&T not to exceed 120 hours per month unless the participant volunteers for additional hours. Providers track the participant's components hours as well as the participant's progress in the SNAP E&T Program in SNAP Works. SNAP E&T staff monitor data entered for participants on a monthly basis.The estimated monthly cost is $34,753.25.

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;

The SNAP E&T providers are required to provide case management services to all SNAP E&T participants which includes conducting assessments to identify and address barriers, developing Individualized Employment Plans for monitoring activities/components, providing continuous supportive services, and assisting with job placements. The SNAP E&T participants' cases are managed through SNAP Works. The SNAP E&T providers provide ongoing case management services to all SNAP E&T participants. Case management includes conducting assessments to identify and address barriers, developing Individualized Employment Plans for monitoring activities/components, providing continuous supportive services, and assisting with

job placements. Progress monitoring, longitudinal data, participant referrals to other entities, and outcomes are tracked in SNAP Works. In addition, the SNAP E&T providers offer wrap around services.
XII. Conciliation Process (if applicable

DCFS utilizes referrals of individuals from community based organizations and community/technical colleges, therefore, individuals are self-initiated into the SNAP E&T program through the SNAP E&T provider of choice. SNAP E&T provider schedules an appointment with the individuals to provide an overview of the specific program and to pre-screen the individuals to ensure they are an appropriate fit for the program. Once the individual is identified as an appropriate fit for the program, the SNAP E&T provider enters the social security number in SNAP Works to determine if the individual receives SNAP benefits. If the individual receives SNAP benefits, the SNAP E&T provider has the individual to sign an agreement attesting that they choose to participate in the SNAP E&T program and then completes the orientation and comprehensive assessment either the same day or an appointment is scheduled for a later date. Once the comprehensive assessment is completed, the SNAP E&T provider completes the Individualized Employment Plan (IEP) with the individual.

SNAP E&T staff utilizes emails, phone calls, Zoom meetings, site visits, and SNAP Works to communicate with the SNAP E&T providers. In addition, there is a quarterly SNAP E&T provider meeting and an annual training provided to the SNAP E&T providers. Information shared with the SNAP E&T Providers includes but not limited to policy updates, State agency changes/updates, process improvements, contracts, invoices, budgets, and best practices.
b) How is the referral communicated to participants and what information about E&T are E&T participants given when they are referred? (e.g. information about accessing E&T services, case management, dates, contact information)?
DCFS utilizes referrals of SNAP eligible participants from community based organizations and community/technical colleges, therefore, individuals are self-initiated into the SNAP E&T program. The individual initiate contact with the SNAP E&T provider of choice. The SNAP E&T provider schedules an appointment with the individual to provide an overview of the specific program and to pre-screen the individual to ensure they are an appropriate fit for the program. Once the individual is identified as an appropriate fit for the program, the SNAP E&T provider has the individual to sign an agreement attesting that they choose to participate in the SNAP E&T program. The SNAP E&T provider enters the social security number of the individual into SNAP Works to verify the SNAP case status. The SNAP E&T providers provide the same services rendered to individuals who receive SNAP benefits to an individual who does not receive SNAP benefits.The State agency informs individuals orally about the SNAP E&T program during the interview process as well in the written consolidated notice for work requirements. SNAP E&T providers has the option to send correspondence to SNAP E&T participants through SNAP Works. DCFS is currently working to brand the SNAP E&T program so that SNAP E&T materials are created and readily available to distribute. The notices available in SNAP Works are as follows: Appointment Notice, SNAP E&T Referral Closing, Employment Plan Closing, and Missed Appointment Notice.

The SNAP E&T participants take part in orientation, case management, a component, participant reimbursements, and referrals to other entities for other supportive services such as mental health counseling which are not paid with SNAP E&T funds.

DCFS utilizes referrals of SNAP eligible participants from community based organizations and community/technical colleges, therefore, individuals are self-initiated into the SNAP E&T program. SNAP Works is used to communicate within the State agency and the SNAP E&T providers.

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;

For FFY 2023, the total 100 federal funds allocated to Louisiana is $1,444,624.00. The total amount of 50/50 funds is $18,860,621.00. The total state share is $9,430,310.50 and the total federal share is $10,874,934.50.

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;

Louisiana operates a voluntary SNAP E&T program. The following persons are exempt from work registration requirements:• Persons under age 16 or age 60 or older. An individual is subject to the work registration requirement beginning the month after his 16th birthday. An individual becomes exempt from the work registration requirement effective the month of his 60th birthday.• Persons age 16 or 17 who are not the head of the household or person 16 or 17 attending school, or enrolled in an employment-training program on at least a half-time basis.• Persons age 18 through 59 enrolled at least half-time in any recognized school (including high school), training program, or institution of higher education. Students enrolled at least half-time in an institution of higher education must meet the student eligibility requirements to meet this exemption. A student will remain exempt during normal periods of class attendance, vacation, and recess if he intends to return.• Parents or other household members personally providing the care of a dependent child under age 6 or an incapacitated person of any age. Verify that the person is needed to care for the incapacitated person.• Regular participants in drug or alcohol treatment and rehabilitation programs.• Persons who are temporarily or permanently disabled (physically or mentally).• A pregnant woman must register unless a doctor's statement verifies incapacity.• Persons working an average of 30 hours per week or receiving average weekly gross earnings equivalent to 30 multiplied by the federal minimum wage. Migrant and seasonal farm workers under contract or similar agreement with an employer or crew chief to begin work within 30 days are exempt.• Persons subject to and complying with STEP or have met the minimum work registration requirement through STEP.• Persons receiving unemployment compensation benefits (UCB). A person who has applied for but is not yet receiving UCB is also exempt if that person is complying with the work requirements of the Louisiana Workforce Commission. The percentage the state intends to exempt from E&T participation is 100%. These exemptions will be re-evaluated on at least an annual basis.

5. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POPULATION THE STATE AGENCY INTENDS TO PLACE IN E&T;

Targeted populations volunteer to participate. Self-initiated SNAP E&T participants enrolled at:

- AimHigh Education are 18 and older and reside statewide.
- Ben D. Johnson are 18 and older and reside in Natchitoches parish.
- Cafe Hope are between the ages of 16 and 24 who reside in Jefferson, Orleans, and Plaquemine parishes.

- Reconcile New Orleans (Café Reconcile) are between the ages of 16 and 24 who reside in Orleans, Jefferson, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles parishes.
- CPPJ are 18 yrs and up who reside in Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis, and Vernon parishes.
- Catholic Charities are 18 and older who reside in East Baton Rouge parish.
- Center for Employment Opportunities are 18 and older who reside in Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard, and St. Tammany parishes.
- Covenant House are between the ages of 16 and 23 who are experiencing homelessness and who reside in the Greater New Orleans Metropolitan area.
- Family Promise of St. Tammany are varies ages who are experiencing homelessness and reside in St. Tammany parish.
- GWSELA – Goodwill Technical College are 18 yrs and older who reside in Ascension, Assumption, East Feliciana, East Baton Rouge, Orleans, Livingston, Jefferson, Plaquemines, Pointe Coupee, St. Bernard, St. Tammany, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, Terrebonne, West Feliciana, and West Baton Rouge parishes.
- HOPE Ministries are between the ages of 18 and 65 who reside in Ascension, Assumption, Avoyelles, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberville, Livingston, Pointe Coupee, West Feliciana, and West Baton Rouge parishes.
- Louisiana Green Corps are between the ages of 16 and 50 who reside in Orleans and Jefferson parishes.
- Louisiana Community and Technical College System (BRCC, LDCC, FTCC) are 18 and older who reside statewide.
- Liberty's Kitchen are between the ages of 16 and 24 who reside in the Greater New Orleans area.
- Mirror of Grace are 18 and older who reside in East Baton Rouge and West Baton Rouge parishes.
- Mission Rebirth are 16 and older who are homeless/displaced and formerly incarcerated who reside in the Greater New Orleans area.
- New Orleans Family Justice Alliance are between the ages of 17 and 65 who experience domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking and who reside in Jefferson, Orleans, St. Bernard, and Plaquemines parishes.
- New Orleans Mission are 18 and older and homeless and who reside in Orleans, Jefferson, St. Tammany, St. Charles, St. Bernard, St. John the Baptist, St. James, and Tangipahoa parishes.
- New Orleans Career Center are 16 and older who reside in the Greater New Orleans area.
- NOTEP are 16 and older who reside in Orleans, Jefferson, St. Tammany, and St. Bernard parishes.
- NOVA are 18 and older who reside in Ouachita, Richland, Morehouse, Madison, Tensas, East Carroll, and West Carroll parishes.
- New Orleans Women & Children's Shelter are 16 and older who reside in Orleans and Jefferson parishes.

- Operation Restoration are between the ages 18 and 65 who reside in Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard, Plaquemines, St. Charles, St. John, St. James, East & West Baton Rouge, and Madison parishes.
- Operation Spark are 18 and older who reside statewide.
- Propel are between 18 and 24 who reside in East and West Baton Rouge, Ascension, Livingston, St. Helena, East and West Feliciana, Pointe Coupee, and Iberville parishes.
- United 1st Steps are 18 and older who experience homelessness and reside in St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, and St. James parishes.
- Youth Empowerment Project are between the ages of 16 and up who reside in the Greater New Orleans area.

6. THE ESTIMATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS THE STATE AGENCY EXPECTS TO PLACE IN E&T;

DCFS expects 2362 volunteers to participate for FFY 2023.

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 Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is working to keep children safe, helping individuals and families become self-sufficient, and providing safe refuge during disasters. The Workforce Development Section within DCFS administers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training (E&T) program. The SNAP E&T program administrative structure includes a SNAP E&T Manager, 3 (three) Functional Administrator SNAP E&T Consultants (Data, Budget, Program/Policy) and 3 (three) Regional Outreach SNAP E&T Consultants for the following regions: Southeast Louisiana (New Orleans, Covington, Thibodaux), Southwest Louisiana (Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Lake Charles), and North Louisiana (Shreveport, Alexandria, Monroe).

Louisiana's SNAP E&T program is a state-administered program with providers in most metropolitan areas with intent to expand throughout the state for SNAP eligible individuals who volunteer to participate. The Workforce Development Section prioritizes the value of education, training, skill development and building while considering individuals' many barriers and overall needs. These activities includes assistance with searching for a job, life skills, coaching, case management, and vocational education. The geographic limitation is expected to provide optimum opportunity to utilize available federal and state funds in a responsible, practical and productive manner. Therefore, Louisiana has 27 SNAP E&T Providers which provide SNAP E&T services to SNAP recipients. The provider and parishes served are as follows:

Parishes Served	
Aim High Education	Online statewide
Ben D. Johnson	Natchitoches
Cafe Hope	Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemine
Reconcile New Orleans	Orleans, Jefferson, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles
Calcasieu Parish Police Jury (CPPJ)	Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis, Vernon
Catholic Charities	East Baton Rouge

	Parishes Served
Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO)	Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard, St. Tammany
Covenant House	Greater New Orleans Metropolitan Area
Family Promise of St. Tammany	St. Tammany
Goodwill Technical College	Ascension, Assumption, East Feliciana, East Baton Rouge, Orleans, Livingston, Jefferson, Plaquemines, Pointe Coupee, St. Bernard, St. Tammany, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, Terrebonne, West Feliciana, West Baton Rouge
Hope Ministries	Ascension, Assumption, Avoyelles, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberville, Livingston, Pointe Coupee, West Feliciana, West Baton Rouge
Louisiana Green Corps	Orleans, Jefferson
Louisiana Community and Technical College System (Baton Rouge Community College, Louisiana Delta Community College, Fletcher Technical Community College)	Statewide
Liberty's Kitchen	Greater New Orleans Metropolitan Area
Mirror of Grace	East Baton Rouge, West Baton Rouge
Mission Rebirth	Greater New Orleans Metropolitan Area
New Orleans Family Justice Alliance	Jefferson, Orleans, St. Bernard, Plaquemines
New Orleans Mission	Orleans, Jefferson, St. Tammany, St. Charles, St. Bernard, St. John the Baptist, St. James, Tangipahoa
New Orleans Career Center	Greater New Orleans Metropolitan Area
NOTEP	Orleans, Jefferson, St. Tammany, St. Bernard
NOVA	Ouachita, Richland, Morehouse, Madison, Tensas, East Carroll, West Carroll
New Orleans Women & Children's Shelter	Orleans, Jefferson
Operation Restoration	Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard, Plaquemines, St. Charles, St. John, St. James, East & West Baton Rouge, Madison
Operation Spark	Statewide
Propel	East & West Baton Rouge, Ascension, Livingston, St. Helena, East & West Feliciana, Pointe Coupee, Iberville
United 1st Steps	St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, St. James

Parishes Served	
Youth Empowerment Project	Greater New Orleans Metropolitan Area

8. THE METHOD THE STATE AGENCY USES TO COUNT ALL WORK REGISTRANTS AS OF THE FIRST DAY OF THE NEW FISCAL YEAR;

The initial count for October 2022 will be obtained from the State's eligibility system file.

9. THE METHOD THE STATE AGENCY USES TO REPORT WORK REGISTRANT INFORMATION ON THE QUARTERLY FORM FNS–583;

DCFS uses the participant information provided by the SNAP E&T providers to report participant information to FNS and an unduplicated count of mandatory work registrants from SNAP data files.

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);

DCFS uses a master list of participant information provided monthly by the providers and SNAP Works (SNAP E&T system), the electronic Unduplicated Count of Mandatory Work Registrants (MWR) Report and the Monthly Mandatory Work Registrants Report to ensure work registrants are not counted twice in a Federal Fiscal Year. Mandatory Work Registrants are screened during certification and recertification for exemptions to work registration requirements. DCFS' eligibility system LITE uses work registration statuses to exempt work registrants from work registration requirements.The eligibility worker at the local DCFS office is responsible for screening all SNAP applicants/recipients for exemption to work registration requirements by identifying the work registrant or ABAWDs statewide who would be subject to the SNAP time limit if there were not a statewide waiver. An ABAWD meets the ABAWD work requirement by fulfilling any of the following: working an average of at least 20 hours per week, participating in and complying with the requirements of any program under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), or any program under section 236 of the Trade Act of 1974 for an average of at least 20 hours per week, or any combination of working and participating in a work program described above for an average of at least 20 hours per week. If the household member is not exempt, the worker then instructs the household member to register for work with LWC by creating an active Helping Individuals Reach Employment (HiRE) account before the SNAP case is certified. A notice is provided to the household advising that in order to register for a HiRE account, the MWR must: Go online to the LWC website at www.louisianaworks.net or go to the local DCFS office and register by using a kiosk located at the office or go to a local LWC Business and Career Solutions Center and register. The account must be active at certification and recertification to be considered registered for work. Work registration status for all MWRs in the SNAP case must be verified by reviewing LITE (eligibility system). An automated interface is run to check the work registration of all MWRs in HiRE. The results are displayed in the Clearance Summary. The worker must review the Clearance Summary to determine if the MWR is registered for work with LWC. If the HiRE account information is not displayed in the Clearance Summary, the worker must use the On Demand LWC button to run the query.

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;

Mandatory work registrants are identified by specific work registration statuses on the State's eligibility system. Statewide and individual parish totals are available. On the last workday of September of each year, an analysis is conducted to identify and count all certified individuals who are mandatory work registrants on that date. A date is system-generated to distinguish on-going registrants from new registrants who have been added during the fiscal year. Program CoordinationMandatory work registrants will be screened at application and during recertification or every twelve months, whichever is later. During clearance of the work registration status, the eligibility worker will screen individuals. The eligibility worker will provide each registrant a written explanation of the work requirements through the mail. Mandatory work registrants will be identified on the State's eligibility system by a special status. Information obtained during the work registration screening process will be entered on the State's eligibility system as work registrant household members are certified or recertified.Determination of Good CauseThe worker determines good cause for failure to comply with work registration requirements. The worker must determine whether good cause exists within 10 days of determining non-compliance or being notified of non-compliance.Failure to comply with work registration requirements may include:• Refusal to Accept an Offer of Employment,• Refusal to Provide Sufficient Information to Determine Employment Status or Job Availability,• Voluntarily Quitting a Job,• Voluntarily Reducing Work Effort, and • Failure to Register for Work with Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) by having an active HiRE AccountGood cause exists when circumstances beyond the client's control prevent compliance with work registration requirements. Sanctioning Resulting From Noncompliance with Work Registration Requirements Mandatory work registrants are individuals who are not exempt from SNAP work requirements and are ineligible if they fail to meet the work registration requirements without good cause which includes failing to create a HiRE account. Any household member may assist a mandatory work registrant with creating a (HiRE) account to register for work.Length of sanction:• First violation - the individual will be ineligible for 1 month or until compliance, whichever is later.• Second violation - the individual will be ineligible for 3 months or until compliance, whichever is later.• Third and subsequent violations – the individual will be ineligible for 6 months or until compliance, whichever is longer.If the MWR is the only household member, the application will be denied since there is no eligible person in the household.If the individual who does not comply is the head of the household, only the head of household is ineligible for the duration of the individual's disqualification. The other members of the household remain eligible. If the disqualified individual joins another household, the disqualified individual remains ineligible for the remainder of the individual's disqualification period. LITE will automatically send a Notice of Decision of failure to comply with work registration requirements. Communication:DCFS utilizes emails, phone calls, Zoom meetings, site visits, and SNAP Works to communicate with the SNAP E&T providers. In addition, there is a quarterly SNAP E&T provider meeting and an annual training provided to the SNAP E&T providers. Information shared with the SNAP E&T Providers includes but not limited to policy updates, State agency changes/updates, process improvements, contracts, invoices, budgets, and best practices. The State of Louisiana has a voluntary SNAP E&T program where individuals are referred from community based organizations and community/technical colleges to participate in the SNAP E&T program through a reverse referral process therefore, SNAP E&T participants cannot be sanctioned. If a SNAP E&T provider determines that the SNAP E&T participant is not a good fit for their specific program, this is notated in SNAP Works (SNAP E&T system) and a task is generated to the eligibility worker to send a notice to the SNAP E&T participant within in 10

days of determination. If a SNAP E&T participant voluntarily stops participating, the SNAP E&T provider closes the referral in SNAP Works with the appropriate referral closure reason, and a closure notice is generated and the participant can view the notice in the citizen portal.

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;

Special State Initiatives:Workforce Development and SNAP E&T is part of the Governor's subcabinet on Education and Workforce. The subcabinet is co-led by the Executive Director of the Louisiana Workforce Commission and the Commissioner of the Louisiana Board of Regents. DCFS is an engaged stakeholder. The subcabinet's goal is to ensure that 60% of Louisianians obtain a credential or certificate by 2030. As such, the subcabinet develops opportunities for state agencies and partners to create employment and training career pathways statewide, especially through the use of SNAP E&T resources and partnerships.Other Employment and Training Programs:Temporary Assistance For Needy Families (TANF) recipients are exempt from SNAP E&T requirements. All work-eligible FITAP recipients are required to participate in the Strategies To Empower People (STEP) program, unless good cause is granted. The Workforce Development Section at DCFS is consistently meeting to strategize on how to collaborate SNAP E&T services with STEP. In addition, DCFS has created a new employment and training program for Child Support Enforcement (CSE) which is called Child Support Enforcement (CSE) Employment and Training program. DCFSS will begin providing employment and training services to CSE through Administration for Children and Families – Office of Child Support Enforcement (ACF-OCSE) approved programming. CSE clients who are SNAP eligible and not receiving TANF will have access to SNAP E&T providers and resources. While conceptual in development and execution, additional coordination is expected with homeless populations serviced by Louisiana Housing Corporation and re-entry populations served by Louisiana Department of Corrections.In addition, Louisiana has twenty-one contracted partners which provide voluntary SNAP E&T services to SNAP recipients. These volunteer programs serve self-initiated participants who are considered as reverse referrals. Voluntary E&T services are offered at Liberty's Kitchen, Calcasieu Parish Police Jury (CPPJ) Human Services Department, Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Louisiana (GWSELA) – Goodwill Technical College, Covenant House, Reconcile New Orleans (Café Reconcile), HOPE Ministries, Louisiana Green Corps, Youth Empowerment Project (YEP), New Opportunities Vision Achievement (NOVA), Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO), New Orleans Women & Children's Shelter (NOWCS), Café Hope, Family Promise, Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS), New Orleans Career Center, Operation Restoration, New Orleans Family Justice, Operation Spark, Project Lazarus, Propel America, and Youth Force NOLA .

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;

Louisiana is building its connections with the Indian tribes in the state to provide E&T services to Indians living on a reservation.

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

Not Applicable as Louisiana operates a voluntary SNAP E&T program.

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.

Provider Type Age 3 and up Age 1-2 (Toddlers) Age 0 (Infant) Special Needs Age 3 and up Special Needs Age 1-2 (Toddlers) Special Needs Age 0 (Infant)Type III Early Learning Center $30.00$31.05$35.65$37.80$39.12$44.92School Child Care Center $24.00$24.00$24.00$30.24$30.24$30.24Family Home Provider $25.00$25.75$29.65$31.50$32.45$37.36In Home Provider $25.00$25.25$26.65$31.50$31.82$33.58Military Child Care Center $30.00$31.05$35.65$37.80$39.1244.92

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.

The SNAP E&T providers incur the actual costs for services provided to all individuals in their programs. The costs that are associated with individuals who are eligible for SNAP E&T are reimbursed through the monthly invoice process. SNAP E&T conducts onsite monitoring visits with providers to ensure program compliance. During the monitoring visits the provider provides funding proof for participants in the form of billing statements for SNAP E&T participants and non- participants. This is compared to the costs invoiced by the provider. SNAP E&T Providers use various methods of transportation for participants including services provided through contractual agreements with different agencies which is free and does not cost the participants any out of pocket expenses.• Liberty's Kitchen will provide monthly bus passes/tokens and Uber and Lyft services.• Calcasieu Parish Police Jury (CPPJ) will ensure transportation is available in one of the following — through agreements with transportation providers in the area, public transit, share-a-ride, local taxi service, Uber/Lyft services, and mileage reimbursement. • Goodwill Industries of Southeast Louisiana - will provide bus tokens/passes and fuel cards.• Covenant House will provide bus tokens/passes. • Reconcile New Orleans (Café Reconcile) will provide bus passes and gas reimbursement. • HOPE Ministries will provide bus passes/tokens, and gas vouchers.•Louisiana Green Corps will provide bus tokens/passes/mileage reimbursement. • Youth Empowerment Project (YEP) will provide bus tokens . • New Opportunities Vision Achievement (NOVA) will provide bus tokens and gas cards. • Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) will provide bus passes and Uber/Lyft services. • New Orleans Women and Children's Shelter (NOWCS) will provide bus passes, gas cards, and Uber/Lyft services.• Café Hope will provide Uber/Lyft services and bus passes.• Family Promise of St. Tammany will provide gas cards.• Louisiana Community and Technical College System will provide bus passes.• New Orleans Career Center will provide bus passes.• Operation Restoration will provide bus passes, taxi, and shared rides.• New Orleans Family Justice will provide Uber/Lyft services.• Operation Spark will provide bus passes and gas cards.• Project Lazarus will provide public transportation and Uber/Lyft/Taxi services.• Propel America will provide bus passes, gas cards, and Uber/Lyft/Taxi services.• YouthForce NOLA will provide bus passes.

Dependent care expenses are in accordance with the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and based on local market rate surveys. The majority of the children are school age and do not require reimbursement. • Covenant House, New Orleans Family Justice, Operation Restoration, and Hope Ministries has an on-site facility available for dependent care. • Providers with caps: Goodwill cap is $600 monthly, Youth empowerment Project cap is $200 monthly, Café Hope cap is $750 monthly, and Operation Spark cap is $3,250 annually.• New Orleans Career Center has a partnership with Kingsley House. • New Orleans Women and Children's Shelter, Liberty's Kitchen, Café Reconcile, Calcasieu Parish Police Jury, Louisiana Green Corps, New Vision Opportunity Achievement, Center for Employment, Louisiana Community and Technical College System, Project Lazarus, Propel America, and YouthForce NOLA does not have a cap for childcare.SNAP E&T Providers offer participant reimbursements such as transportation, childcare, uniforms, work and training tools, tuition, books, certifications, permanent documents, housing and utility allowance (only allowed twice and emergency based), personal hygiene (not ongoing but reasonable and necessary), permit and fees, background checks, clothing for job interviews, fingerprinting, training materials, course registration fees, and wifi (prepaid internet cards),etc. that are reasonable and necessary for successful participation in the SNAP E&T program.The SNAP E&T Handbook, Quick Start Guide, and SNAP E&T Toolkit provides directions to SNAP E&T Providers regarding which costs are allowable and which costs may and may not be reimbursed.

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.

We anticipate that $993,650.00 (state/federal funds) will be used for SNAP E&T participant reimbursements.

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;

The number and percentage of participants who received E&T services and obtained unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after completion of services through job search training.

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;

The number and percentage of participants who earned a certificate or recognized credential.

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;

The number and percentage of participants in SNAP E&T that completed a training, educational, work experience, apprenticeship, or on-the-job training component and received a certificate or recognized credential.

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

The number and percentage of participants who gained employment in the second quarter after completion of basic/foundational skills training.

E. OTHER INDICATORS APPROVED BY FNS IN THE E&T STATE PLAN.

- The number and percentage of participants who received E&T services and obtained unsubsidized employment during the second quarter completion of services through job search training.
- The number and percentage of participants who remain employed in the second quarter after completion of job retention services.
- The number and percentage of participants who received E&T services and are in unsubsidized employment in the second quarter completion of work experience.
- The number and percentage of participants in SNAP E&T that completed a training, educational, work experience, apprenticeship, or on-the-job training component and received a certificate or recognized credential.
- The number and percentage of participants who earned a certificate or recognized credential after completion of Education - Career Technical Education Programs or Other Vocational Training.
- The number and percentage of participants who gained employment in the second quarter after completion of vocational training.
- The number and percentage of participants who earned a high school equivalency certificate (HiSET/GED).
- The number and percentage of participants who gained employment in the second quarter after completion of basic/foundational skills training.
- The number an percentage of participants who gained employment in the second quarter after completion of Education-Work Readiness Training.

B. ABLE-BODIED ADULTS WITHOUT DEPENDENTS (ABAWD) [28]

1. ITS PLEDGE TO OFFER A QUALIFYING ACTIVITY TO ALL AT-RISK ABAWD APPLICANTS AND RECIPIENTS;

Louisiana is not a pledge state.

2. ESTIMATED COSTS OF FULFILLING ITS PLEDGE;

Not applicable.

3. A DESCRIPTION OF MANAGEMENT CONTROLS IN PLACE TO MEET PLEDGE REQUIREMENTS;

Not applicable.

4. A DISCUSSION OF ITS CAPACITY AND ABILITY TO SERVE AT-RISK ABAWDS;

Not applicable.

5. INFORMATION ABOUT THE SIZE AND SPECIAL NEEDS OF ITS ABAWD POPULATION; AND

Not applicable.

6. INFORMATION ABOUT THE EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND WORKFARE COMPONENTS IT WILL OFFER TO MEET THE ABAWD WORK REQUIREMENT

Not applicable.

TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA)

Has the state incorporated TAA into the sections indicated above?

Yes

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;

Services are provided to veterans and eligible persons by JVSG staff members according to the needs of the veteran, any significant barrier to employment (SBE) they may possess and the roles and responsibilities of JVSG personnel. DVOP specialists and LVERs are essential parts of and fully integrated into the workforce development network. They are included among the AJC partner staff, which consists of all staff employed by programs or activities operated by AJC partners listed in 29 U.S.C. 2841(b) that provide online and/or in-person workforce development or related support services as part of the workforce development system. Other AJC partner staff members include staff of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Wagner Peyser (WP) and other AJC network partner programs.

DVOP specialists -- Under 38 U.S.C. 4103A(a), a DVOP specialist provides individualized career services and facilitates placements to meet the employment needs of veterans, prioritizing service to special disabled veterans, other disabled veterans and other categories of veterans in accordance with priorities determined by the Secretary of Labor.

LVER -- Under 38 U.S.C. 4104(b), the LVER's principal duties are to: (1) conduct outreach to employers in the area to assist veterans in gaining employment, including conducting seminars for employers and, in conjunction with employers, conducting job search workshops and establishing job search groups; and (2) facilitate employment, training and placement services furnished to veterans in a state under the applicable state employment service delivery systems.

DVOP specialists are domiciled in local AJC offices throughout the state or with other partner agencies. One LVER is designated as the state coordinator of veterans' services and one DVOP is currently assigned as an intensive service coordinator (ISC) co-located with the Veterans Affair VR&E office in New Orleans. The state is currently operating under an approved waiver from DOL VETS to utilize four LVERs as veteran program managers in the JVSG Program. These LVERs provide direct supervisory and administrative oversight for the DVOP staff in their assigned areas of operation. It is anticipated the lead LVER will perform the traditional role of the LVER within their assigned geographical area 70% of the time. The remaining time will be spent performing supervisory functions such as payroll activities, schedule approval, performance evaluation, etc. for DVOP staff in their respective geographical area.

An analysis of the veteran population in each parish throughout the state was conducted to determine an equitable distribution of DVOP specialists. Official domiciles and areas of

responsibility have been adjusted in accordance with the results of that analysis. The state will review analysis results annually in conjunction with the Annual Funding Modification process and adjust domicile locations as necessary based on population shifts in order to best serve veterans (with SBEs) and other eligible persons in targeted populations. In addition to DVOP specialists, each AJC has individuals trained in case management and business and/or community services networking. DVOP specialists coordinate closely with these AJC staff members when providing intensive services to veterans with an SBE or those that are otherwise targeted. In turn, DVOP specialists provide advice and guidance as needed to AJC staff members that are providing services to other veterans and other eligible persons. This team approach ensures that all veterans and other eligible persons receive quality services that afford them the greatest opportunity for a successful outcome.

When not actively providing individualized career services or reviewing open case files, DVOP specialists and other AJC career specialists fully trained in case management and networking conduct outreach at off-site locations including, but not limited to, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs offices, Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC) for the U.S. DVA, Military Treatment facilities (MTF), Warrior Transition Units/Battalion (WTU/WTB) and Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) grantee locations. The purpose of these outreach efforts is two-fold. The first purpose is to find veterans and invite the eligible veterans and/or eligible persons to the AJC for assessment and needed services. The second purpose is to develop relationships with supportive services in the area so that SBE veterans and other veterans can be referred to those agencies for services.

LVER staff members are domiciled in local AJCs throughout the state. In the state's business services delivery model, one industry sector coordinator and one business services coordinator has been assigned to each of the state's eight regional labor market areas. The area of responsibility for each LVER staff member has been adjusted to align with that of these regional labor market areas. The LVER coordinates with regional industry sector coordinators, business services coordinators and members of the Recruitment and Placement Team assigned to AJCs to advocate to employers on behalf of veterans and to develop job opportunities specifically for veterans. LVER staff train all AJC employees to network for veterans and comply with priority of service requirements.

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;

The primary function of the state's DVOP specialist team is to provide individualized career services for veterans identified to have an SBE in accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 4103A, VPL 07-10 and VPL 03-14, or the most recent USDOL policy, and those veterans that are a member of a special population in accordance with VPL 04-14, or the most recent USDOL policy.

Prior to conducting any other individualized career service, DVOP specialists shall conduct a comprehensive assessment, which shall be an "individualized interviewing process" and may also include the use of an Interest Inventory, Work Keys, WIN Assessment or other assessment tool. Once the comprehensive assessment has been completed, the DVOP shall, with the cooperation of the veteran, develop and implement an Individual Employment Plan (IEP), and continuous consistent contact. DVOP specialists shall always, and as a minimum, complete these three individualized career services. Case management continues to be an appropriate delivery strategy or framework within which intensive services may be delivered and in most cases, shall be followed. To enhance the implementation of the IEP career guidance, supportive services, job development contacts, job referrals and individualized career services and training may also be provided. Depending on the needs of the individual, the goal of the IEP may be to obtain education, training or employment. Training or education may be short- or long-term depending on the certification, licensing or skills being acquired to optimize successful

employment outcomes. The DVOP specialist may receive assistance with these functions by other career specialists who are also specifically trained to facilitate case management. The state requires DVOP specialists to conduct outreach to locate veterans with an SBE with the purpose of providing individualized career services and to form partnerships with external and internal supportive services programs that can provide those services. Examples of the programs are listed below.

The DVOP will work closely with the following partner programs or organizations:

- Veterans' Readiness and Employment
- Homeless Veteran Reintegration Programs
- VA VET Centers
- Homeless and Halfway Shelters
- Civic and Veteran Service Organizations
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act partners
- Louisiana Vocational Rehabilitation facilities
- Veterans' Upward Bound Program
- State Veterans' Affairs Representatives
- Local College and Universities and Vo-Tech Veterans' Service Representatives
- Veterans' Service Organizations
- Department of Social Services TANF initiatives for veterans
- Parish Veteran Service Officers

The LVER responsibilities are specifically targeted to promote the advantages of hiring veterans to employers, employer associations and business groups. LVER roles and responsibilities are consistent with 38 U.S.C. § 4104, VPL 07-10 and VPL 03-14. As such, the LVER serves an important role in the state's Business Services Delivery Model. In coordination with the other members of the business services team, the LVER advocates for employment and training opportunities for all veterans through outreach to employers, training facilities, unions, apprenticeship programs and private and government businesses. The LVER also participates in job fairs, promotes programs that offer licensing and credentialing opportunities and develops and makes presentations to employers. Each LVER must provide a monthly report to the state veterans coordinator detailing their outreach activities. LVER Staff members conduct outreach to perform the following activities:

- Conducting employer outreach;
- In conjunction with employers, conducting job searches and workshops and establishing job search groups;
- Coordinating with unions, apprenticeship programs and businesses or business organizations to promote and secure employment and training programs for veterans;
- Informing federal contractors of the process to recruit qualified veterans;
- Promoting credentialing and licensing opportunities for veterans; and
- Coordinating and participating with other business outreach efforts.

The state intends for LVER staff to play a central role in facilitating the provision of services to veterans. This is accomplished through building partnerships, especially with AJCs in their assigned regions, providing subject matter expertise and promoting the efficient and effective integration of all employment services provided to veterans. Within each AJC, LVER staff shall coordinate closely with the local area coordinator (LAC) to provide training and technical assistance on priority of service, best practices for providing effective services to veterans, relevant external partners, the role of DVOP specialists, integration of DVOP specialists into the AJC service delivery model, and best practices for conducting outreach to employers.

To maximize the impact of the streamlined LVER staff, the state takes a top-down, cooperative approach to employer outreach. LVER staff shall coordinate with their business service team partners, and other state agencies or programs such as Louisiana Rehabilitative Services (LRS), to conduct outreach to employer associations at the state and regional level. In this way the maximum number of employers can be efficiently and effectively incorporated into the promotion of hiring of veterans. This outreach will educate employers on the advantages of hiring veterans, and inform employers on how to find qualified veteran applicants by leveraging the State workforce system and AJCs. The state intends to increase veteran employment by making a sound business case to employers regarding the advantage of hiring veterans and providing employer's tools and contacts to do so effectively.

The Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW) Act amended USC Title 38, Sections 4103A and 4104, to state that Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program specialists, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives, are prohibited from performing non-veteran related duties that detract from their ability to perform their statutorily-defined duties related to meeting the employment needs of eligible veterans.

C. THE MANNER IN WHICH DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF ARE INTEGRATED INTO THE STATE'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM OR AMERICAN JOB CENTER;

Louisiana provides employment, training and placement services to all veterans through a network of strategically located AJCs operated by 15 Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDA) and supported by the state's proprietary HiRE database system. The state, working closely with each AJC and their LWDA, has implemented a standardized framework for customer flow. This flow determines the methodology through which all clients (both job-seeker and employer) are integrated into the system and how they are assessed to identify their service needs. All programs are coordinated through a joint referral process described in each region's memorandum of understanding (MOU) between partners. Each partner performs the services allowed by their authorizing legislation or policy. Inter-staff collaboration is also enforced via program updates and workforce development policies are shared among partners at regularly scheduled staff meetings and training. During those contacts, all staff members share information about new employers and job orders received, AJC scheduled activities and positive recruitment activities taking place in the region.

All DVOP specialists are full-time employees, including the DVOP specialist ISC out-stationed with VA VR&E. They are singularly responsibility for locating and providing individualized career services to targeted veterans and other eligible persons in the context of an effective network system. Although DVOP specialists are responsible for facilitating the case management and individualized career services of veterans with significant barriers to employment (SBE), they are not alone in this effort. Providing individualized career services to veterans with SBEs takes a team effort and as such, all services available in any particular AJC are available to veterans on a priority-of-service basis. The state mandates and monitors that non-JVSG funded staff provide individualized career services through the case management framework as appropriate to veterans and other eligible persons when no DVOP specialist is available. All veterans are identified during triage/intake screening. If it is determined the veteran has a significant barrier to employment and they meet eligibility, then the veteran should be referred to a DVOP for individualized career services.

The state promotes employment and job training opportunities through the use of several specialized programs. The state funds an Incumbent Worker Training Program (IWTP) initiative through collaboration with local education and training facilities in order to train participants who are already working toward upgrading their skills and pay. Southeastern Louisiana University and Delgado Community College operate Veterans' Upward Bound Programs to promote additional education for veterans and assist with college or technical school programs designed to help earn a degree or certification. These opportunities are presented to veterans through AJC office visits and presentations at veterans workshops.

The state's Business Services Delivery Model divides the state in to eight separate labor regions. Each region is assigned an industry sector coordinator and a business services coordinator. The LVER functions as a member of these Business Services Teams in their respective regions. The team's primary focus is to conduct job development and outreach to employers, including federal contractors and labor unions. LVER staff responsibilities include operating targeted hiring events, and veterans' job fairs. LVER staff provides program continuity by acting as the technical program advisor and trainer for AJC staff. The state has no part-time LVER staff.

To facilitate the optimal utilization of the services and resources available from other service providers, the state has developed cooperative relationships with many service providers including all WDBs, AJCs, the Louisiana Economic Development (LED), Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) grantees, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserves (ESGR), Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs (LDVA), U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) and numerous local agencies and nonprofit organizations. The state continues to execute robust, coordinated outreach efforts at the local, regional, and state levels to identify and reach out to additional service providers. As part of this outreach, all DVOP specialists are required to conduct outreach to local USDOL-VETS competitive grantees (currently there is one HVRP grantee in Louisiana) and the one Wounded Warrior Transition Unit located at Fort Polk, La. This outreach ensures an accurate and realistic picture of what other services and resources are available at the local, regional and state levels and promote the development of relationships to leverage those service providers. This information is shared with JVSG staff across the state. Information sharing provides a vehicle for DVOP specialists to integrate available partner services and resources into the IEP for the veterans they are serving and provide LVER staff with additional avenues to promote and facilitate employment services and placements for veterans and other eligible persons.

The state partners with many of these organizations through the MOU process and DVOPs make regular outreach contact with these organizations on behalf of the veterans they serve.

All AJCs across the state work together with JVSG grant-funded staff to ensure that information flow regarding employment and training opportunities is clear, concise and continuous. The state lists approved training providers on its website including detailed descriptions of training provided and the veteran's potential for employment after successful completion of the training, based on occupational demand.

Louisiana's Native American tribes live in open tribal lands and are not segregated from the general public. As such, resources of other organizations that provide employment services to veterans are openly available to the very small Native American population residing in Louisiana.

Louisiana has adopted a demand-driven approach to all workforce and employment programs to ensure that all services and training are directed toward high-demand jobs. To support this effort, the state is heavily engaged with employers, employer associations and other partners in the top industries within each region to continuously identify the skills necessary to both enter and succeed in high-demand careers.

The LWDAs and their constituent AJCs make up the central hub for all workforce activities and associated training within the state. The state's strategy for the leveraging of other state and federal education and training programs to develop skills necessary to prepare veterans for in-demand jobs is therefore focused on and operated in close cooperation with our AJC partners. The combined effects of the effective integration of the JVSG into the AJC service delivery model, outreach to and relationship building with relevant partners, and comprehensive up-to-date information on in-demand jobs and skills, produces a coordination of programs and services that reduces or eliminates duplication, closes gaps in service and identifies the program or service best suited to the individual veteran being served. In this way, the state leverages a wide range of state and federal training programs to efficiently and effectively provide veterans with the specific skills necessary to secure and succeed in current in-demand jobs.

The state's outreach efforts and public information activities are used to inform veterans of the services available at their local AJC and the training opportunities that are available in their area and within the state. These outreach efforts, as described in Section B above, are focused on key service providers likely to interact with veterans that have significant barriers to employment. The intent of this outreach is to educate service providers about job training and other services available to veterans at their local AJC. In turn, the state's partner service providers can encourage veterans to seek services at an AJC. Due to the complexity of eligibility criteria and the variance of programs offered in disparate areas, public information systems usually do not provide specifics on particular programs but do direct veterans and other eligible persons into the local AJC.

The state is actively engaged in promoting development of high-demand, job-driven training opportunities for veterans and other eligible persons within the education community. Business Services Teams, specifically the ISC, partnering with LED staff members, advise and collaborate with employers and educational institutions, (particularly the Louisiana Community and Technical College System), to promote access to, retention in and completion of individual training and education.

D. THE INCENTIVE AWARD PROGRAM IMPLEMENTED USING THE 1% GRANT ALLOCATION SET ASIDE FOR THIS PURPOSE, AS APPLICABLE;

The state shall request no more than1 percent of its annual allocation for each year's JVSG grant as performance incentive awards for eligible staff. This award shall be used in accordance with VPL 01-22 attachment 5, or the most recent guidance from USDOL-VETS. The objective of the LWC incentive award program is to recognize, promote and reward superlative and exceptional performance in the provision of service to veterans within the context of statutes and regulations. The basic objective of the awards program is to create an awareness and continuous level of interest in the importance of priority of service for veterans and an environment that engenders continuous improvement in serving veterans across the spectrum of service. The award system shall continue to operate as defined in the applicable State Policy and as approved by USDOL.

The state anticipates that individuals and teams will recognize the value and process of the awards program and will, as a result, develop a competitive attitude within the agency that supports esprit de corps within the team while sharpening the focus on service to other eligible persons.

Incentive awards shall be expended up to no more than 1 percent of the total grant amount for the fiscal year, which is set aside strictly for this purpose in the annual grant budget. Awards shall be determined based on a percentage of total award available for that fiscal year but shall not (in total) exceed no more than 1 percent of the total available funds for a given fiscal year or the most current USDOL guidance on grant-funded incentive award amounts.

Exceptional merit is based on a number of factors, with the overriding concept being the value of the process. In essence this is determining both a quantitative and qualitative rating and merit based on the following factors:

- Total veterans served and total services rendered to those veterans within the parameters of these areas; Among the veterans served how many entered career employment.

- Outreach to veterans and subsequent flow of basic services that result in veterans becoming job ready, or the need for individualized career services;

- Outreach to and the comprehensive assessment of special target groups within the veteran community;

- Individualized career services through the case management framework and outcomes of those efforts;

- Job placements, in particular job developments, for veterans and disabled veterans;

- Outreach to and partner development with employers and federal contractors in the support of creating job opportunities for veterans;

- Outreach to and partner development with community service agencies, other state and federal programs and internal agency components in creating a supportive service network for veterans with barriers to employment and who may need case management;

- Organization of, participation in and success in job fairs and other veteran center community activities;

- Any other innovative veteran-related activity.

The award process is restricted by state law, such that to operate all awards must be cash, and all cash awards must be presented directly to individuals. This means that offices (teams) receiving incentive recognition shall share equally in the overall office award, and the individual award amount shall be determined by the team composition.

50% of the total award fund available shall be awarded to JVSG funded staff as follows:

Ten percent (10.0%) for first place; Nine percent (9.0%) for second place; Eight percent (8.0%) for third place; Seven and one half percent (7.5%) for fourth place; Five percent (5.0) for fifth place; Five percent (5.0%) for sixth place; Two and one half percent (2.5%) for seventh place; Two and one half percent (2.5%) for eighth place.

35% of the total award fund available shall be split between two offices (teams of which JVSG grant funded staff may be a part) and 15% of the total award fund available shall be awarded to three eligible partner agency service providers who provide services to veterans through an array of employment and training programs. The first place winner will receive 7.5%. The second place will receive 5.0%. Third place will receive 2.5%. The two awards made to offices shall be split between one large office (6) full- time staff or and one small office (5) or fewer full-time staff. Amounts may be adjusted based on the total incentive award, yearly.

Awards shall be administered and distributed as approved by the state of Louisiana Civil Service Board as detailed in the approved policy. For state merit staff awardees, the incentive will be paid out through the payroll system. For non-state merit employee, a separate payroll check will issued to the individual. Any employee contributions that result from the payment of the incentive will be charged to the JVSG grant.

An email request for team details and recommendations shall be sent to all Workforce Development Boards, local area coordinators, site supervisors, senior field leadership and JVSG-

funded staff during August. Recommendations may come from anyone in the system, co-workers, supervisors, managers, coordinators, directors and JVSG staff.

Determination of the award shall be by a combination of objective and subjective data. Data compilation, analysis and award determination shall be by a team comprised of the veterans state coordinator and members of the management of information systems (MIS) staff. The final award approval shall be by the appointing authority, director of the Office of Workforce Development who is also the signatory authority for the JVSG grant relationship with USDOL.

Incentive award funds distributed shall be obligated by Sept. 30 each fiscal year and distributed not later than Dec. 31 of the same year in accordance with the regulation. The incentive award report shall be in compliance with USDOL VETS reporting requirements.

Winners shall be publicly recognized locally by their peers, local dignitaries and leadership for their exceptional performance on behalf of veterans. Winners shall also be recognized at a statewide conference or other similar large-scale event forum that provides the greatest positive publicity for the program.

Tie breakers: If two or more individuals or offices (teams) score equally for their category, then those ties shall be broken by selecting the office that had the highest ratings on customer service reports during the review period, taken from the JVSG Customer Service Surveys, or for the individual by selecting the individual who had the most successful outcomes or the most successful job developments for the period.

Documentation: Documentation used for the award nominee selections shall be taken from the state proprietary employment system HiRE, veteran staff reports and job fair records. Data shall encompass the period of the first three federal fiscal quarters of the fiscal year. Credit for activities and services shall not be awarded without back-up documentation.

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);

Veterans that attest to belonging to at least one of the six criteria listed below or are members of a special population are considered to have an SBE and are targeted by the DVOP specialist:

- A special disabled or disabled veteran, as defined in 38 U.S.C. § 4211(1) and (3);

- Homeless, as defined in Sections 103(a) and (b) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302(a) and (b)), as amended;

- A recently separated service member, as defined in 38 U.S.C § 4211(6), who has been unemployed for 27 or more weeks in the previous 12 months;

- Vietnam-Era Veterans

- An offender, as defined by WIOA Section 3 (38), who is currently incarcerated or who has been released from incarceration;

- Lacking a high school diploma or equivalent certificate; or

- Low-income, as defined by WIOA Section 3(36).

- Veterans, as defined in 38 U.S.C. § 4211, aged 18 to 24 that possess limited civilian work history which can make transitioning to civilian labor force difficult. Based on this fact, veterans between 18 and 24 may benefit from individualized career services

DVOP specialists shall also provide services to priority category populations identified by the Secretary under 38 U.S.C. § 4103A (a)(1)(C). Currently, the secretary has identified four such populations. These populations are:

- Transitioning service members who have participated in the Transition Assistance Program and have been identified as in need of individualized services;

- Service members who are wounded, ill or injured and receiving treatment in military treatment facilities or warrior transition units;

- The spouses or other family caregivers of such wounded, ill or injured service members;

- Native American tribes live in open tribal lands and are not segregated from the general public. As such, resources of other organizations that provide individualized services to veterans are openly available to the very small Native American population.

References:

1. VPL 03-14, Jobs for Veterans' State Grants (JVSG) Program Reforms and Roles and Responsibilities of American Job Center (AJC) Staff Serving Veterans.
2. VPL 03-14, Change 1, Expansion and Clarification of Definition of Significant Barriers to Employment for Determining Eligibility for the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP).
3. VPL 03-14, Change 2, Expansion and Clarification of Homeless Definition as a Significant Barrier to Employment.
4. VPL 03-19, Designation of Additional Populations Eligible for Services from Disabled Veteran's Outreach Program Specialists.
5. VPL 07-14, American Job Center (AJC) Participation in Capstone Activities and Other Outreach to Transitioning Service Members (Note: Clarifies the specific population of transitioning service members who can be served.)

F. HOW THE STATE IMPLEMENTS AND MONITORS THE ADMINISTRATION OF PRIORITY OF SERVICE TO COVERED PERSONS;

Per VPL 01-22, attachment 1: *The description of how the state implements and monitors priority of service to covered persons is included in the Common Elements of the WIOA State Plan.*

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,

Per VPL 01-22, *a response to this section is not required.*

2. EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT SERVICES, AND

Per VPL 01-22, *a response to this section is not required.*

3. JOB-DRIVEN TRAINING AND SUBSEQUENT PLACEMENT SERVICE PROGRAM FOR ELIGIBLE VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE PERSONS;

Per VPL 01-22, *a response to this section is not required.*

H. THE HIRE DATE ALONG WITH MANDATORY TRAINING COMPLETION DATES FOR ALL DVOP SPECIALISTS AND LVER STAFF; AND

Per VPL 01-22, *a response to this section is not required.*

I. SUCH ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AS THE SECRETARY MAY REQUIRE.

JVSG Performance Measures

Negociated Levels:

- Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit **43.80%**
- Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit **44.60%**
- Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit **$5,208**

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 industry and Occupational Projections through 2028 (table 1) shows the largest component of growth is health care and social assistance (adding 33,102 jobs). This is followed by Accommodation and Food Services (adding 22,745 jobs) ,Professional Scientific, and Technical Services (adding 9,966 jobs) and Other Services, Except Public Administration (adding 8,714 jobs).

Table 1:

Louisiana

Industry and Occupational Projections

Industry Title	NAIC	2018 Average Employment	2028 Projected Employment	Employment Change Through 2028	Share of Total Growth Through 2028
Health Care and Social Assistance	62	291,217	324,319	33,102	11.4%
Accommodation and Food Services	72	207,058	229,803	22,745	11.0%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	54	85,453	95,419	9,966	11.7%
Other Services, Except Public Administration	81	161,379	170,093	8,714	5.4%
Educational Services	61	165,333	171,865	6,532	4.0%
Manufacturing	31-33	131,360	136,920	5,560	4.2%
Administrative and Waste Services	56	97,190	102,231	5,041	5.2%
Retail Trade	44-45	226,308	230,010	3,702	1.6%
Transportation and Warehousing	48-49	69,065	71,090	2,025	2.9%
Government	90	138,239	140,237	1,998	1.4%

Table 2 indicates the Industry forecast for all industries in Louisiana using 2020 base employment data. It is shown that statewide there were 1,789,618 jobs in 2020 and a projection of 99, 962 to be added in 2022.

Area	Base 2020 Employment	Projected 2022 Employment	Difference	Percent Change
Statewide	1,789,618	1,889,580	99,962	6%
New Orleans	508,755	533,515	24,760	5%
Baton Rouge	429,196	460,293	31,097	7%
Houma	84,826	93,210	8,384	10%
Lafayette	238,584	254,276	15,692	7%
Lake Charles	129,114	127,017	-2,097	-2%
Alexandria	85,886	90,871	4,985	6%
Shreveport	211,850	224,423	12,573	6%
Monroe	101,539	108,295	6,756	7%

Louisiana's labor force participation rate, the percentage of Louisiana's population either working or seeking employment, increased from April 2020 at a rate of 54.7 percent to 58.8 percent in April 2022. Louisiana is expected to add 99,962 jobs (6% increase), which is below pre-pandemic levels (2019:Q4). Every region in the state is expected to add 3% - 10% jobs with an exception of the Lake Charles region. The New Orleans area is projected to add 24,760 jobs, the Baton Rouge area is projected to add 31,097 jobs, the Houma area is projected to add 8,384 jobs, the Lafayette area is projected to add 15,692 jobs, the Lake Charles area is projected to lose 2,097 jobs, the Alexandria area is projected to add 4,985 jobs, the Shreveport area is projected to add 12,573 jobs, and the Monroe area is projected to add 6,756 jobs. Most sectors outside of oil and gas extraction and manufacturing are now experiencing growth. At the current pace of recovery, Louisiana is expected to regain COVID-related job losses in the first quarter of 2023.

Major Industries in Louisiana

Major Industries in Louisiana

Industry	Base 2020 Employment	Projected 2022 Employment	Difference	Percer Chang
Health Care and Social Assistance	284,453	300,091	15,638	5%
Retail Trade	213,096	224,830	11,734	6%
Accommodation and Food Services	157,115	181,936	24,821	16%
Educational Services	142,849	142,440	-409	0%
Other Services, Except Public Admin.	139,808	143,065	3,257	2%
Government	136,168	138,774	2,606	2%
Manufacturing	124,730	143,266	18,536	15%
Construction	112,191	114,277	2,086	2%
Administrative and Waste Services	88,273	91,467	3,194	4%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	81,807	90,470	8,663	11%

Top 5 Growing Industries in Louisiana

Industry	Base 2020 Employment	Projected 2022 Employment	Difference	Percent Change
Accommodation & Food Services	157,115	181,936	24,821	16%
Manufacturing	124,730	143,266	18,536	15%
Health Care and Social Assistance	284,453	300,091	15,638	6%
Retail Trade	213,096	224,830	11,734	6%
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	81,807	90,470	8,663	11%

Industry and Occupational Projections

Industry Sectors	NAICS CODE	2020 Average Employment	2022 Projected Employment	Employment Change 2020-2022	Percent Change 2020-2022
Health Care and Social Assistance	62	284,453	300,091	15,638	5.5%
Accommodation and Food Services	72	157,115	181,936	24,821	15.8%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	54	81,807	90,470	8,663	10.6%
Other Services, Except Public Administration	81	139,808	143,065	3,257	2.3%
Administrative and Waste Services	56	88,273	91,467	3,194	3.6%
Educational Services	61	142,849	142,440	-409	-0.3%
Manufacturing	31-33	124,730	143,266	18,536	14.9%
Transportation and Warehousing	48-49	72,121	79,378	7,257	10.1%
Government	90	136,168	138,774	2,606	1.9%

The tables above indicate the industries that will experience the most growth in 2022. It is forecasted that Accommodation and Food Services (24,821 jobs), Manufacturing (18,536 jobs), Health Care and Social Assistance (15,638 jobs), Retail Trade (11,734 jobs), and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (8,663 jobs).

Moreover, the industry projections shown in the above tables reflect the growing needs for training and continual workforce development efforts that focus on new, high skill jobs. As previously shown, the industries with the most constant growth are Accommodation and Food Services, Manufacturing, Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services. These industries consist of jobs such as Food Preparation Workers, Cashiers, Customers Service Representatives, Home Health Aides, Nursing Assistants, Office Clerks, Janitors, Personal Care Aides, Registered Nurses, Waiters/Waitresses, Laborers/Freight Stock, and Maintenance/Repair Workers etc. Many of the employment opportunities are suitable for older workers, however some may require additional training or education.

Below is a chart taken from a study which reflects the "Long Term Annual Demand of Top Occupations to the Year 2028 Sorted by the Total Annual Demand"

State of Louisiana

Long Term Projections for top Occupations to 2028-Based on Education and Training

Occupational Title	2018 Employment	2028 Employment	10 Year Growth	Percent Change	Most Significant Source of Education or Training 5	Work Experience	Job Training
Cashiers	64115	63392	-723	-1.13	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term on-the-job training
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	19480	23093	3613	18.55	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term on-the-job training
Cooks and Food Preparation Workers	68646	75944	7298	10.63	None	None	None
Customer Service Representatives	23876	23499	-377	-1.58	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	22358	22418	60	0.27	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	25075	25602	527	2.1	High school diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	185742	205891	20149	10.85	None	None	None
Food Preparation Workers	36631	40192	3561	9.72	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term on-the-job training
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	21548	22785	1237	5.74	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	Short-term on-the-job

Occupational Title	2018 Employment	2028 Employment	10 Year Growth	Percent Change	Most Significant Source of Education or Training 5	Work Experience	Job Training
							training
Home Health Aides	4734	6456	1722	36.38	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	12721	13894	1173	9.22	None	None	None
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	24584	26615	2031	8.26	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term on-the-job training
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	43716	45886	2170	4.96	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term on-the-job training
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	19780	21567	1787	9.03	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	None
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	21237	22898	1661	7.82	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Nursing Assistants	15204	16760	1556	10.23	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	None
Nursing Assistants	6788	7453	665	9.8	None	None	None
Office Clerks, General	36475	35529	-946	-2.59	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
Personal Care Aides	21977	27596	5619	25.57	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
Receptionists	15985	16787	802	5.02	High school	None	Short-

Occupational Title	2018 Employment	2028 Employment	10 Year Growth	Percent Change	Most Significant Source of Education or Training 5	Work Experience	Job Training
and Information Clerks					diploma or equivalent		term on-the-job training
Registered Nurses	42035	47015	4980	11.85	Bachelor's degree	None	None
Retail Salespersons	58811	60876	2065	3.51	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term on-the-job training
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Technical and Scientific Products	2930	3064	134	4.57	Bachelor's degree	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Waiters and Waitresses	35952	38719	2767	7.7	No formal educational credential	None	Short-term on-the-job training

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))

Louisiana SCSEP and Sub-grantees will utilize the long-term industry projections to identify the training opportunities and unsubsidized employment opportunities for older workers. As previously mentioned, research indicates that opportunities available to order workers will involve healthcare, retail, customer service, and accommodation/ food services. These jobs include positions for private sitters, certified nurse assistants, home health aides, medical assistance, retail sales clerks, sales associates, cafeteria workers, museum attendants, greeters, etc.

High growth industries with a presence in the community will be identified and targeted as potential employers for older workers. In addition, small businesses will be targeted which has been proven successful. Other strategies that Louisiana SCSEP and Sub-grantees will use to access the needs of older workers and promote transition into unsubsidized employment include: · Continual partnership with the Workforce One-stop referral, Participation in community business events such as job fairs. Rotating participants between community service assignments in which new skill sets can be developed. Furthermore, Sub-grantees will attempt to recruit Host Agencies/training sites that will provide skills needed within the high growth industries and occupations (as listed above). If available, Sub-grantees will also utilize the OJE program to match the participant with the employer in high growth industries and occupations. More importantly, it is a priority of Louisiana SCSEP and Sub-grantees to support the vision of long-term employment for older workers.

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))

Louisiana SCSEP coordinators will work to establish more classroom training and community service assignments relative to employment opportunities mentioned in Section 1 and Section 2 of this plan. Past experience, in meeting with host agencies and employers, was to discuss skills, areas that were lacking in their companies, and seek suggestions and specific training ideas to overcome these deficiencies. Concentration would be on increasing the level of participant skills in those areas and promote those ready participants to those employers. Louisiana has been most successful in placing participants in unsubsidized employment with community service agencies and service-oriented type industries. Those jobs such as custodial work, maintenance, stock clerks, office workers, receptionists, child care, drivers, retail sales and housekeeping have proven to be the most successful for long-term employment. This will be a continued objective.

Most enrollees need assistance with job search, supportive services, and skills training. This brings about issues with self-esteem, lack of confidence and other insecurities. SCSEP staff will work closely with SCSEP participants to overcome these barriers by tailoring plans to the individual's needs. They will work to foster self-esteem and confidence in the enrollee to help them become more competitive in the job market so they will secure unsubsidized employment. By placing them in appropriate training positions, it will stimulate them cognitively and by enrolling them in educational programs, it will promote better brain fitness. This will maximize their marketability. Past trends show that many host agencies eventually hire their assigned SCSEP participants and the job retention rates are higher which indicates that successful training and preparation is the key.

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))

As mandatory partners, as prescribed in public law under the Older Americans Act, Louisiana SCSEP grantees will continue to coordinate services with WIOA Boards and service providers. Sub- grantees will continue to report details on participants who have entered employment from each assigned parish. In some areas, job placement numbers increase the regular WIOA employment totals, thereby, improving performance measures throughout the State. State and National SCSEP grantees look forward to improving coordination and collaboration with WIOA during the next four years by looking to implement the following strategies to benefit SCSEP participants:

- Identify training for seniors in soft and occupational skills including seniors with disabilities.
- Work with WIOA partners, faith based community organizations to identify financial assistance and financial planning supportive services for SCSEP participants.

- Work with WIOA and One Stop System to identify senior friendly user technology and identify resources to secure the technology to increase career readiness for participants.
- Computer-based training and Teknimedia is being offered to participants statewide.
- Work with WIOA partners, faith-based community organizations to identify and encourage SCSEP participant participation in work-related training and education activities.
- Identify literacy resources in Louisiana and work to build partnerships and improve coordination of these resources with WIOA and SCSEP; encourage participation by SCSEP participants in these programs.
- Partnering with the Parish Career Solution Centers Service Delivery Systems, in creating a customer focused method to increase the number of persons 55 years or older who might benefit from unsubsidized employment in both the private and public sectors.
- Collaborating with Higher Learning Educational Systems, LA Community/ Technical College Systems (LCTCS), Public School Adult Education and training providers to improve literacy/educational deficiencies, update present skills, and obtain new training in demand occupations for potential long-term employment whether it be part or full-time.

SCSEP and the Parish Career Solution Centers will continue to make progress in meeting the employment and training needs of the older worker population. Although the numbers are much higher in the age group of 18 to 54 years that seek services at the Career Solution Centers, seniors 55 and older should receive equal employment assistance.

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))

Louisiana SCSEP is housed within the Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs(GOEA). GOEA administers all federal funds appropriated, allocated, or otherwise made available to the state for services/programs to the elderly under the Older American Act (OAA) programs. GOEA developed an extensive network of quasi-governmental agencies recognized as the Aging Service Network. This network consists of the 64 Parish Councils on Aging (COA), 34 Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), 139 Senior Centers, University Centers, Advocacy and Service Organizations, the Senior Corps (Foster Grandparents, Senior Companion, Retired Senior Volunteer Program), the state Senior Employment Program (Title V). All SCSEP Sub-Grantees are operated under the Aging Service Network administered by GOEA. The Sub-Grantees administer OAA title programs and SCSEP, along with other services. One program to mention is the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC). The ADRC is a "one-stop-shop" to access public and private programs at the community level. Sub-Grantees coordinate activities with the SCSEP participants through the usage of their Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) line. A prescreening method is utilized for every caller for priority ranking of services needed whether it is SCSEP or OAA title service. Clients are referred and encouraged to make applications for multiple services if necessary. The goal is to completely meet the needs of the client with all provided services. The ADRC line connects participants to various needed OAA or SCSEP programs along with other potentially beneficial agencies in the caller's local communities. Calls requesting SCSEP services are referred to the appropriate sub-grantees according to their parish regardless of state or national grantee status as equitable distribution dictates. GOEA also has active roles in National Family Caregiver Services, ensuring participants are aware of housing opportunities, partnering with agencies to assist persons with disabilities and ensuring they have assistive technology and services, Vocational Rehabilitation in providing supportive services likes eyeglasses, hearing aids, dentures, etc. GOEA has knowledge of

services under the OAA and staff is trained in the referral process (helping refer participants to home delivered meals, in-home services, respite care, medication management, wellness, transportation, etc.) that can be beneficial to participants.

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))

Louisiana SCSEP will continue coordinating SCSEP with other private and public entities and programs that provide services to older Americans, such as community and faith-based organizations to assist the elderly and those with special needs or disabilities. Currently, participants are referred to community action programs for assistance with housing; Catholic Charities provides assistance with income tax preparation, and Vocational Rehab assign job coaches to work with participants with the greatest barriers to employment. In addition, there are numerous partnerships with clothes closet, food banks/pantries, etc. to assist participants in obtain items to wear to work, food, reduced health care services, and more. Additionally, Sub-grantees and Nationals will continue to utilize different organizations and educational institutions for the provision of other community services and training opportunities such as computer training and assessing job readiness. In addition, there will be coordination with community and faith-based organizations that provide transportation and programs for those with disabilities or special needs. Coordination and co-location of services help to identify the needs of participants and develop suitable job openings. Moreover, the collaboration with community-based and faith-based organization will establish opportunities for job fairs and sharing program information. Using this platform will allow Sub-Grantees to establish rapport with employers who offer reliable career pathways, and are willing to maintain a long-term working partnership.

D. PLANNED ACTIONS TO COORDINATE SCSEP WITH OTHER LABOR MARKET AND JOB TRAINING INITIATIVES. (20 CFR 641.302(J))

Louisiana SCSEP plans to continue coordination with other labor market and job training initiatives by:

- Partnering with the Parish Career Solution Centers Service Delivery Systems, in creating a “customer focused method” to increase the number of persons 55 years or older who might benefit from unsubsidized employment in both the private and public sectors;
- Identifying the appropriate education, skills upgrade and training needs that older workers must obtain to secure new jobs or to retain their present jobs with advancement opportunities;
- Collaborating with Higher Learning Educational Systems, LA Community/ Technical College Systems (LCTCS), Public School Adult Education and training providers to improve literacy/educational deficiencies, update present skills, and obtain new training in demand occupations for potential long-term employment whether it be part or full-time;

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)

As mandatory partners, prescribed in public law under the Older Americans Act, Louisiana SCSEP Grantees continue to coordinate services with WIOA Boards and service providers. Sub-grantees continue to report details on those seniors who have entered employment from each

assigned parish. In some areas, job placement numbers may increase the regular WIOA employment totals, thereby, improving performance measures throughout the State of Louisiana.

Sub-grantees and Nationals will continue to coordinate employment services with WIOA as described below:

- A SCSEP representative will continue to attend WIOA board meetings in each area throughout the State. Through these members, the WIOA Boards solicit older workers input to ensure that senior training and employment issues are addressed;
- Seek additional grant funds to provide adequate personnel in the Parish Career Solution Centers and continue to provide participant SCSEP trainees to assist the WIOA staff at these centers;
- Identify methods that contractors might employ to assist WIOA service providers attain performance standards and recruitment; conduct job search workshops for older workers and introductory computer training workshops conducted by a professional instructor at the Career Solution Centers;
- Involve WIOA service providers in older worker issues, conferences, and training;
- Participate, when requested, in writing local and state WIOA plans;
- Engage in joint outreach by participating in local Job Fairs, Business Expos, WIOA seminars, Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development planning to accomplish appropriate employment for seniors;
- Collaborate with community-based and faith-based organizations, Councils on Aging and other agencies by collaborating and sharing as much information relative to the older worker as possible. Collaboration may include using Workforce Investment Training Vouchers to provide formal job training. In addition, opportunities might exist to leverage on-the-job experience training funds in conjunction with support from for-profit companies seeking to fill critical employment vacancies. When a repetitive training system can be accomplished, the long-term value to the community would be of great benefit; and,
- SCSEP Sub-grantees and Nationals will maintain a strong partnership with other community-based non-profit programs to make an impact in the social service network. Each non-profit or government host agency that SCSEP supports creates a social support network; however, all programs must recognize that hiring the older worker is the true focus.

F. EFFORTS TO WORK WITH LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICES IN RURAL LOCATIONS.

Prepared by Economic Research Service, USDA, Washington, DC.			
http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/state-fact-sheets			
Data updated: **January 5, 2022**			
Population, Income and Employment			
Population			
	Rural *	**Urban ***	**Total**
Year			
2020 (latest estimates)	731,262	3,926,495	4,657,757
	Rural *	**Urban ***	**Total**
Income (Earnings per job 2020)	42,597	52,433	50,874
Poverty rate (percent)			
2019 (latest model-based estimates)	23.1	18.0	18.8
	Rural*	**Urban***	**Total**
Employment (Total jobs in number 2020)			
Unemployment rate percentage 2020	7.7	8.3	8.3
Education (age 25+) not completing high school (2019)	19.5	13.9	14.8

According to the USDA Economic Research-Louisiana Fact Sheet listed below, 16% of Louisiana's total population live in rural or non-metropolitan areas, with the remaining 84% residing in metropolitan areas or in a near proximity to metro areas. Louisiana SCSEP faces challenges with providing services in rural areas such as: assisting participants to find unsubsidized employment due to a shortage of jobs and many of the participants lack transportation. To overcome these challenges Louisiana SCSEP will continue collaborative efforts with rural development. In addition, Louisiana SCSEP will concentrate on awareness and recruitment efforts in parishes having the highest levels of poverty.

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.)

Louisiana SCSEP will continue working toward strengthening relationships with agencies and organizations that hire and train SCSEP participants. Sub-grantees collaborate with training and educational institutions to assist participants in resume writing and interviewing skills. Moreover, Louisiana SCSEP identify which jobs are available in each area and provide the necessary training, including but not limited to computer training, job readiness, appropriate workplace behavior, specialized software training, and soft skills training. In addition, the Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics will be utilized to identify areas of highest unemployment and job placement opportunities. More importantly, Sub-grantees will work with participants to overcome barriers that could prevent their retention in unsubsidized employment through follow-up and the provision of supportive services.

3. THE STATE'S LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR SERVING MINORITY OLDER INDIVIDUALS UNDER SCSEP. (20 CFR 641.302 (C))

According to the SCSEP Analysis of Service to Minority Individuals for PY 2019, GOEA has an overall SCSEP service rate of 82.4%, which exceeds the U.S. Census percentage of 49.9%. The overall service to minorities report indicates Louisiana SCSEP has had no significant change in its service to minorities but continues to exceed the U.S. Census percentages. For Hispanics, the U.S. Census shows 5.5% of Louisiana's population is Hispanic; however, GOEA is serving 3.7% (which is still over half of the total Hispanic population 67.3%). The Census indicates 41.7% Blacks for the assigned areas that GOEA serves 78.7% (with no significant variance). The report shows Louisiana SCSEP serves 0.5% of the Asian population and the Census indicates that there is 1.8% Asians in the service area. Of the 0.5% of American Indians, there was no service to the population. The Census shows no Pacific Islanders and there was no service to those individuals in the program year. Although SCSEP services are not provided to the Asian population and the Pacific Islanders population, there is a small percentage in the overall population of Louisiana. Louisiana SCSEP will continue to develop solutions to reach both populations. In efforts, to reduce disparities in minorities as it relates to enrollment and for performance outcomes, Louisiana SCSEP will continue implementing plans to increase outreach to the populations that are underserved. Outreach efforts will include publicity through use of the social media-(Facebook/Twitter), cold calling, newspaper advertisements, job fairs, community events, promotional material such brochures, posters, etc. In addition, Louisiana SCSEP will continue coordinating with National partners to develop techniques to the dispersion populations. Sub-grantees will continue targeting agencies that hire veterans, persons over 65 and have a disability. Additionally, Sub-grantees will continue to seek methods to increase these numbers by networking with senior centers, religious organizations, city government officials, tribal leaders, veteran organizations and listing vacancies with the local workforce "Career Solution Centers as a primary focus on these minority groups. In addition, Louisiana SCSEP will continue to work with Catholic Charities and use its resource connections within its Refugee programs to seek out individuals for placement. Furthermore, Sub-grantees will continue to post information in places like grocery stores, pharmacies, and religious institutions to attract minorities and the underserved populations. Partnerships with EmployBR, Louisiana Workforce Commission, and the Business, Career Solution Centers and the Chamber of Commerce will continue and be strengthen where weakness are identified. Ultimately, the SCSEP provider utilizes the One Stop system for outreach efforts to recruit minorities in urban and rural areas.

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)

The following community service needs are to be focused on by National Grantees and sub-grantees: (1) identifying employers and referring participants to job openings. 2) participant's with transportation issues; (3) housing for participants and potential participants; and 4) will coordinate with other state and local officials who have been able to identify and address community service needs. The community services that are needed exist in the following rural parishes: Acadia, Allen, Assumption, Avoyelles, Beauregard, Bienville, Caldwell, Cameron, Catahoula, Claiborne, Concordia, De Soto, East Carroll, East Feliciana, Evangeline, Franklin, Grant, Jackson, Jefferson Davis, La Salle, Lafourche, Lincoln, Livingston, Madison, Morehouse, Natchitoches, Plaquemines, Pointe Coupee, Richland, Sabine, St. Helena, St. Landry, St. Martin, Tangipahoa, Tensas, Union, Vermillion, Vernon, Washington, Webster, West Carroll, West Feliciana and Winn.

In order to address these needs, Grantees should develop cooperative agreements with agencies outside the established service area and host agencies, including agencies such as: Assisted

Living Facilities, United Way Organizations, Goodwill Industries, Catholic Charities, Salvation Army, local Libraries, local YMCA, LDOL/WIOA, Adult Education, Louisiana Technical Colleges, Community Action Programs, Hispanic Resource Centers and AAA/Councils on Aging. These agencies are essential to meet the community social health, welfare, educational, recreational, conservation and environmental quality efforts. Information obtained through surveys and other sources dictate that our primary focus should be placed upon housing, transportation and medical/prescription needs that are crucial and necessary to the community. SCSEP sub-grantees should develop a rapport with the local utility companies, local cable (government access) stations, free newspapers, and local malls to obtain (low or no cost) advertising of program information that will meet the community needs, environmental quality efforts, economic development and other essential services to the community.

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))

Louisiana SCSEP will continue to strive to meet the required goals and targets established by Dol. To achieve and exceed goals and targets, Louisiana SCSEP will continue to develop new relationships and partnerships with local and national employers within the state by re-enforcing awareness and outreach efforts.

Additionally, Louisiana will apply the following strategies to improve SCSEP services:

- Work with new and existing host agencies in effort to improve and increase training opportunities for participants.
- Expand opportunities for participants through On the job Experience-OJE, which means to develop employer relationships in the private sector.
- Expand supportive services to include meeting transportation needs for seniors through mass transportation (bus tokens, jobs on bus line, etc.), car repair and collaboration for transportation with other agencies serving seniors
- Collaborate with community colleges, adult learning centers and libraries to provide basic computer training for seniors.

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))

Performance in assisting SCSEP participant's transition into unsubsidized employment could be improved by increasing specialized and advanced training outside community service assignments early in a participant's enrollment with the program. Additional training would allow the participant to gain the necessary skills needed and required to enter into unsubsidized employment.

Helping participants and host agencies adjust to shorter lengths of time participants will be on the program would also be helpful so that training remains progressive with the short-term goal of employment immediately in view.

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))

The Equitable Distribution Report (EDR) provides a basis for determining the collective progress made by SCSEP grantees toward equitable distribution of program positions in the State. It is also useful for determining where to locate new or vacant positions. The US DOL releases the annual EDR, which calculates the proportion of income and age eligible population by parish. It is multiplied by the SCSEP funds for the state, which results in the number of authorized SCSEP positions per parish. These reports are essential in identifying where projects of this type are most needed based on their high unemployment rates. Metropolitan Statistical Areas with the highest unemployment rates during the current program year (PY 2021) are shown below.

	PY 2020-Jul 2020				PY 2021-Jul 2021			
Region Metropolitan Statistical Area	Labor Force 2020	Employment 2020	Unemployment 2020	Unemployment Rate 2020	Labor Force 2021	Employment 2021	Unemployment 2021	Unemployment Rate 2021
Alexandria	61068	56644	4424	7.2	64741	61939	2802	4.3
Baton Rouge	**394491**	**358024**	**36467**	**9.2**	**419957**	**395572**	**24385**	**5.8**
Hammond	54281	47861	6420	11.8	57282	53059	4223	7.4
Houma-Thibodaux	**83681**	**76492**	**7189**	**8.6**	**89383**	**84697**	**4686**	**5.52**
Lafayette	203340	184599	18741	9.2	215102	203038	12064	5.6
Lake Charles	**98496**	**88669**	**9827**	**10**	**98956**	**92784**	**6172**	**6.2**
Monroe	76046	69481	6565	8.6	79716	75314	4402	5.5
New Orleans-Metairie	**564106**	**497066**	**67040**	**11.9**	**595847**	**550746**	**45101**	**7.6**
Shreveport-Bossier City	177079	160201	16878	9.5	186773	175385	11388	6.1

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.

Based upon the SCSEP Equitable Distribution Report Louisiana had a total of 724 slots authorized positions with 139 for the State Grantee and 585 national grantees for PY2020. In PY 2021 there are a total of 741 authorized positions with 140 for the State Grantee and 601 between the National Grantees. There were significant variances in the following parishes: LaSalle, Lafayette, Lafourche and Terrebonne.

County	**Total 2020**	**Total 2021**	**Change**	**Cities**
Acadia	**16**	**12**	-4	Branch, Church Point, Crowley, Duson, Estherwood, Eunice, Iota, Mermentau, Morse, Rayne
Allen	**6**	**5**	-1	Elizabeth, Kinder, Mittie, Oakdale, Oberlin, Reeves
Ascension	**9**	**11**	2	Abend, Darrow, Donaldsonville, Duplessis, Gonzales, Prairieville, Sorrento

Assumption	**4**	**4**	0	Belle Rose, Labadieville, Napoleonville, Paincourtville, Pierre Part, Supreme
Avoyelles	**13**	**16**	3	Bunkie, Cottonport, Evergreen, Hessmer, Mansura, Marksville, Moreauville, Plaucheville, Simmesport
Beauregard	**5**	**6**	1	De Ridder, Dry Creek, Merryville
Bienville	**4**	**3**	-1	Arcadia, Bienville, Bryceland, Castor, Gibsland, Jamestown, Lucky, Mount Lebanon, Ringgold, Saline
Bossier	**16**	**16**	0	Benton, Bossier City, Eastwood, Haughton, Plain Dealing, Red Chute
Caddo	**42**	**40**	-2	Belcher, Blanchard, Gilliam, Greenwood, Hosston, Ida, Mooringsport, Oil City, Rodessa, Shreveport, Vivian
Calcasieu	**28**	**31**	3	Carlyss, DeQuincy, Iowa, Lake Charles, Moss Bluff, Prien, Sulphur, Vinton, Westlake
Caldwell	**2**	**2**	0	Clarks, Columbia, Grayson, Kelly
Cameron	**1**	**0**	-1	Cameron, Hackberry
Catahoula	**2**	**2**	0	Harrisonburg, Jonesville, Sicily Island
Claiborne	**3**	**3**	0	Athens, Colquitt, Haynesville, Homer, Junction City, Lisbon
Concordia	**5**	**4**	-1	Clayton, Coochie, Ferriday, Ridgecrest, Vidalia, West Ferriday

De Soto	**5**	**5**	0	Logansport, Mansfield, South Mansfield, Stanley, Stonewall
East Baton Rouge	**42**	**43**	1	Baker, Baton Rouge, Gardere, Greenwell Springs, Inniswold, Zachary
East Carroll	**2**	**2**	0	Lake Providence, Monticello, Transylvania
East Feliciana	**3**	**3**	0	Clinton, Jackson, Norwood, Slaughter, Wilson
Evangeline	**6**	**6**	0	Basile, Mamou, Pine Prairie, Ville Platte
Franklin	**5**	**4**	-1	Baskin, Gilbert, Winnsboro, Wisner
Grant	**6**	**6**	0	Colfax, Dry Prong, Georgetown, Montgomery, Pollock
Iberia	**16**	**14**	-2	Delcambre. Jeanerette, Loreauville, Lydia, New Iberia
Iberville	**5**	**4**	-1	Bayou Goula, Carville, Crescent, Dorseyville, Grosse Tete, Maringouin, Morrisonville, Plaquemine, Ramah, Rosedale, St. Gabriel, White Castle
Jackson	**3**	**3**	0	Chatham, East Hodge, Eros, Hodge, Jonesboro, Quitman
Jefferson	**58**	**56**	-2	Avondale, Barataria, Bridge City, Elmwood, Estelle, Grand Isle, Gretna, Harahan, Harvey, Jean Lafitte, Jefferson, Kenner, Lafitte, Marrero, Metairie, River Ridge, Shrewsbury, Terrytown, Timberlane, Waggaman, Westwego,

				Woodmere
Jefferson Davis	**9**	**8**	-1	Elton, Fenton, Jennings, Lake Arthur, Welsh
La Salle	**27**	**6**	-21	Broussard, Carencro, Lafayette, Scott, Youngsville
Lafayette	**17**	**32**	15	Chackbay, Cut Off, Des Allemands, Galliano, Golden Meadow, Larose, Lockport, Mathews, Port Fourchon, Raceland, Thibodaux
Lafourche	**7**	**22**	15	Jena, Midway, Olla, Tullos, Urania
Lincoln	**5**	**5**	0	Choudrant, Downsville, Dubach, Grambling, Ruston, Simsboro, Vienna
Livingston	**14**	**14**	0	Albany, Denham Springs, French Settlement, Killian, Livingston, Maurepas, Port Vincent, Springfield, Walker, Warsaw Landing
Madison	**3**	**2**	-1	Delta, Mound, Richmond, Tallulah
Morehouse	**6**	**5**	-1	Bastrop, Bonita, Collinston, Mer Rouge, Oak Ridge
Natchitoches	**7**	**7**	0	Ashland, Campti, Clarence, Goldonna, Natchez, Natchitoches, Powhatan, Provencal, Robeline
Orleans	**68**	**75**	7	New Orleans
Ouachita	**22**	**21**	-1	Bawcomville, Clairborne, Monroe, Richwood, Sterlington, Swartz, West Monroe
Plaquemines	**6**	**4**	-2	Belle Chasse, Boothville, Buras, Empire, Myrtle Grove, Phoenix, Pointe a

				la Hache, Venice
Pointe Coupee	**5**	**5**	0	Fordoche, Livonia, Morganza, New Roads
Rapides	**34**	**32**	-2	Alexandria, Ball, Boyce ,Cheneyville, Deville, Forest Hill, Glenmora, Lecompte, McNary, Pineville, Woodworth
Red River	**2**	**3**	1	Coushatta, Edgefield, Hall Summit, Martin
Richland	**4**	**4**	0	Delhi, Mangham, Rayville
Sabine	**9**	**7**	-2	Converse, Fisher, Florien, Many, Noble, Pleasant Hill, Zwolle
St. Bernard	**6**	**6**	0	Arabi, Chalmette, Meraux, Violet
St. Charles	**5**	**4**	-1	Almedia, Ama, Bayou Gauche, Boutte, Des Allemands, Destrehan, Frellsen, Hahnville, Killona, Luling, Mimosa Park, Montz, New Sarpy, Norco, Paradis, St. Rose, Taft
St. Helena	**3**	**3**	0	Greensburg, Montpelier
St. James	**3**	**3**	0	Convent, Gramercy, Lutcher, Vacherie
St. John the Baptist	**5**	**5**	0	Edgard, Garyville, LaPlace, Reserve
St. Landry	**17**	**17**	0	Arnaudville, Cankton, Eunice, Grand Coteau, Krotz Springs, Lawtell, Leonville, Melville, Opelousas, Palmetto, Port Barre, Sunset, Washington
St. Martin	**8**	**8**	0	Breaux Bridge, Cecilia, Henderson, Parks, St. Martinville
St. Mary	**13**	**19**	6	Amelia, Baldwin, Bayou Vista, Charenton, Franklin, Morgan City,

				Patterson
St. Tammany	**25**	**23**	-2	Abita Springs, Bush, Covington, Folsom, Lacombe, Madisonville, Mandeville, Pearl River, Slidell, Sun
Tangipahoa	**18**	**18**	0	Amite, Hammond, Independence, Kentwood, Natalbany, Ponchatoula, Robert, Roseland
Tensas	**2**	**2**	0	Newellton, St. Joseph, Waterproof
Terrebonne	**20**	**31**	11	Bayou Cane, Chauvin, Dulac, Gibson, Gray, Houma, Montegut, Schriever
Union	**5**	**4**	-1	Bernice, Farmerville, Lillie, Marion, Spearsville
Vermilion	**8**	**11**	3	Abbeville, Erath, Gueydan, Kaplan, Maurice, Pecan Island
Vernon	**5**	**5**	0	Anacoco, Fort Polk, Hornbeck, Leesville, Newllano, Rosepine, Simpson
Washington	**11**	**11**	0	Angie, Enon, Bogalusa, Franklinton, Mount Hernon, Varnado
Webster	**7**	**9**	2	Cotton Valley, Cullen, Doyline, Minden, Sarepta, Sibley, Springhill
West Baton Rouge	**2**	**2**	0	Addis, Brusly, Port Allen
West Carroll	**3**	**2**	-1	Epps, Kilbourne, Oak Grove, Pioneer
West Feliciana	**2**	**2**	0	Angola, St. Francisville
Winn	**4**	**3**	-1	Atlanta, Calvin, Dodson, Sikes, Winnfield
2021 Total	**724**	**741**	**17**	

Authorized Positions				

3. DESCRIBE CURRENT SLOT IMBALANCES AND PROPOSED STEPS TO CORRECT INEQUITIES TO ACHIEVE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION.

The Louisiana Program Year 2020 Equitable Distribution Report (see below). All grantees will concentrate efforts on filling slots in parishes that are underserved first in order to correct the imbalance during this four-year plan period through outreach efforts. Equitable distribution can be challenging in rural parishes and areas with increases in the number of eligible individuals. Louisiana strives to keep the actual position distribution between one or two positions above or below the equitable distribution goal.

FIPS	County	State	Louisiana Modified Positions	Louisiana Equitable Distribution	Louisiana Variances	ANPPM Modified Poistions	ANPPM Equitable Distribution	ANPPM Variances	IID[S] Modified Positions	IID[S] Equitable Distribution	IID[S] Variances
22001	Acadia	LA				12	5	-7			
22003	Allen	LA				3	2	-1	2	0	-2
22005	Ascension	LA				11	6	-5			
22007	Assumption	LA				4	2	-2			
22009	Avoyelles	LA				8	32	24	8	9	1
22011	Beauregard	LA				6	5	-1			
22013	Bienville	LA				3	1	-2			
22015	Bossier	LA				12	4	-8	4	4	0
22017	Caddo	LA				37	68	31	2	1	-1
22019	Calcasieu	LA				21	12	-9	10	8	-2
22021	Caldwell	LA				2	3	1			
22023	Cameron	LA									
22025	Catahoula	LA				2	2	0			
22027	Claiborne	LA				3	6	3			
22029	Concordia	LA				4	4	0			
22031	De Soto	LA				5	4	-1			
22033	East Baton R	LA	28	28		14	5	-9			
22035	East Carroll	LA				2	1	-1			
22037	East Felician	LA	3	1	-2						
22039	Evangeline	LA				6	4	-2			
22041	Franklin	LA				4	1	-3			
22043	Grant	LA				4	2	-2	2	0	-2
22045	Iberia	LA				10	13	3	4	4	0
22047	Iberville	LA	3	2	-1	1	1	0			
22049	Jackson	LA				3	2	-1			
22051	Jefferson	LA	52	46	-6				4	4	0
22053	Jefferson D	LA				6	1	-5	2	1	-1
22055	Lafayette	LA				24	16	-8	8	8	0
22057	Lafourche	LA	12	2	-10				10	5	-5
22059	La Salle	LA				3	2	-1	3	2	-1
22061	Lincoln	LA				5	5	0			
22063	Livingston	LA	9	4	-5	5		-5			
22065	Madison	LA				2		-2			
22067	Morehouse	LA				5	2	-3			
22069	Natchitoche	LA				7	10	3			
22071	Orleans	LA				69	99	30	5	2	-3
22073	Ouachita	LA				21	26	5			
22075	Plaquemine	LA	4	4							
22077	Pointe Coup	LA	5	5							
22079	Rapides	LA				19	19	0	13	12	-1
22081	Red River	LA				3		-3			
22083	Richland	LA				4	1	-3			
22085	Sabine	LA				5		-5	2	1	-1
22087	St. Bernard	LA				6	2	-4			
22089	St. Charles	LA				4	1	-3			
22091	St. Helena	LA				3		-3			
22093	St. James	LA	3	3							
22095	St. John the	LA				5	4	-1			
22097	St. Landry	LA				17	18	1			
22099	St. Martin	LA				8	10	2			
22101	St. Mary	LA				9	5	-4	9	9	0
22103	St. Tamman	LA				23	10	-13			
22105	Tangipahoa	LA	7	3	-4	11	9	-2			
22107	Tensas	LA				2	2	0			
22109	Terrebonne	LA				16	1	-15	15	12	-3
22111	Union	LA				4	10	6			
22113	Vermilion	LA				9	8	-1	2	0	-2
22115	Vernon	LA				5	1	-4			
22117	Washington	LA	11	5	-6						
22119	Webster	LA				9	4	-5			
22121	West Baton	LA	2	3	1						
22123	West Carrol	LA				2		-2			
22125	West Felicia	LA				2	2	0			
22127	Winn	LA				3	4	1			
	Total		**139**	**106**	**-33**	**493**	**457**	**-36**	**105**	**82**	**-23**

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.

Grantees will address under enrollment by the following:

- Increase collaboration with the local workforce, private and public entities to recruit and enroll participants.
- Provide additional training to SCSEP staff on how to increase program participation.
- Expanding recruitment efforts, increase program outreach efforts, and focus on developing viable host agencies in underserved parishes.
- Adequately enroll new participants after program participants have achieved durational limits.

Grantees will address over-enrollment by the following:

- Increase efforts to place participants who are "job ready" to enter into unsubsidized employment.
- Develop a waiting list for eligible participants.
- Freeze enrollment in over-served parishes and develop a waiting list for eligible participants.

B. EQUITABLY SERVES RURAL AND URBAN AREAS.

The chart below shows the poverty levels by parish in Louisiana. According to the US Census-American Community Survey (ACS), 18.6% of people living in Louisiana are in poverty. Seventeen parishes have poverty levels of 25% or greater. The parishes with the highest poverty levels are East Carroll (45.7%), Madison (41.7%), St. Landry (32.2%), Tensas (31.6%), and Natchitoches (32.8%). According to the final PY20 Quarterly Progress Report-QPR there were 18 of 139 participants served who lived in rural areas. Employment opportunities and resources are more difficult to obtain in rural areas. Staff travel as often as needed to assist these individuals in reaching goals and ensuring performance measures are met. National grantees and sub-grantees will work with the local rural economic development offices, mayors and parish councils to coordinate ways in which seniors can better be served in areas of access to transportation, employment and training opportunities. Transportation is one of the major challenges participants face in rural areas and employment opportunities are not as available as in urban areas. This is compounded by time and/or distance involved in traveling between the older person's home and their job training sites, higher fuel expenses, and vehicle maintenance. More focus will be placed on trying to secure volunteer drivers, gas vouchers, subsidized taxi fares and recommending Uber as an alternative solution. Although recruitment and transportation remain an issue in rural and poverty-stricken areas; grantees will work to overcome these obstacles. Grantees will continue collaborative efforts with rural development. Grantees will also concentrate awareness and recruitment efforts in parishes having the highest levels of poverty. Furthermore, Louisiana SCSEP will utilize the Equitable Distribution formula provided by the SCSEP.org website as a long term strategy to manage and ensure rural and urban areas are equitably served. In addition, Louisiana and National SCSEP Grantees will continue to collaborate on best practices and strategies to ensure that participants are equitably served in both urban and rural areas.

All People in Poverty			
Louisiana overall		18.6	
Parishes	RCU Code	Percent	Rural/Urban
Acadia Parish	4	25.2	Urban
Allen Parish	6	19.6	Rural
Ascension Parish	2	10.8	Urban
Assumption Parish	6	20.7	Rural
Avoyelles Parish	6	27.4	Rural
Beauregard Parish	6	15.4	Rural
Bienville Parish	6	26.9	Rural
Bossier Parish	2	14.4	Urban
Caddo Parish	2	22.4	Urban
Calcasieu Parish	3	14.9	Urban
Caldwell Parish	8	20.8	Rural
Cameron Parish	3	13.9	Urban
Catahoula Parish	9	26	Rural
Claiborne Parish	7	32.7	Rural
Concordia Parish	7	27.2	Rural
De Soto Parish	2	18.3	Urban
East Baton Rouge Parish	2	16.7	Urban
East Carroll Parish	7	45.7	Rural
East Feliciana Parish	2	19.6	Urban
Evangeline Parish	6	27.3	Rural
Franklin Parish	7	27.3	Rural
Grant Parish	3	20	Urban
Iberia Parish	4	24.1	Urban
Iberville Parish	2	23.8	Urban
Jackson Parish	6	21.6	Rural
Jefferson Parish	1	17.7	Urban
Jefferson Davis Parish	6	15.6	Rural
Lafayette Parish	3	19.5	Urban
Lafourche Parish	3	15.3	Urban
La Salle Parish	6	16.6	Rural
Lincoln Parish	4	25.8	Urban
Livingston Parish	2	11.3	Urban
Madison Parish	7	41.7	Rural
Morehouse Parish	6	27.4	Rural
Natchitoches Parish	6	32.8	Rural
Orleans Parish	1	23.8	Urban
Ouachita Parish	3	21.3	Urban
Plaquemines Parish	1	15.5	Urban
Pointe Coupee Parish	2	20.3	Urban
Rapides Parish	3	19.4	Urban
Red River Parish	6	23.1	Rural
Richland Parish	6	26.2	Rural
Sabine Parish	6	23.1	Rural
St. Bernard Parish	1	20.1	Rural
St. Charles Parish	1	12.8	Urban
St. Helena Parish	2	19.6	Urban
St. James Parish	6	16.8	Urban
St. John the Baptist Parish	1	18.2	Rural
St. Landry Parish	4	32.7	Urban
St. Martin Parish	3	19.3	Urban
St. Mary Parish	4	21	Urban
St. Tammany Parish	1	11.8	Urban
Tangipahoa Parish	4	17.9	Urban
Tensas Parish	9	31.6	Urban
Terrebonne Parish	3	17.3	Rural
Union Parish	3	18	Urban
Vermilion Parish	4	18.3	Urban
Vernon Parish	4	17.5	Urban
Washington Parish	6	24.6	Urban
Webster Parish	6	26	Rural
West Baton Rouge Parish	2	12.8	Rural
West Carroll Parish	9	23.3	Urban
West Feliciana Parish	2	24.4	Rural
Winn Parish	6	22.8	Urban

C. SERVES INDIVIDUALS AFFORDED PRIORITY FOR SERVICE UNDER 20 CFR 641.520. (20 CFR 641.302(A), 641.365, 641.520)

Louisiana SCSEP will ensure when recruiting and selecting participants for SCSEP, priority is given to individuals who have one or more of the following priority of service characteristics:

- Are covered persons in accordance with the Jobs for Veterans Act (covered persons – veterans and eligible spouses, including widows and widowers – who are eligible for SCSEP must receive services instead of, or before, non-covered persons);
- Are 65 years or older;
- Have a disability;
- Have limited English proficiency;
- Have low literacy skills;
- Reside in a rural area;
- Have low employment prospects;
- Have failed to find employment after utilizing services provided through the One-Stop Delivery System;
- Are homeless or are at risk for homelessness
- Are formerly incarcerated or on supervision from release from prison or jail within five years of the dare of initial eligibility determination.

The priority of service requirements are included in the state SCSEP contract and are also followed by national SCSEP grantees. Sub-Grantees use connections with other programs, such as Veteran Affairs and Vocational Rehabilitation Services at the WIOA One-Stops to promote SCSEP and gain referrals on potential applicants who meet the priority of service and eligibility requirements. Grantees also partner with organizations that serve hard to reach populations such as those that are geographically or socially isolated and those whose primary language is not English. Catholic Charities has a refugee assistance program in-house which allows for immediate access to special populations. Due to the demographics of the areas they serve, some grantees will be able to serve larger percentages of these special populations better. The State SCSEP Director (GOEA) will aid the grantees in evaluating whether, collectively, they are serving these populations adequately based on quarterly performance reports.

5. THE RATIO OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS IN EACH SERVICE AREA TO THE TOTAL ELIGIBLE POPULATION IN THE STATE. (20 CFR 641.325(A))

County	Total Population	55 years and older	Percentage
Allen Parish	25,764	1,282	5%

County	Total Population	55 years and older	Percentage
Ascension Parish	107,215	7168	7%
Assumption Parish	23,421	2319	10%
Avoyelles Parish	42,073	3838	9%
Beauregard Parish	35,654	3583	10%
Bienville Parish	14,353	1500	10%
Bossier Parish	116,979	9550	8%
Caddo Parish	254,969	19782	8%
Calcasieu Parish	192,768	23683	12%
Caldwell Parish	10,132	1066	11%
Cameron Parish	6,839	688	10%
Catahoula Parish	10,407	1128	11%
Claiborne Parish	17,195	1811	11%
Concordia Parish	20,822	1920	9%
De Soto Parish	26,656	2420	9%
East Baton Rouge Parish	440,171	34604	8%
East Carroll Parish	7,759	583	8%
East Feliciana Parish	20,267	2236	11%
Evangeline Parish	33,984	3030	9%
Franklin Parish	20,767	2235	11%
Grant Parish	22,309	1965	9%
Iberia Parish	73,240	6299	9%
Iberville Parish	33,387	3154	9%
Jackson Parish	16,274	1699	10%
Jefferson Davis Parish	31,594	2586	8%
Jefferson Parish	432,552	40508	9%
La Salle Parish	14,890	1381	9%
Lafayette Parish	221,578	16791	8%
Lafourche Parish	96,318	8288	9%
Lincoln Parish	46,735	3434	7%
Livingston Parish	128,026	10198	8%
Madison Parish	12,093	962	8%

County	Total Population	55 years and older	Percentage
Morehouse Parish	27,979	2749	10%
Natchitoches Parish	39,566	3461	9%
Orleans Parish	343,829	28561	8%
Ouachita Parish	153,720	12112	8%
Plaquemines Parish	23,042	2006	9%
Pointe Coupee Parish	22,802	2066	9%
Rapides Parish	131,613	11703	9%
Red River Parish	9,091	1039	11%
Richland Parish	20,725	1927	9%
Sabine Parish	24,233	2842	12%
St Bernard Parish	35,897	2849	8%
St Charles Parish	52,780	4359	8%
St Helena Parish	11,203	1181	11%
St James Parish	22,102	2282	10%
St John the Baptist Parish	45,924	3982	9%
St Landry Parish	83,384	8578	10%
St Martin Parish	52,160	4703	9%
St Mary Parish	54,650	5027	9%
St Tammany Parish	233,740	23048	10%
Tangipahoa Parish	121,097	11592	10%
Tensas Parish	5,252	711	14%
Terrebonne Parish	111,860	7810	7%
Union Parish	22,721	2572	11%
Vermilion Parish	57,999	5002	9%
Vernon Parish	52,334	4002	8%
Washington Parish	47,168	5257	11%
Webster Parish	41,207	4206	10%
West Baton Rouge Parish	23,788	2028	9%
West Carroll Parish	11,604	1189	10%
West Feliciana Parish	15,625	1109	7%

County	Total Population	55 years and older	Percentage
Winn Parish	15,313	1446	9%

6. THE RELATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO:

A. RESIDE IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS WITHIN THE STATE

Louisiana has a population of approximately 4,627,002. If an estimated 14% is over the age of 65 and 18.6% of those persons live in poverty, then there are approximately 120,487 eligible SCSEP individuals in Louisiana. The state has a total of 741 slots assigned overall. The percentage of persons residing in rural areas is 18.6% and 81.4% for urban (about a 4:1 ratio in those residing in urban areas rather than rural).

B. HAVE THE GREATEST ECONOMIC NEED

Of the total SCSEP eligible population in Louisiana, 38% has been identified as having the greatest economic need, with income at or below the federal poverty guideline.

C. ARE MINORITIES

Minorities make up about 42% of Louisiana's population.

Louisiana Minority Group	% of Eligible Population
Black/African American	*32.8%*
Hispanics	*5.3%*
Asian	*1.73%*
American Indian	*0.7%*
Alaska Native	*0.57%*
Other Pacific Islander	*1.41%*
Native Hawaiian	*0.03%*

D. ARE LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT

8% of Louisiana's SCSEP eligible population is identified as having limited English proficiency.

E. HAVE THE GREATEST SOCIAL NEED. (20 CFR 641.325(B))

Greatest Social Need" which is caused by non-economic factors, including persons with disabilities, language barriers, and cultural, social or geographical isolation. When considering the greatest social need for Louisiana SCSEP eligible participants characteristics were measured by the following statistics:

Those with disabilities: 38%

Limited English proficiency: 8%

Geographical isolation:18.6%

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))

Sub-grantees and National grantees in Louisiana will not transfer positions from one geographic area to another without first notifying the state agency responsible for preparing the State Plan and the Equitable Distribution report. The State & National program operators will submit in writing any proposed changes in distribution to the Federal Project Officer.

Participants will be notified within 30 to 60 days of any transfer. Participant records, if applicable, will be given to the new grantee within 60 days of the new grant period. This will include any intake documentation and eligibility information to retain current participants. Prior to transfer, every effort will be made to secure unsubsidized employment for participants and referrals to other workforce programs will be conducted. Participants will be notified of the transfer by the current grantee as soon as possible in order to ease the transition. Any questions regarding the transfer will be answered jointly. Payroll payments will be made by the current agency until the end of the program period. Afterwards, the new agency will be responsible for payroll payments.

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT (CSBG)

a) Describe how the State and the eligible entities will coordinate the provision of employment and training activities through Statewide and local WIOA workforce development systems; and may

CSBG employment and training activities are included as a "required partner" for WIOA One-Stop Career Centers. The State CSBG Lead Agency and the Community Action Agencies statewide have an MOU with comprehensive American Job Centers to coordinate services in their local areas which include employment, referrals, training and workshops, resume writing, job search, high school equivalency testing, transportation and housing assistance. Some Community Action Agencies are located within the American Job Centers which allows the convenient and seamless referral of clients and continuous communication and collaboration.

(b) Provide examples of innovative employment and training programs and activities conducted by eligible entities or other neighborhood-based organizations as part of a community antipoverty strategy.

1. The WIOA Job Placement Program places WIOA participants in the Community Action Agencies' work sites. The eligible entities in turn provide the participants with on the job training, resume writing skills, ethical work practices and transportation assistance for typically 400 work hours. At the end of the job training period, the Community Action Agency has the option of hiring the participant or assisting them in obtaining permanent employment elsewhere.
2. Total Community Action has a collective impact initiative focused on reducing the underemployment rate of African American males consisting of a partnership which includes the WIOA One-Stop Operator, the Urban League of Louisiana and Goodwill. This community level change is led by the public/private/business partnership New Orleans Business Alliance (NOLABA).

3. The ASSIST Agency utilizes the Individual Development Account (IDA) Program to provide matching funds for education and training tuition, books, tools and materials for clients who want to obtain education to obtain employment or higher wage paying careers. The agency works with clients who have gone through WIOA to obtain skills to become a commercial truck driver, licensed practical nurse or any of the other occupations that South Louisiana Community College provides training for.

4. Cameron Community Action Agency coordinates with WIOA through the "traveling jobs" van which visits Cameron Parish once a month. Cameron CAA is the "one stop" for Cameron Parish which allows persons access to services without having to travel the 54 miles to Lake Charles, LA .

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)	67.0%	65.9%	67.0%	65.9%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	67.0%	66.1%	67.0%	66.1%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$6,400	$6,400	$6,400	$6,400
Credential Attainment Rate	65.0%	73.5%	65.0%	73.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	54.0%	65.5%	54.0%	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)	65.0%	64.0%	65.0%	64.0%

Performance Indicators	PY 2022 Expected Level	PY 2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2023 Expected Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	68.0%	67.0%	68.0%	67.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$7,500	$7,500	$7,500	$7,500
Credential Attainment Rate	75.0%	79.8%	75.0%	79.8%
Measurable Skill Gains	67.0%	74.5%	68.0%	74.5%
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)	68.0%	70.7%	68.0%	70.7%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	72.0%	72.0%	72.0%	72.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$3,100	$3,100	$3,100	$3,100
Credential Attainment Rate	50.0%	52.0%	50.0%	52.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	46.0%	50.0%	46.0%	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.

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)	56.0%	56.0%	56.0%	56.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	58.0%	57.0%	58.0%	57.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000
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)	40.2%	31.0%	40.3%	31.2%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	37.2%	31.0%	37.3%	31.2%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$3510	$3100	$3515	$3150
Credential Attainment Rate	30.2%	21.5%	30.3%	22.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	47.2%	42.5%	47.3%	43.0%
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)	48.4%	53.5%	48.4%	55.3%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	43.2%	48.6%	43.2%	50.6%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	$3,911	$4,169	$3,911	$4,252
Credential Attainment Rate	32.7%	38.0%	32.7%	39.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	38.0%	46.0%	38.0%	48.0%
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

OTHER APPENDICES

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/WIOA_Appendix_1_2020_Final.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/WIOA_Appendix_2_2020_Final.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/WIOA_Appendix_3_2020_Final.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/WIOA_Appendix_4_2020_Final.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/WIOA_Appendix_5_2020_Final.pdf

http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WIOA/WIOA_Appendix_6_2020_Final.pdf