

January 2017



# WIOA State Plan

for the State of Indiana



INDIANA  
**WORKFORCE**  
DEVELOPMENT

AND ITS **WorkOne**. CAREER CENTERS

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# WIOA State Plan for the State of Indiana

## Requested Revisions

- **VI-AEFL B.1 – Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Section 203 of WIOA)**  
Requested Revision – Requested Revision - Item partially addressed. Update State Plan narrative. The State at a minimum must define the ELA activities for English Language Learners. Update the State Plan narrative.
- **VI-AEFL C – Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individuals**  
Requested Revision – Requested Revision - Item partially addressed. Describe how the State will establish and operate programs under section 225 of WIOA for corrections education and education of other institutionalized individuals, including how it will fund, in accordance with the requirements of Title II, subtitle C, any of the academic programs required by the statute. Update State Plan narrative
- **VI-AEFL D.1 – Describe how the State will establish and operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs under Section 243 of WIOA, for English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries.**  
Requested Revision – Requested Revision - Item partially addressed. The State must describe how literacy ELA, and civics education will be delivered in combination with IET. Update State Plan narrative
- **Table 1 comments – Comments on Table 1**  
Requested Revision – Requested Revision - Enter missing performance goals.
- **Table 2 comments – Comments on Table 2**  
Requested Revision – Requested Revision-Enter missing performance goals.
- **Table 3 comments – Comments on Table 3**  
Requested Revision – Requested Revision-Enter missing performance goals.
- **Table 4 comments – Comments on Table 4**  
Requested Revision – Requested Revision-Enter missing performance goals.
- **Table 5 comments – Comments on Table 5**  
Requested Revision – Requested Revision-Enter missing performance goals.

## Overview

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Governor of each State must submit a Unified or Combined State Plan to the U.S. Secretary of Labor that outlines a four-year workforce development strategy for the State's workforce development system. The publicly-funded workforce system is a national network of Federal, State, regional, and local agencies and organizations that provide a range of employment, education, training, and related services and supports to help all jobseekers secure good jobs while providing businesses with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. States must have approved Unified or Combined State Plans in place to receive funding for core programs. WIOA reforms planning requirements, previously governed by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), to foster better alignment of Federal investments in job training, to integrate service delivery across programs and improve efficiency in service delivery, and to ensure that the workforce system is job-driven and matches employers with skilled individuals. One of WIOA's principal areas of reform is to require

States to plan across core programs and include this planning process in the Unified or Combined State Plans. This reform promotes a shared understanding of the workforce needs within each State and fosters development of more comprehensive and integrated approaches, such as career pathways and sector strategies, for addressing the needs of businesses and workers. Successful implementation of many of these approaches called for within WIOA requires robust relationships across programs. WIOA requires States and local areas to enhance coordination and partnerships with local entities and supportive service agencies for strengthened service delivery, including through Unified or Combined State Plans.

## Options for Submitting a State Plan

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

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

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

- Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)
- Employment and Training Programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4))
- Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))
- Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Programs (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (Programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.)
- Unemployment Insurance Programs (Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (Programs authorized under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))
- Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Community Services Block Grant Program (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.))\*
- Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program (Programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532))

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

## How State Plan Requirements Are Organized

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

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

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

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

Indiana is submitting a Unified State Plan. While Indiana is not submitting a combined plan, Indiana is collaborating with many partners and much of this work will be detailed in the Plan.

## I. WIOA State Plan Type

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

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

**Combined State Plan.** This plan includes the Adult Worker Program, Dislocated Worker Program, Youth Program, Wagner-Peyser Act Program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program, and Vocational Rehabilitation Program as well as one or more of the optional combined State Plan partner programs identified below. **No**

## Combined Plan partner program(s)

Indicate which Combined Plan partner program(s) the state is electing to include in the plan.

Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.) **No**

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) **No**

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))) **No**

Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o)) **No**

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.)) **No**

Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.) **No**

Unemployment Insurance Programs (Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law) **No**

Senior Community Service Employment Program (Programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.)) **No**

Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development **No**

Community Services Block Grant Program (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.)) **No**

Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program (Programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532)) **No**

## II. Strategic Elements

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

### a. Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions, economic development strategies, and labor market in which the State's workforce system and programs will operate.

#### 1. Economic and Workforce Analysis

##### A. Economic Analysis

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions and trends in the State, including sub-State regions and any specific economic areas identified by the State.

### **i. Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations**

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.

### **ii. Emerging Industry Sectors and Occupation**

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.

## **III. Employers' Employment Needs**

With regard to the industry sectors and occupations identified in 1 and 2 above, provide an assessment of the employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.

Indiana has the challenge of filling one million job in less than 10 years. Data shows that Hoosier employers will have to replace an estimated 660,000 workers over the next decade, and an additional 330,000 new jobs are projected for the same time frame. As we dig a bit deeper into those 1 million jobs, below is what we find.

As to existing demand, Indiana's Economic Analysis Report published in October 2015, reviewed online job posting to determine demand, which varies by industry. Demand for healthcare practitioners, business and financial operations, office administrative support, and food prep showed the most growth in online posting demand since July, 2014. The occupation "sales and related" saw the most over the year declines.

As to emerging demand, the 2014 Hoosier Hot 50 Jobs is a list of high growth rate occupations (both short-term and long-term) with wages at or above the state median. The occupations are ranked according to a single index of weighted occupational measures of growth and opportunity. The Top 10 from the Statewide Hoosier Hot 50 for 2022 are: (1) Registered Nurses, (2) K-12 Teachers, (3) Truck Drivers, (4) Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, (5) General and Operations Managers, (6) Licensed Practical Nurses, (7) Postsecondary Teachers, (8) Accountants and Auditors, (9) First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers, (10) Electrician. As to the Regional Hot 50, there is some variation from the state list with the following occupations making the top 10:

- Industrial Machinery Mechanics
- Construction Laborers
- First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers
- Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers
- Customer Service Representatives
- Machinists
- Maintenance and Repair Workers
- Accountants and Auditors
- Team Assemblers
- Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks
- Physicians and Surgeons
- Secretaries and Administrative Assistants
- Mechanical Engineers

Based on analysis of occupational projections data (including supply, demand and wages), Indiana has identified these priority sectors. Those are: advanced manufacturing and logistics, health science, agriculture and information technology.

As to the employment needs of employers in the above identified sectors and occupations, Indiana has assessed the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA's) found on O\*NET and have vetted those with Indiana employers through focus groups and surveys. While this work is ongoing, initial findings are that employers most desire employability skills (soft skills). As shown in Indiana's Economic Analysis Report published in October 2015, the top listed employability skill by far, is oral and written communication skills, followed by integrity, team-oriented, and customer service. Specialized or technical skills listed in highest demand include quality assurance (QA), application process, food preparation, bilingual and preventative maintenance inspections. The top certifications in demand from advertising employers, include drivers' licenses, CDLs, certifications in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), HAZMAT, Basic Life Support (BLS) and Continuing Education (CE).

A thorough analysis of Indiana's economy and workforce can be found at: [http://www.hoosierdata.in.gov/docs/annual\\_econ\\_analysis/INDIANA%20ECONOMIC%20ANALYSIS%20REPORT%20Program%20Year%202014%20w%20Appendices.pdf](http://www.hoosierdata.in.gov/docs/annual_econ_analysis/INDIANA%20ECONOMIC%20ANALYSIS%20REPORT%20Program%20Year%202014%20w%20Appendices.pdf).

Additionally, for a Vocational Rehabilitation specific analysis, see Vocational Rehabilitation Section j at pages 98-100 below.

## B. Workforce Analysis

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3 of WIOA.\* This population must include individuals with disabilities among other groups\*\* in the State and across regions identified by the State. This includes: Individuals with barriers to employment including displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals.

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

### i. Employment and Unemployment

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

### ii. Labor Market Trends

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

## III. Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce

Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.

## IV. Skill Gaps

Describe apparent 'skill gaps'.

Indiana's unemployment rate dropped from a 10-year peak of 10.3% in 2009, to 6.0% annually in 2014. The rate continues to fall in 2015. Indiana's unemployment rate has remained below the national average in recent months

and throughout much of the 2014 program year. Over the last two and a half years, Indiana has seen growth in private sector employment of over 120,000. During the summer of 2014, Indiana also reached a new peak in private sector employment levels, not seen since early 2000. However, there are signs of misalignment between the educational attainment levels of the unemployed and current employer demand for evolving skills.

Indiana has reviewed the national employment projections data showing that in the 2020 the educational levels for employment will be broken down as follows: 35% H.S. Diploma or less, 30% some college/AA degree, and 35% BA or higher. (See Recovery 2020, Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce, 2013; and Complete College America). In reviewing Indiana data, Indiana is following the similar trends. For high wage, high demand jobs, Indiana data is showing that in 2020 the educational levels for employment will be broken down as follows: 33.8% H.S. diploma or less, 30.7% some college/AA degree and 35.7% BA or higher. For all occupations, it is broken down as follows: 50.8% H.S. diploma or less, 24.2% some college/AA degree and 22.4% BA or higher. Indiana, through a collaborative effort of the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, the Indiana Commission on Higher Education and Ivy Tech Community College, is in the process of conducting a thorough and detailed gap analysis pursuant to recent legislation. The gap analysis will identify any gaps or imbalances between high school career and technical education courses and community college certification courses offered in the region and the workforce needs and training and education needs in the region.

Additionally, in Indiana, there are 1.2 million young people ages 16-29, whom account for roughly 1/3 of the working population. Since the great recession, unemployment among this age group has been higher than the average population. Unfortunately, Indiana loses a large percentage of its youth with postsecondary credentials and degrees to surrounding states and California. Yet, simultaneously and as stated above, there are more than **one million jobs** that will be available in the next 10 years, and there is a misalignment of educational training programs to the skills demanded by employers.

A thorough analysis of Indiana's economy and workforce can be found at: [http://www.hoosierdata.in.gov/docs/annual\\_econ\\_analysis/INDIANA%20ECONOMIC%20ANALYSIS%20REPORT%20Program%20Year%202014%20w%20Appendices.pdf](http://www.hoosierdata.in.gov/docs/annual_econ_analysis/INDIANA%20ECONOMIC%20ANALYSIS%20REPORT%20Program%20Year%202014%20w%20Appendices.pdf).

For a Vocational Rehabilitation specific analysis, see Vocational Rehabilitation Section j at pages 98-100 below.

## 2. Workforce Development, Education and Training Activities Analysis

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the workforce development activities, including education and training in the State, to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, as identified in *Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce* above, and the employment needs of employers, as identified in *Employers' Employment Needs* above. This must include an analysis of –

### A. The State's Workforce Development Activities

Provide an analysis of the State's workforce development activities, including education and training activities of the core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required and optional one-stop delivery system partners.\*

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

The workforce development programs of the Core partners are listed below:

## **Title I - Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth:**

As to adults and dislocated workers, the Governor initiated a core focus on workforce for the state in 2013. In partnership with the Indiana state legislature, DWD embarked upon an aggressive plan to update the whole direction of the agency and how DWD thinks about workforce development for the state. A few key components of this work include an analysis and subsequent procurement of a new integrated case management and labor exchange system. Indiana chose Geographic Solutions as the integrated system to be used for all workforce activities across the state. This system will be the foundation for workforce activities in all of our WorkOne offices across the state and utilized by every one-stop operator and state merit staff. Another critical component that will be leveraged by all partners across the workforce system is our Demand Driven Workforce System framework. This system will help DWD project what careers, jobs and skills are needed by Indiana businesses in the short, medium and long-term horizon. This data will help our one-stop partners identify what training programs to enroll clients in for a career when they complete. Additionally, it will help schools (secondary and post-secondary) identify what curriculum needs to be developed to meet the needs of the Indiana economy.

All of these activities are being developed to improve Indiana's workforce delivery system. One of the first and most critical partners to utilize these tools will be our Title I partners delivering the Integrated WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth services. Indiana has a system of 28 comprehensive offices, referred to as WorkOne Career Centers, in 12 workforce regions. Indiana's system also consists of over 60 smaller county based "express" offices. Lastly many, but not all regions, have implemented a mobile type system where staff go out to the community centers where customers go for a wide array of additional services. The comprehensive, express and mobile WorkOne offices are led by the regional workforce boards. Each board has implemented a system that connects partners either physically in the WorkOne office or virtually through partnership with the core program providers. Specifically, the boards have strategies and regional plans to implement the Adult and Dislocated Worker core programs through the WorkOne system. A critical need for Indiana's businesses is finding enough trained and qualified employees to meet their needs. Thus, the Adult and Dislocated Worker system is focused on assessment, identification and training of workers to meet the demands of Indiana's businesses. This work requires coordination with all of the core programs. Key examples include working with Adult Basic Education partners and the WorkINDiana program to identify Hoosiers who need their High School Equivalency or are skills deficient and then coordinate that work with short-term training that will lead to an entry level career position in critically needed business fields. The partnership between Adult Basic Education and the one-stop system has been critical for this to be effective. Overall, Indiana has had an integrated environment in our WorkOne Career Centers for a number of years.

As to youth, workforce development programming assists young people (ages 14-21 if in-school youth; ages 16-24 if out-of-school youth) who face significant barriers to education and/or employment by providing resources and support to overcome those barriers and successfully transition to self-sufficiency. This is accomplished by assessing a participant's skills, interests, needs, and goals; creating customized service plans in collaboration with the participant; and expanding the participant's connection to the local economy, educational opportunities, and community services. Most services to date have been focused on in school youth since the majority of WIA funded was for in-school youth. Indiana is working to transition programming to out-of-school youth as required under WIOA. One of Indiana's significant youth programs is Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG). JAG is a statewide drop-out prevention program that targets at-risk high school juniors and seniors as well as out-of-school youth who have already dropped out of high school. The program's goals are to provide skills assessment and remediation to ensure students receive a high school diploma or its equivalent; assist in the attainment of employability skills to pursue employment or post-secondary education; and to help ensure graduates remain employed after graduation or transition to post-secondary education or training. Indiana's JAG model provides tutoring assistance and adult mentoring. Participants receive individualized attention and identification of specific barriers to success, which may include academic problems, life skills, personal skills, and social or economic barriers. Students receive one year of follow-up service after graduation. Each senior completes the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), applies to two colleges and has the opportunity to take the American College Testing (ACT), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or some pre-postsecondary enrollment examination.

JAG continues to thrive with 118 active programs across Indiana thanks in large part to the continued support of the Indiana General Assembly and Governor Mike Pence. JAG achieved a graduation rate of 93 percent (state average 89 percent) in 2014 and won the national award for highest scholarship dollars earned by students (\$15 million) for the third-straight year. In the same year, for the very first time, 11 of Indiana's 12 region received the prestigious "5 of

5" Award for exceeding national goals in the following categories: graduation, post-secondary education, enrollment, securing entry level jobs leading to career advancement opportunities, and positive student outcomes.

## Title II - Adult Education:

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

Adult Basic Education (ABE) welcomed 27,561 adult learners through its programs in 2014. Nearly half (13,539) of these students completed at least one level gain, with a majority advancing multiple levels (22,658 advancing levels achieved). Over 4,400 earned their Indiana High School Equivalency. The cost per Adult Education student attaining a level gain, which is equivalent to two K-12 grade levels, was \$1,612. For perspective, the average cost per year for public K-12 students in School Year 2013 was \$9,556.

The Adult Education program in Indiana continually works to coordinate with the WorkOne system to ensure workforce services are available to those accessing adult education services. One significant program is the WorkINdiana program, which enables adult education students working toward their high school equivalency or improving their basic skills to simultaneously earn an industry-recognized occupational certification. Students may select certification training from a list of approved certifications (see below). To ensure success, WorkINdiana requires regional partnerships between WorkOne Centers and Adult Basic Education centers, career and technical education centers, community colleges, and local economic development representatives. Together these partners determine which careers from the certification framework are most relevant to their regions and then implement the requisite training programs. Students must be co-enrolled in Title I programs to ensure a full range of supports and financial services are made available. In PY14, 1,101 students enrolled in WorkINdiana training with more than 400 approved career certification programs located at 84 sites across the state.

## Title III - Wagner Peyser:

Indiana's Wagner Peyser program covers the full range of labor exchange activities in our WorkOne system. In the comprehensive one-stop offices, the Department of Workforce Development employs over 150 employees through Wagner Peyser funding. These employees partner with the other staff who implement key components of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Their tasks include, but are not limited to, initial client evaluation and assessment, job search assistance, re-employment assistance through the Indiana's Jobs for Hoosiers program, employer recruitment and other employer services. Indiana's state merit staff are closely tied to our employers across the state and provide a full range of services directly to our employers to assist them filling their open positions.

In addition to staff, the Wagner Peyser grant provides tools for state staff and their partners to manage the labor exchange services necessary to match an employer with a potential employee. Some of these tools include Indiana's labor exchange system called Indiana Career Connect. Assessment tools to help employees and employers evaluate the skills needed for critical positions such as Indiana Career Explorer (ICE), WorkKeys, cTorq, Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) to name a few. Additionally, Wagner Peyser provides partial funding for the case management system. Indiana is in the middle of a transition of that system to Geographic Solutions.

The **Hoosier Initiative for Re-Entry (HIRE)** program is a collaboration with the Indiana Department of Workforce Development and the Indiana Department of Correction dedicated to creating a cohesive relationship between ex-offender clients, WorkOne Centers, businesses, non-profit organizations, and local law enforcement agencies. The collective goal of this group is to help place rehabilitated, trained, and determined clients back into the workforce. Re-Entry Coordinators (funded partly with Wagner Peyser dollars) meet with clients in individual and group training

sessions to develop the strong work ethic skills that employers are seeking. Basic skills such as integrity, sense of responsibility, emphasis on quality, discipline, and a sense of teamwork are vital to keep a company functioning at its peak. After release and job placement, DWD staff meets regularly with participants and employers to identify work related issues or needs, and to discuss any program changes. It costs Indiana roughly \$20,000 per year to incarcerate one offender. Department figures show the state's cash return to the economy during the past year is more than \$8M due to savings on incarceration costs and increases in state economic productivity.

#### **Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation:**

Vocational Rehabilitation is an engaged partner to increase educational access to job-seekers that may need VR services and supports to be successful in other state and federal programs. VR is able to provide services to assist with barriers stemming from an individual's disability that assists in access to existing programs or aids in successfully completing a program. VR is working with State programs, like JAG and local educational agencies, to identify ways to collaborate to serve student and youth populations through pre-employment transition services. Project SEARCH is a VR program that is a worksite-based school-to-work program that provides employment and education opportunities for students with disabilities transitioning from high school. The program benefits employers by increasing workforce diversity and reducing recruitment and training costs. Many employers experience improved job retention, enhanced community image and increased customer satisfaction. Additionally, the Randolph-Sheppard Business Enterprise Program (<http://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/4901.htm>) provides entrepreneurial opportunities for legally blind clients of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS). These blind entrepreneurs manage a wide variety of food-service operations, including cafeterias, coffee shops, vending locations, and highway area vending sites. Through this program, blind individuals receive training and opportunities to become productive, tax-paying citizens and independent business owners.

The workforce development programs of the mandatory and optional partners, including Career and Technical Education (CTE), Community Services Block Grant, Indian and Native American programs, HUD Employment and Training programs, Job Corps, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs program, Senior Community Service Employment program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (unless the Governor determines TANF will not be a required partner), Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, Unemployment Compensation (UC) programs, and YouthBuild, are listed below:

#### **CTE:**

In Indiana Career and Technical Education are funded through the federal Carl D. Perkins program along with state funding. The program prepares students in secondary and post-secondary education for industry-recognized credentials and transition to higher education and/or workplace readiness. Indiana's CTE delivery system consists of 46 area Vocational districts, nearly 300 school corporations and post-secondary institutions offering certification and two-year degree programs, administered by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development and the Indiana Department of Education. Following the Perkins Act two-plus-two model the CTE program encourages secondary and post-secondary institutions to develop instructional plans that provide a minimum of two years of secondary CTE study followed by two years of post-secondary instruction, with an associate degree and accompanying certification as the preferred goal of the latter. In accordance with the state's vision for all post-secondary CTE students to achieve challenging academic and technical standards, as well as, to prepare them for placement in current or emerging professions, the following career pathways were identified in which post-secondary funds were to be obligated: Science, Engineering and Technologies, Health Services, Business, Management and Administration, Information Technology, Transportation and Logistics, Architecture and Construction, and Manufacturing and Processing. In addition to focusing on delivering "plus two" educational opportunities within defined pathways, the importance of credential attainment including both educational credentials and occupational certifications is also emphasized. There is also strong emphasis on job placement for post-secondary CTE students. Accordingly, placement-enhancing activities are encouraged, including the development of experiential education (job shadowing, internships, co-operative experiences) and employment services and counseling (job-seeking skills instruction, development of on-the-job-training experiences, and other placement activities).

**Community Services Block Grant:**

The Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA) is the designated state agency to act as the lead agency for purposes of carrying out state activities for the federal Community Services Block Grant. IHCDA's mission is to ensure all Hoosiers have the opportunity to live in safe, affordable, quality housing in economically stable communities. This mission is furthered by a number of goals. One of these goals is to improve the lives of citizens through efforts to enhance employment. IHCDA provides services to low-income individuals and families through a large number of local community action agencies. These agencies partner with one-stop centers to administer workforce activities such as job programs, employment counseling services, micro-enterprise programs, and referral services.

**Indian and Native American programs:**

The American Indian Center of Indiana, Inc. (AICI) is the Indiana Section 166 grantee for the Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration Native American Programs Division. The service area of this organization includes all but six counties in Indiana (Elkhart, Kosciusko, LaPorte, Marshall, Starke, and St. Joseph counties). These six counties fall under the designated service area of the Michigan Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians. AICI works cooperatively throughout the state of Indiana within the one-stop centers to provide workforce development activities under WIOA. AICI focuses its services on American Indians, Alaska Natives, or Native Hawaiians. Additionally, the Commissioner for the Department of Workforce Development sits on the Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission Board.

**HUD Employment and Training Programs:**

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grants out Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars to the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA). OCRA uses this funding to administer the Workforce Development Program (WDP), which provides Indiana communities access to resources to develop and maintain a high quality workforce increasing the skills and capacity of current and future members of Indiana's workforce.

**Job Corps:**

Indiana has two Jobs Corps Centers: Atterbury and IndyPendence. These centers offer no-cost education and career technical training programs administered by the U.S Department of Labor. These programs are intended to help young people, ages 16-24, improve the quality of their lives through career, technical, and academic training. These centers also offer other services, such as, career planning, on-the-job training, job placement, food service, driver's education, health and dental care, a bi-weekly basic living allowance and clothing allowance. A Job Corps representative participates on the work-based learning taskforce of the State Workforce Board and is on the local workforce development board and the youth advisory committee in the Regions where the Job Corps facility are located.

**Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program:**

This program operates in Indiana's WorkOne centers. Under normal operating circumstances, all WorkOne customers are greeted by the welcome team and moved on to the appropriate staff for assistance. The majority of veterans should be served by Wagner-Peyser or WIOA staff rather than the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) Veterans' staff. This allows JVSG Veterans' staff efforts to focus on veteran customers with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE). Welcome team staff should identify those veterans with SBE's and direct those veterans to the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program specialist for assistance, intensive services and case management. In the event that a DVOP is not available, the veteran or spouse should be referred to the appropriate Wagner-Peyser or WIOA staff and not held up until a DVOP is available.

**Senior Community Service Employment program (SCSEP):**

Indiana SCSEP (both the National Grantee and State Grantee, which is DWD) are active partners with the One-Stop delivery system. The State sub-grantee and one of the national sub-grantees are both WIOA One-Stop operators, thus creating a more coordinated partnership in those regions. Indiana will continue to integrate all SCSEP participants into One Stop and WIOA activities.

**Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF):**

The TANF program is run out of Indiana's Family and Social Services Agencies (FSSA), Division of Family Resources. FSSA also houses the state's vocational rehabilitation program. The employment and training services being provided to TANF cash recipients are currently being contracted out to a single statewide vendor, who coordinates with the WorkOne system. TANF is also coordinating with VR, such that VR is providing information to assist the VR contractor in understanding VR and its eligibility requirements in order to provide appropriate referrals and assist the "shared consumer" in achieving his/her employment outcome.

**Trade Adjustment Assistance programs (TAA):**

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

**UC:**

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

**YouthBuild:**

Indiana receives funding for four YouthBuild programs: Evansville, Indianapolis, Anderson and Gary. The Region 12 Workforce Development Board (EmployIndy) received one of these grants (YouthBuild Indy) and manages this national education, work readiness and leadership training program. Participants receive support towards a high school equivalency diploma and pathways to college or vocational training, including credentialed construction training. Participants also worked toward improving the quality of life in Indianapolis by transforming abandoned, blighted homes into valuable housing for low income families. In August 2014, EmployIndy was awarded a \$1.1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to continue YouthBuild Indy through 2017. The other three programs are not operated by the workforce boards, but each of these three regions have partnered with their respective YouthBuild program to identify what services the WorkOnes can and will provide for YouthBuild participants.

The WIA Annual Report, the ICC's Annual Report, and the DWD Annual Training Report provide a more thorough analysis of the State's workforce development activities, including education and training activities. The ICC report can be found at: <http://www.in.gov/icc/2394.htm>; the WIA Annual Report and the DWD Annual Training Report can be found at <http://www.in.gov/dwd/2565.htm>.

All core programs and required one-stop delivery system partners listed above will continue to work together to meet the needs of the workforce and employers. The creation of the Indiana Career Council (ICC) supports collaboration among partners. With the focus of 1) providing coordination to align the various participants in the state's education,

job skills development, and career training system, and 2) matching the education and skills training provided by the state's education, job skills development, and career training system with the currently existing and future needs of the state's job market, the ICC developed a Strategic Plan to improve the state's education, job skills development, and career training system.

The Regional Works Councils also support collaboration among partners with their to develop technical training options which encourage all students to achieve with a personal "Plan A," providing opportunity for success whether they want to go to college, learn a trade, or start their career right out of high school. The legislatively mandated councils focused on career and technical education awareness, curricula enhancement and development, and greater collaboration between industry and education to meet skill needs across identified priority sectors and occupations. The Works Council members are appointed by the Governor and include employers, educators, workforce and economic development partners and nonprofit partners.

Some examples of how core partners are working together to meet the needs of the workforce and employers are:

- Innovative Curriculum grants (<http://in.gov/irwc/2362.htm>) have created new career and technical education programming for over 2,600 students, who, to date, have earned more than 3,600 dual credits hours and over 1,000 industry certifications in partnership with local businesses;
- The Indiana Youth Institute, Indiana Chamber of Commerce, the Center for Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL), and the Regional Works Councils have hosted several Post-Secondary Pathways events around the state to engage educators, workforce professionals and local businesses to better understand work environments, desired skill sets and hiring/internship opportunities to share with students;
- Frameworks for sector strategies ([http://in.gov/icc/files/Indiana\\_Plan\\_and\\_Launch\\_Sector\\_Partnership\\_Initiative.pdf](http://in.gov/icc/files/Indiana_Plan_and_Launch_Sector_Partnership_Initiative.pdf)) and career pathways systems ([http://in.gov/icc/files/Indiana\\_Pathways\\_Definitions.pdf](http://in.gov/icc/files/Indiana_Pathways_Definitions.pdf)) were developed to connect individuals to high-demand jobs in Indiana with additional implementation work to follow by the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), the Department of Education (DOE), and the Commission for Higher Education (CHE);
- New grant programs and activities such as Skill UP (<http://in.gov/dwd/skillup.htm>), Return & Complete ([http://in.gov/icc/files/Return\\_and\\_Complete\\_Guidance\\_At\\_a\\_Glance\\_8\\_1\\_2015\\_\(2\).pdf](http://in.gov/icc/files/Return_and_Complete_Guidance_At_a_Glance_8_1_2015_(2).pdf)), and Career Ready are aligning workforce efforts among various agencies and organizations across the state with a focus on regional leadership and local priorities;
- Indiana was awarded a Talent Pipeline Policy Academy grant by the National Governors Association for the ongoing efforts in data collection and partnership engagement;
- New work-and-learn guides were created for employers to readily expand work-and-learn opportunities ([http://www.in.gov/icc/files/A\\_Guide\\_to\\_Talent\\_Attraction\\_and\\_Development\\_for\\_Hoosier\\_Employers.pdf](http://www.in.gov/icc/files/A_Guide_to_Talent_Attraction_and_Development_for_Hoosier_Employers.pdf)); and
- Indiana was awarded Work-Based Learning Policy Academy grant by the National Governors Association to develop strategies to scale high-quality, work-based learning opportunities for young adults, connecting 16- to 29-year-olds with middle-skills career opportunities in STEM-intensive industries.

## B. The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities

Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in (A) above.

The strengths of the workforce development activities identified in (A) above are:

- Three of the four core programs (Titles I, II and III) and five of the required one-stop partners (post-secondary Career and Technical Education (Perkins), Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, Senior Community Service Employment program, Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, and Unemployment Compensation programs) are located within one state agency, (DWD), increasing the ease of coordination.

- The state is infusing employer demand into all workforce development programs and activities in a more coordinated and precise way;
- Jobs for American Graduates (JAG) remains a strong in-school youth program and have even grown despite WIOA changes reducing the amount of WIOA funding for in-school youth programs;
- Some adult education programs are already co-located in WorkOne centers and/or community spaces;
- Wagner Peyser staff and labor exchange services are co-located in WorkOne centers, thus Title I and III programs are already completely coordinated.
- Indiana has had tremendous outcomes for both the WorkINdiana and HIRE programs.
- VR staff are community based, sharing office space with TANF and WorkOne, but also meeting their clients in the community to ensure accessibility of services.
- The state is braiding TANF funding with other state and federal dollars to assist with funding the JAG, HIRE, WorkINdiana and Serve Indiana programs.
- The lead agencies of the WIOA Core Programs partner with the Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) by sitting on the scoring committee for the Workforce Development Program grant (a HUD Employment and Training Program). This ensures coordination and consistency amongst workforce development programming.
- The Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA), which is the designated state agency for purposes of carrying out state activities for the federal Community Services Block Grant, is applying through the National Governors Association for a technical assistance grant on two generation poverty work. The WIOA core partners are supporting this grant application and have agreed to partner with IHCDA as a member of their “core team.”
- Job Corps is involved with Indiana’s state workforce board and two local workforce boards.

The weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in (A) above are:

- WorkINdiana needs to be strengthened in certain areas of the state through better coordination between the Adult Education provider and the WorkOne system.
- Additional funding needs to be secured to maintain and/or expand the successful JAG, WorkINdiana and HIRE Programs.
- Not all mandatory one-stop partners are coordinated and/or have a highly functioning referral system with the WIOA core partners.
- TANF employment and training services are being provided outside the workforce system.
- There is not currently a single sign on or intake system for the WIOA core and/or mandatory partners’ clients.

### C. State Workforce Development Capacity

Provide an analysis of the capacity of State entities to provide the workforce development activities identified in (A) above.

The state agencies involved in providing the core WIOA workforce development activities are:

- the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), administering WIOA Titles I, II, and III; and
- the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services, who oversees Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) and administers WIOA Title IV.

DWD also has responsibility for the following mandatory one-stop partners: post-secondary Career and Technical Education (Perkins), Local Veterans’ Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program, Senior

Community Service Employment program, Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, and Unemployment Compensation programs. FSSA also has responsibility for the TANF program.

Additionally the following state agencies administer programs falling within the mandatory one-stop partners:

- the Office of Community and Rural Affairs administers the Workforce Development Program grant, a HUD Employment and Training Program; and
- the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA) is the designated state agency for purposes of carrying out state activities for the federal Community Services Block Grant.

Given the consolidation of several of the state's workforce development activities into a few agencies and given the coordination between the state agencies, the capacity of the state's entities to provide workforce development activities is great. Additionally, the previous work that has been completed by the Indiana Career Council has provided a solid foundation for the state entities to continue to move forward and expand state capacity. The majority of the work of the Indiana Career Council has been transitioned to the state workforce board, thus further empowering the state workforce entities to accomplish the necessary workforce development activities to move Indiana forward.

## b. State Strategic Vision and Goals

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

### 1. Vision

Describe the State's strategic vision for its workforce development system.

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

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

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

### 2. Goals

Describe the goals for achieving this vision based on the above analysis of the State's economic conditions, workforce, and workforce development activities. This must include—

- Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers of employment\* and other populations.\*\*
- Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

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

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

**GOAL 1: SYSTEM ALIGNMENT** Create a seamless one-stop delivery system where partners provide client-centric integrated services, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment.

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

**GOAL 2: CLIENT-CENTRIC APPROACH** Create a client-centered approach, where system partners and programs coordinate in a way that each Indiana citizen (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment) has a pathway to improving his or her education, knowledge, skills and, ultimately, his or her employment prospects, with a focus on in-demand careers.

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

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

The National Governors Association reports:

Sector strategies are among the few workforce interventions that statistical evidence shows to improve employment opportunities for workers and to increase their wages once on the job. Employers report increases in productivity, reductions in customer complaints, and declines in staff turnover, all of which reduce costs and improve the competitiveness of their companies.[1]

Due in part to the limited public resources available for education, training, and career development, it is important that the State ensure that the resources it makes available are closely aligned with the sectors that are key drivers of the state's existing and emerging economy. Further, partners within Indiana's education, job skills development, and career training system must enhance their ability to engage meaningfully with employers within these sectors, and ensure that programming addresses the emerging and existing education, knowledge, and skill needs of these

sectors from entry level to advanced. Concurrently, the State and its partners need to ensure that there are effective and meaningful forums for employers in these sectors to collaborate with each other and to work with the system's partners.

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

### 3. Performance Goals

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

Please refer to the table in Appendix 1.

### 4. Assessment

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

The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) created the office of business intelligence in the spring of 2016. This office is responsible for WIOA benchmarking that drives a deeper understanding of performance to best serve Hoosier employers and employees. This office will work with the WIOA steering committee and the state workforce board to ensure the vision, goals and strategies of the state plan are moving the state workforce system in a positive direction.

This office is also in the process of establishing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and performance measures to improve data-informed decision making. In establishing KPIs and performance measures, the first step is developing a philosophy and model to group measures. The highest measure is the vision. The vision then helps define the KPIs which are measures that enable the core programs to track success in reaching the vision. The next set of measures that KPIs inform are the program performance measures. The two objectives of program performance measures are to track outcomes from each program/unit and show how the program impacts the agencies KPIs and vision. The last set of measures are activity measures which are in place to monitor daily management activities with the purpose of tracking success towards the program performance measures.

DWD plans to issue a policy on system assessment and continuous quality improvements to ensure that the current actions are being coordinated in a way that allows partners to review relevant information and take action to improve the system. This will be completed by July 1, 2017. By establishing KPIs and performance measures and more purposefully using data, the core programs can lay the foundation needed to most effectively support operational and organizational improvement.

VR & DWD will continue to reassess that state employee performance appraisal goals with the core indicators in mind. Currently staff are measured on select prior indicators and these will be updated to be in better alignment with the new common performance measures. Both agencies will also be modifying the outcome data elements that are captured in their respective providers to ensure appropriate alignment with the common performance measures.

### c. State Strategy

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

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

Indiana has 1 million jobs to fill over the next decade, with 660,000 being replacements and 330,000 being new jobs. With Indiana’s unemployment being at an all-time low and with the current educational pipeline not being sufficient to fill the projected jobs, workforce development strategies will need to be focused on all segments of the populations, but with a special focus on those with barriers to employment.

The following strategies will address these needs for populations described in the economic and workforce analyses in (a) above.

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

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

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

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

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

- **STRATEGY 2.1:** Create a career pathways system that provides opportunities for students and workers across the education and workforce systems to link to the labor markets within each region in Indiana, and their respective high-wage, high-demand careers.

- **STRATEGY 2.2:** Ensure that students and workers at all levels throughout Indiana are provided with meaningful career counseling and career preparation, including information on Indiana's high wage, high demand occupations.
- **STRATEGY 2.3:** Elevate the importance of work-and-learn models, with particular focus on Indiana's priority sectors identified in (a) above and a focus on youth adults. Connecting young adults to high-wage, high-demand employment opportunities through work-and-learn is essential to filling the million job openings projected to be available in Indiana between now and 2025.
- **STRATEGY 2.4:** Ensure that those with barriers to employment and youth have increased access to and opportunities for employment, education, training, and support services.

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

The National Governors Association reports: Sector strategies are among the few workforce interventions that statistical evidence shows to improve employment opportunities for workers and to increase their wages once on the job. Employers report increases in productivity, reductions in customer complaints, and declines in staff turnover, all of which reduce costs and improve the competitiveness of their companies.[1]

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

- **STRATEGY 3.1:** Identify Priority Now and Priority Future sectors and occupations in Indiana based on the criteria set out by the Indiana Career Council in a Resolution regarding priority sectors and occupations in Indiana passed at the June 15, 2015 meeting.
- **STRATEGY 3.2:** Launch and/or expand sector partnerships in and across workforce development regions that complement the State's priority industry sectors to provide a mechanism for Indiana's education, job skills development, and career training system to collect information and respond to sector needs.

Additionally, the below sector and career pathways specific work is progressing.

- The Indiana Plan and Launch Sector Partnership Initiative encompasses the State's readiness, engagement of employers, as well as the vitality and future of sector strategies in Indiana. This document is an important resource to be utilized as the state strategy progresses. Priority Now Sectors were identified to align immediate occupational demands with the skills and training needed to fill those positions to readily address gaps in employment in high-demand and high-wage careers. These Priority Now Sectors for the State of Indiana are Advanced Manufacturing, Agriculture, Health Sciences, Information Technology, and Transportation, Distribution and Logistics.
- Career Pathways is an essential component to the success and strength of sector partnerships. The Indiana Pathways Innovation Network (IN-PIN) provides a framework and tools for Hoosiers to create, support, and expand career pathways statewide which is supported by multiple state agencies including IDWD. Since its creation in 2015, the network is comprised of over 150 organizations and 75 individual members which continues to grow. To date, six regional workshops and a study visit was held with over 365 participants. IN-PIN will continue to host similar events, share promising practices in Indiana, and provide examples of current career pathway systems in action to learn more and support sustainable career pathway systems.
- DWD is in the process of contracting with a sector strategy subject matter expert in organizing and executing technical assistance to grow and expand sector partnerships across Indiana, as well as continue to explore how we utilize sector partnerships as the vehicle to develop industry-driven career pathways in Indiana.

- DWD will host an inaugural two-day Indiana Sectors Summit in October 2016 in concert with this subject matter expert to convene current sector partnerships and provide resources, tools, and technical assistance to begin and leverage sector partnerships throughout the state. During the Elevating Work and Learn in Indiana event, model programs of work and learn opportunities including apprenticeships, on-the-job training, cooperative education, internships, and externships will be highlighted and shared with the audience of employers, educators, key stakeholders to expand all work and learn opportunities. Keynote speakers include business presidents, government officials, and education leaders to communicate and model sector partnership strategies and opportunities in traditional and non-traditional sectors statewide.
- Regional sector partnership efforts are also supported by DWD with Skill UP! Indiana. Industry-led partnerships consisting of business, education, workforce and economic entities serving an area of at least 200,000 people are eligible to apply for this grant opportunity supporting program goals such as:
  1. Sector-focused training and education programs for in-demand occupations;
  2. Curriculum based on necessary skills and competencies as identified by local employers;
  3. Employability skills (soft skills) instruction that can be utilized across all careers;
  4. Work-and-learn opportunities for youth and adult learners.
- Thirteen Skill UP! Indiana grant proposals were awarded during round 1 and the round 2 awarded proposals will be announced during the Indiana Sectors Summit in October 2016. These grant awards support and connect identified needs by regional teams to the information available from economic and workforce data aligning to high-wage and high-demand career opportunities.

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[1] National Governors Association, “State Sector Strategies Coming of Age: Implications for State Workforce Policy Makers.” <https://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/2013/1301NGASSSReport.pdf>

## **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 following strategies will support the alignment of the core and required one-stop partner programs:

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

### III. Operational Planning Elements

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

#### a. State Strategy Implementation

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include—

##### 1. State Board Functions

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

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

##### 2. Implementation of State Strategy

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

##### A. Core Program Activities to Implement the State's Strategy

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

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

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

- **STRATEGY 1.1:** Develop a common understanding among partners as to what the "One Stop Delivery System" is in Indiana.

- Work with partners to develop a framework for Indiana for the One Stop Delivery System, with common definitions.
- Educate all stakeholders on the framework.
- **STRATEGY 1.2:** Increase service integration among partner agencies within the One Stop Delivery System
  - Build upon the work of the Career Council's System Alignment taskforce in examining the structure and service delivery of Indiana's workforce agencies, regions, and partners to increase coordination, efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability. This examination will stress the importance of creativity and innovation in thinking beyond bricks and mortar locations, while analyzing and making recommendations on:
    - ▶ the value of co-location with other core, mandatory or optional partners;
    - ▶ coordination of case management across partners; and
    - ▶ coordination of business services across partners.
  - Implement new case management systems across partners. DWD is in the process of implementing a new case management and labor exchange system. This system will also align with the states labor market information data, interactive website and tools for jobs seekers and career counselors. Additionally, VR is continuing development of a web-based case management system to improve the efficiency and enhance the mobile-working environment of VR field staff. The system will ensure appropriate system integration and data-sharing to align resources and consumer information to improve the consumer's experience in VR and increase the success of meeting his/her employment goal. During implementation of both systems, Indiana is assessing ways to leverage the systems for alignment across the entire One Stop system and as appropriate share data between the two systems.
  - Evaluate the employment and training services being provided to recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), identifying options for consolidating programs and services that would increase coordination, efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability
  - Evaluate utilization of SNAP 50/50.
- **STRATEGY 1.3:** Simplify the process for customers in order for services to be accessible when, where and how they are needed.
  - Build upon the work of the Career Council's System Alignment taskforce by analyzing and make recommendations on:
    - ▶ the ability to leverage technology for virtual One Stop;
    - ▶ the ability for mobile One Stop services; and
    - ▶ common intake/single points of entry.
    - ▶ Create clear explanation of services and clear explanation of eligibility for programs.
  - **STRATEGY 1.4:** Ensure the culture of the One Stop system promotes knowledge transfer across partner programs, such that staff embraces the "no wrong door" philosophy and is capable of providing information on services across programs and making appropriate referrals.
  - Provide training to current staff on services across programs
  - Develop cross-training materials that can be used in the future on new hires
  - In Region 11, DWD and VR are working on a Pilot to have a subject matter expert on WorkOne services in the VR office and to have a subject expert on VR services in the WorkOne office. Common referrals

and communication channels are being established between the offices, and staff training is being conducted so the entire VR or WorkOne office will be cross-trained.

- **GOAL 2: CLIENT-CENTRIC APPROACH** Create a *client-centered* approach, where system partners and programs coordinate in a way that each individual worker or student has a pathway to improving his or her education, knowledge, skills and, ultimately, his or her employment prospects, with a focus on in-demand careers.
- **STRATEGY 2.1:** Create a career pathways system that provides opportunities for students and workers across the education and workforce systems to link to the labor markets within each region in Indiana, and their respective high-wage, high-demand careers.
  - Key items regarding the development of a career pathways system framework have been completed by the Indiana Career Council, including development of a document that clearly defines elements of a career pathways system, and development of a process document for aligning various pathways programs into an integrated pathways system.
  - Through the Education Workforce Innovation Network (EWIN) project, The National Center for College and Career Transitions (NC3T) is leading an effort known as the Indiana Pathways Innovation Network, or IN-PIN. The purpose of this initiative is to bring together employer-led organizations, school districts, adult education providers, colleges, and workforce system partners to develop and support educational pathway programs for youth and adults. IN-PIN helps identify and share promising practices and replicable strategies that can be used to implement and improve pathway programs of study. IN-PIN also will promote the structures and processes needed for these organizations to work together to form a career pathways system.
  - The Indiana Pathways Innovation Network (IN-PIN) will hold workshops to provide a framework for communities to build or strengthen pathways systems to support the statewide development of a pathways system.
  - A “State of the Workforce” is under development so counselors have the most up-to-date information on in-demand, high-wage occupations.
  - Over \$4.3 million in state funds and \$2.7 million in private match funds were awarded by the Indiana Regional Works Councils through the CTE Innovative Curriculum grants. Dual credits and/or workforce credentials were a component of the programs receiving awards.
  - DWD, through the Skill UP initiative, will provide up to \$11 million dollars in funding to industry-led regional partnerships for the implementation of a number of evidence-based strategies aimed at closing the skill and attainment gaps.
  - Ivy Tech community college, DWD and the Indiana Department of Education are working on an integrated approach for CTE pathways.
  - Indiana is receiving federal technical assistance on career pathways in adult education (Moving Pathways Forward), with plans for a local pilot.
  - DWD, working with the SWIC’s WIOA Implementation Taskforce, will analyze policies and the opportunities to ensure those with barriers to employment and low level learners will have the ability to access sustainable career pathways and seek appropriate credentials at all levels.
- **STRATEGY 2.2:** Ensure that students and workers at all levels throughout Indiana are provided with meaningful career counseling and career preparation, including information on Indiana’s high-wage, high-demand occupations.
  - Adult career counseling standards that build off of the new k-12 career counseling standards are currently under development. After their development, next steps will be: 1) marketing and implementation of the standards, and 2) broad professional development to all providers, including Adult Education, Work One offices, Ivy Tech campuses, Vocational Rehabilitation, K12, etc.

- A “State of the Workforce” is under development so counselors have the most up-to-date information on in-demand, high-wage occupations.
- Proposed changes to the Core 40 diploma include the addition of the Preparing for College and Careers and a College and Career Readiness sequence.
- Indiana Career Explorer is available to all Indiana residents to provide career interest information.
- “Postsecondary Pathways: Connecting Education to Careers for Student Success” events are being hosted by DWD and the Regional Works Councils, in partnership with the Indiana Youth Institute, the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, the Center for Excellence in Leadership of Learning at the University of Indianapolis and the Commission for Higher Education, as well as local and regional employers, to address the issues of postsecondary education and workforce development. These day-long, local professional development opportunities are designed to give educators, counselors and other youth-serving professionals the chance to learn directly from employers about available jobs in their region. Employers also inform attendees about the necessary steps for students to take to explore pathways to careers, such as apprenticeships, internships and credentials that take one to two years to earn.
- Jobs for America’s Graduates (JAG) will be expanded in Indiana. JAG is a state-based, national non-profit organization dedicated to preventing dropouts among youth who are most at-risk. JAG’s mission is to keep young people in school through graduation and provide work-based learning experiences that will lead to career advancement opportunities, or to enroll in a postsecondary institution that leads to a rewarding career. JAG students receive adult mentoring while in school and one year of follow-up counseling after graduation. Indiana’s program consistently graduates approximately 90 percent of participants and many students choose to continue their education after high school.
- Indiana received a technical assistance grant for its Jobs for America’s Graduates programs through the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau that will provide instruction and marketing materials related to financial capability education through December 2016.
- **STRATEGY 2.3:** Elevate the importance of work-and-learn models (ICC 4)
  - Key items regarding work-and-learn has been accomplished by the Indiana Career Council that will provide a framework for moving Indiana forward. One such item is the development and dissemination of *A Guide to Talent Attraction and Development for Indiana Employers: Leveraging Work-and-Learn Opportunities to Attract Qualified Hoosier Talent*.
  - The State Workforce Innovation Council (SWIC) will continue to stress the importance of work and learn through the Demand Driven Workforce System taskforce, which is a taskforce of the SWIC. One of the objectives of this taskforce is to provide guidance on development of pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, and work-and-learn opportunities.
  - Apply for and grant out funding which elevates the importance of work-and-learn in Indiana:
    - ▶ A Sector Partnership National Emergency Grant was awarded to the Indiana Department of Workforce Development by the US Department of Labor. Part of these funds may be used to provide employer incentives for work-based training.
    - ▶ WIA incentive funding was dedicated to work-and-learn, with grants being awarded in January, 2015, with a focus on youth and adult education work-and-learn opportunities.
    - ▶ Work-and-learn opportunities are one evidenced-based approach that can be funded by DWD’s Skill UP initiative.
    - ▶ Indiana intends to apply for NGA’s Center Work-based Learning Policy Academy
  - The Lieutenant Governor sponsored a State Fair Summer program, with this year being the pilot year.

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

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

- **STRATEGY 3.1:** Identify Priority Now and Priority Future sectors and occupations in Indiana based on the criteria set out by the Indiana Career Council in a Resolution regarding priority sectors and occupations in Indiana passed at the June 15, 2015 meeting.
  - Enhance the occupational projections program with a new emphasis on current demand and greater details on the skills and certifications employers are seeking. DWD desires to provide more actionable information to our state's employers, job trainers, job seekers, and educators by projecting the trends in

our employer workforce demand over time. Through the use of advanced data analytics and data sciences, DWD will enhance insights of employer workforce demand using data already collected by the state workforce agency, other state agencies, and external data sources (where applicable).

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

## B. Alignment with Activities outside the Plan

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

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

The Core partners and the following state representatives of the mandatory partners meet regularly to assess alignment and coordination of activities described (A) above: Career and Technical Education (Perkins) Post-Secondary, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs, and Unemployment Compensation Programs. Indiana also includes child welfare and corrections in the meetings.

Indiana will be adding the missing mandatory partners to our regular meeting to ensure alignment and coordination of the goal 1 strategies. This will be completed by quarter 1 of 2017.

### **C. Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals**

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

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

The Core partners and the following state representatives of the mandatory partners meet regularly to assess alignment and coordination of activities described (A) above: Career and Technical Education (Perkins) Post-Secondary, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs, and Unemployment Compensation Programs. Indiana also includes child welfare and corrections in the meetings.

Indiana will be adding the missing mandatory partners to our regular meeting to ensure alignment and coordination of the goal 1 strategies. This will be completed by quarter 1 of 2017.

### **D. Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers**

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

Strategic planning Goal 3 and the strategies and implementation activities under that goal address how Indiana will coordinate a demand driven workforce system (DDWS). The DDWS will provide a comprehensive analysis of Indiana's workforce demand thereby providing a valuable resource to Indiana employers and educational institutions. Indiana has identified multiple resources to coordinate the DDWS data including a customer relationship management (CRM) tool. The CRM software will provide multiple resources for employers and educators to access including real time data, information regarding services available through the state and regional, state and nationwide industry news.

In addition, field staff are responsible for developing relationships with local employers, educating and assisting them in accessing Indiana's workforce programs and services. The employer engagement team will be coordinating with partners, required and otherwise, in the delivery of services to employers. Those partners will include: vocational rehabilitation, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), state, regional and local economic development partners, education/training providers, industry/sector leaders and local community organizations.

As indicated above, the core partners and the following state representatives of the mandatory partners meet regularly to assess alignment and coordination of activities described (A) above: Career and Technical Education (Perkins) Post-Secondary, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs, and Unemployment Compensation Programs. Indiana also includes child welfare and corrections in the meetings.

Indiana will be adding the missing mandatory partners to our regular meeting to ensure alignment and coordination of the goal 1 strategies. This will be completed by quarter 1 of 2017.

### **E. Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions**

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

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

The state will continue to include education and training providers in the conversation as initiatives and policies are being decided upon. Examples include the ICC and ICC taskforce work, the SWIC and SWIC taskforce work, the Regional Works Councils, etc.

### **F. Partner Engagement with Other Education and Training Providers.**

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

WIOA State Plan Strategies 2.1 and 2.2 specifically address engagement of education and training providers. Providers in the K-12 and post-secondary arena are engaged in developing a career pathways system and are engaged in ensuring students are provided with meaningful career counseling and career preparation, including information on Indiana's high-wage, high-demand occupations.

The state will continue to include education and training providers in the conversation as initiatives and policies are being decided upon. Examples include the ICC and ICC taskforce work, the SWIC and SWIC taskforce work, the Regional Works Councils, etc.

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

### **G. Leveraging Resources to Increase Educational Access**

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

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

## WorkINDiana

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

In 2014, Indiana received Workforce Investment Act (WIA) incentive funding for their statewide performance in Program Year 2012. Indiana chose to grant this funding to 10 of the 12 Workforce Investment Boards (WIB) for expansion of the WorkINDiana training program and inclusion of work experiences for participants in this training "bridge" program. The 10 WIBs chose specific career clusters with demonstrated need in their economic growth region. These industries include, but are not limited to: Welding (ASW), Certified Nursing Assistant, Certified Production Technician, Pharmacy Technician, Certified Billing and Coding, among others. Regional areas began implementation of the work experience component of the WIA Incentive Grant in January 2015. As of September 30, 2015, 21 participants have completed WorkINDiana training and been placed in short-term, industry-related work experience. Work experience employers include large and small employers such as Walgreen's, Greene County Hospital, Stone City Iron Works, Boyd Welding & Machine, Inc., Landmark Family Dental, Indiana Periodontics and others. Several of the participants have been permanently hired by the work experience employer. Under the incentive grant, work experience wages are expected to align with entry level industry wages. Current wages for the participants who received a permanent placement range from \$11.00-\$19.00 per hour.

## Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG)

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

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

### Hoosier Initiative for Re-Entry (HIRE)

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

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

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

### REA, WPRS and JFH

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

### Adult Basic Education (ABE)

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

### Skill UP

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

### Indiana INTERNnet

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education received a \$500,000 allocation over the most recent biennium to provide additional support to Indiana INTERNnet, (a web-based tool matching employers to college interns), and they

are looking at ways to determine barriers to offering work-and-learn experiences as well as strategies to expand work-and-learn opportunities across the State of Indiana.

<https://indianaintern.net/>

## Vocational Rehabilitation

Vocational Rehabilitation is an engaged partner to increase educational access to job-seekers that may need VR services and supports to be successful in other state and federal programs. VR is able to provide services to assist with barriers stemming from an individual's disability that assists in access to existing programs or aids in successfully completing a program. VR is working with State programs, like JAG and local educational agencies, to identify ways to collaborate to serve student and youth populations through pre-employment transition services. Project SEARCH is a VR program that is a worksite-based school-to-work program that provides employment and education opportunities for students with disabilities transitioning from high school. The program benefits employers by increasing workforce diversity and reducing recruitment and training costs. Many employers experience improved job retention, enhanced community image and increased customer satisfaction. Additionally, the Randolph-Sheppard Business Enterprise Program provides entrepreneurial opportunities for legally blind clients of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS). These blind entrepreneurs manage a wide variety of food-service operations, including cafeterias, coffee shops, vending locations, and highway area vending sites. Through this program, blind individuals receive training and opportunities to become productive, tax-paying citizens and independent business owners.

## H. Improving Access to Post-Secondary Credentials

Describe how the State's strategies will improve access to activities leading to recognized post-secondary credentials, including Registered Apprenticeship certificates. This includes credentials that are industry-recognized certificates, licenses or certifications, and that are portable and stackable.

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

One of Indiana's strategies is to improve and expand the WorkINdiana program. This program enables adult education students working toward their high school equivalency or improving their basic skills to simultaneously earn an industry-recognized occupational certification. Students may select certification training from a list of approved certifications (see below). To ensure success, WorkINdiana requires regional partnerships between WorkOne Centers and Adult Basic Education centers, career and technical education centers, community colleges, and local economic development representatives. Together these partners determine which careers from the certification framework are most relevant to their regions and then implement the requisite training programs. Students must be co-enrolled in Title I programs to ensure a full range of supports and financial services are made available.

Another strategy is to elevate the importance of work-and-learn models so that youth and young adults have access to high-wage, high-demand employment opportunities in the state, most of which will require an industry-recognized credential. Here are four ways that the state is supporting work and learn opportunities in Indiana.

1. As the work with the National Governors Association (NGA) Policy Academy on Work-Based Learning continues, a cross-agency core team including partners from the Commission for Higher Education, the Department of Education, the Department of Workforce Development, the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, the Indiana Economic Development Corporation and Ivy Tech have been pulled together and a State Workforce Innovation Council taskforce group has been created to discuss and formalize the work. Best practices and models of successful work and learn opportunities will be shared at the Sectors Summit this October 19 and 20, 2016.
2. The Innovative Work and Learn Grant opportunity awarded almost \$400,000 to 10 Indiana Regional Works Council to foster and scale the most innovative and effective work-and-learn models in the state. The

deadline for applications was July 1, 2016 and required a ratio of 4:1 of grant funding to private investment match. More information including the grant guidelines can be found [here](#).

3. On June 2, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) received a U.S. Department of Labor \$200,000 ApprenticeshipUSA State Accelerator Grant and will pursue other opportunities such as the ApprenticeshipUSA State Expansion Grant in order to grow and expand apprenticeships throughout the state. Work is focusing on building apprenticeships in the priority sectors of information technology and health.
4. DWD continues to support work and learn initiatives statewide through the Skill UP! Indiana grants. The Round 1 recipients began work in February 2016 with multiple programs offering work and learn programs around the state. The application process for Round 2 is ongoing and over 40 letters of intent were received. Visit the Skill UP! Indiana website for a complete list of who submitted letters of intent and more information on the initiative.

Additional priority activities aligned with the work and learn example initiatives above include:

- Creating an Indiana-specific framework for quality work and learn opportunities and educate stakeholders on the framework.
- Defining work-based learning continuum by grade and age band across a career pathway (by industry sector) to integrate experiences with academic progress and education outcomes.
- Identifying benchmarks for employers and educators to meet to be considered a high quality, demand-driven, work-based learning programs and develop a recognition program.
- Identifying through projections data the top 40 careers with little to no supply. Map existing work and learn programming and educational constructs to maintain relationships with employers.
- Incorporating DWD's demand perspective into Indiana Career Explorer (Indiana's career counseling tool).

The Department of Workforce Development is also working closely with the Department of Education to ensure that secondary school accountability grades and student assessment take into consideration career readiness and promote industry recognized credentials as developed or supported by business and industry.

The state also has a comprehensive counseling initiative with the following goals: Pre-K through adult counselors and advisors will know current and projected occupational demand in their region, along with the skills, education and training associated with each occupation; current occupational demand data will be used to inform decisions made by parents, students, clients, educators and training providers; and educational programs and services will be mapped to jobs in demand.

Some counseling activities will include:

- Integrate demand for occupations in ICE
- Market via social media, TV, print, IJB, IIB
- Create advisor and counselor listserv
- Add demand content to counseling/advising degree and training programs
- Develop curriculum support materials: lesson plans, assessments and resource list
- Upskill JAG counselors, CTE teachers, transition coaches, WorkOne career and academic advisors through online professional development
- Embed employability skills in general education core and develop rubric to measure
- Incentivize work and learn opportunities for Hoosiers ages 16-29 to focus on high-demand occupations

## I. Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies.

Describe how the activities identified in (A) will be coordinated with economic development entities, strategies and activities in the State.

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

A few specific examples where coordination is taking place are:

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

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development will meet with state/regional/local economic development groups on a regular basis to ensure coordination of workforce development activities described in section A above with economic development strategies involving workforce development entities in the State. In particular, DWD has worked to coordinate employer engagement activities across core and required One Stop Delivery System partners. DWD will also be working to share important and relevant data collected with economic development partners.

## b. State Operating Systems and Policies

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the State operating systems and policies that will support the implementation of the State strategy described in **Section II Strategic Elements** . This includes—

### 1. The State operating systems that will support the implementation of the State's strategies. This must include a description of—

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

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

The primary activity underway is to ensure a client-centric supply system exists to engage individuals, connect them to all available services and resources, and facilitate their re-employment in Hoosier jobs. A project to target procuring modern technology for implementing a common Case Management and Job Matching system across the State has been initiated. DWD and VR are in the process of building separate case management systems to meet their unique needs, but the agencies are working together to determine how the systems, once fully built, can interface. While DWD is in the beginning stages of working with a newly procured vendor, VR is almost 2 years into the process. VR's system is under a larger umbrella of the Case Management for Social Services within Indiana's Family Social Services Administration (FSSA). The purpose of the overarching FSSA system is to oversee and provide appropriate

and timely services to all FSSA consumers being served in various programs. Additionally, the consolidated system shall enhance system integration, data integrity, and remove legacy systems. The VR portion of the project started February of 2014 and is presently gathering the current and future business state and processes. The VR portion requires improved efficiency to enhance the existing mobile and paperless work environment of VR field staff. Furthermore, VR will closely work with DWD to ensure appropriate system integration and data-sharing occurs to align resources, improve reporting processes and outcomes, and enhance the consumer's experience. The ultimate goal is to have the Core programs working seamlessly together.

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

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

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

Another project is the State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS), which has been active for over a year. This project is called the Indiana Network of Knowledge (INK). INK will bring together data from across many State agencies in a single data repository. This data along with new technologies to store and analyze will provide insight into the state pipeline of future employees (the Supply). Using this data along with employer demand data from the DDWS will allow the State to identify potential future skill gaps. Educational and training institutions can use the data to provide the programs that teach those skills and abilities so that when students graduate they have a fulfilling Hoosier job awaiting them. INK will also help the State measure the effectiveness of its programs by being able to track participant progress after they leave the program. INK will allow analysis of program participants to determine if they are entering/completing additional education or entering/remaining in employment.

The State continues to support and enhance the Hoosiers by the Numbers website as the source for all workforce data. This site is Indiana's Labor Market Information website which includes many virtual tools with information for community leaders and individuals. The Indiana Business Research Center also assists in the hosting, developing, and secreting the Workforce Information Database (WID) as mandated by the Workforce Information Grant. This site offers data tools and downloads for all of the Bureau of Labor Statistics Employment and Wage statistics programs. This includes information on the incumbent workforce, unemployment trends, labor force estimates, and projections for future occupations in demand. The site is designed for career counselors, job seekers, economic developers and the general public. The Indiana Department of Workforce Development continued to populate the Workforce Information Database with state and local data that covers at least the most recent 10-year period. The Workforce Information Database serves as the primary source for Indiana's website (Hoosiers by the Numbers) and is supplemented by the Stats Indiana database, maintained by our university partner, IBRC. The data covers counties, metropolitan statistical areas, economic growth regions and balance of state areas in addition to statewide estimates and aggregates.

Hoosiers by the Numbers had more than 75,000 active sessions and nearly 50,000 new users on the site between July 2014 and June 2015, according to the web analytics tracked by the agency. 35.5% of visitors to the site were

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

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

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

Data is collected through the use of several database/systems to capture business and client activities/services provided throughout the agency. For all programs each system has the ability to record and track all activities/services. Data is derived from customer self-service, staff entry, and system interfaces with interagency systems, partner systems and vendor custom applications.

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

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

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\* For the PY 2016 state plan, descriptions of data collection and reporting processes need only include currently known indicators.

**2. The State policies that will support the implementation of the State's strategies (e.g., co-enrollment policies and universal intake processes where appropriate). In addition, describe the State's process for developing guidelines for State-administered One-Stop partner programs' contributions to a One-Stop Delivery System, including benchmarks, and its guidance to assist local boards, chief elected officials, and local one-Stop partners in determining equitable and stable methods of funding infrastructure in accordance with sec. 121(h)(1)**

**(B). Beginning with the state plan modification in 2018 and for subsequent state plans and state plan modifications, the State must also include such guidelines.**

Several state policies have been issued or updated in response to the transition to WIOA. The state's Priority of Service Policy requires that at least 50% of the clients served under Title I Adult are either receiving public assistance, low-income, or basic-skills deficient. This ensures that services are being prioritized for those with barriers to employment and that are most in need of services. Local areas must have written policies that delineate how they will give priority of service and must adhere to these policies. DWD will provide technical assistance to local areas that do not have 50% or more of their adult participants enrolled into one of the priority categories. DWD will review the data and the local policies to determine if changes are needed after a year of data is available.

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

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

DWD issued a policy on April 15, 2016, regarding Memoranda of Understanding and Shared Infrastructure Costs. In that policy, it was stated that for Program Year 2016, state and local areas will need to continue to negotiate local funding agreements as they have been doing under WIA and that as the regulations become finalized, DWD will provide further guidance regarding the negotiation of these funding agreements for PY 2017. Now that the regulations have been issued, the core partners have met to start developing guidelines for State-administered One-Stop partner programs' contributions to a One-Stop Delivery System, including benchmarks, and guidance to assist local boards, chief elected officials, and local One-Stop partners in determining equitable and stable methods of funding infrastructure in accordance with sec. 121(h)(1)(B). The core partners plan to have guidance issued by December 1, 2016, after the November state board meeting.

Lastly, the state is looking at issuing policy guidance regarding: (1) pay-for-performance contracts for the delivery of training services and (2) job quality criteria for determining employer eligibility for WIOA funds. The state will work with the State Workforce Innovation Council's WIOA Implementation Taskforce on these.

### **3. State Program and State Board Overview**

#### **A. State Agency Organization**

Describe the organization and delivery systems at the State and local levels for the programs covered in the plan, including the organizational structure. Include an organizational chart.

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

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

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

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

A graphic organizational chart of DWD leadership can be viewed here: [http://netapps.dwd.in.gov/fazio/General\\_Information/docs/DWD\\_Org\\_Chart.pdf](http://netapps.dwd.in.gov/fazio/General_Information/docs/DWD_Org_Chart.pdf).

### **Indiana Department of Workforce Development Commissioner, Steven J. Braun**

- Executive Assistant, Cindy George
- Chief of Staff Chief Financial Officer, Bill Nonte
  - a. Director, Budget, Accounting & Procurement, Les Williams
  - b. Director, Facilities & Operations, Darrell Smith
  - c. Director, Human Resources, Danai Bracey
- Chief Information Officer, Steve Elliott
  - a. Director Business Intelligence, Vacant
  - b. Director, IT - UIM, Pam Grenard
  - c. Director, IT - Workforce Development, Jeff Tucker
  - d. Director, Case Management and Labor Exchange, Terri Banks
  - e. Director, Research & Analysis, Fran Valentine
- General Counsel, Jeff Gill
  - a. Associate General Counsel, Bob Robisch
  - b. Counsel/Director, Regulatory Oversight & Compliance, Connie Berry
  - c. Director, Review Board, Steve Bier
  - d. Director, Government & Legislative Affairs, Brenda Summers
- Chief Operating Officer, Josh Richardson
  - a. Assoc. Chief Operating Officer Employer Engagement, Mike Barnes
    - ▶ Director, Business Services, Bryon Silk
    - ▶ Director, Business Strategies, Jennifer O'shea
  - b. Assoc. Chief Operating Officer Workforce, Dennis Wimer
    - ▶ Director, Business Solutions, Chad Carter
    - ▶ Director, Field Operations, Nancy Davisson
    - ▶ Director, Business Systems, Dawn Axsom

- c. Assoc. Chief Operating Officer, Vacant
  - ▶ Director, Strategic Initiatives, Leslie Crist
  - ▶ Director, Career & Technical Education, Chris Deaton
  - ▶ Executive Director Serve Indiana, Mark McAleavey
- d. Assoc. Chief Operating Officer Adult Education, Marilyn Pitzulo
  - ▶ Director, Adult Education Policy, Vacant
  - ▶ Director, Adult Education Operations
- e. UI Director, Kate Shelby
  - ▶ Chief of UI Integrity, Gwen Winderlich
  - ▶ Chief of Benefits, Lisa Russel
  - ▶ Chief of Appeals, Sabrina Rahn
  - ▶ Chief of Benefit Payment Control, Betty Titus
  - ▶ Chief of UI Tax, Jennifer Chappell
  - ▶ Chief of Employer Compliance, Lauren Bogan
  - ▶ Chief of Customer Service, Vacant
  - ▶ Chief of UI Policy, Liz Polley
- Chief Strategy Officer Gina Ashley
  - a. Assoc. Chief Strategy Officer, Alishea Hawkins
  - b. Director, Public Affairs, Vacant
  - c. Director, Marketing, Stephanie Genrich

The Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), through its Bureau of Rehabilitative Services, is the state agency responsible for the administration and oversight of WIOA programs under Title IV. A graphic organizational chart of FSSA leadership can be viewed at the following link: <http://www.in.gov/fssa/4829.htm>. The chart illustrates the following individuals, their associated job titles, and agency structure:

Secretary of FSSA, John J. Wernert, MD

- Director of Human Resources, Marci Rautio
- Chief of Staff, Chris Johnson
- Executive Assistant, Lisa Graham
  - Chief Advocacy Officer, Peggy Welch
  - Chief Financial Officer, Paul Bowling
  - Chief Information Officer, Jared Linder
  - Chief Quality Officer, Vacant
  - Director of Aging, Yonda Snyder
  - Director of Communications, Jim Gavin
  - Director of Disability and Rehabilitative Services, Kylee Hope
  - Director of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning, Nicole Norvell
  - Director of External Agency Affairs, Ben Evans

- Director of Family Resources, Adrienne Shields
- Director of Medicaid, Joe Moser
- Director of Mental Health and Addiction, Kevin Moore
- General Counsel, Allison Taylor
- Legislative/Policy Director, Gus Habig

## B. State Board

Provide a description of the State Board, including—

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

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

### 1. Membership roster

Provide a membership roster for the State Board, including members' organizational affiliations.

Below is a list of State Workforce Innovation Council (SWIC) members. The Board has representation from the Governor, 2 State Representatives, 2 State Senators, City and County CEOs, 22 businesses, 8 individuals representing labor, the Commissioner of the Department of Workforce Development, the Director of Vocational Rehabilitation, organizations with demonstrated experience in serving youth, and representatives from Education, including K-12, adult education, community colleges and higher education.

#### SWIC MEMBERS

- Paul Perkins, SWIC Chair, President, Amatrol, Inc.
- Eric Holcomb, Lieutenant Governor
- Steve Braun, DWD Commissioner
- Teresa Lubbers, Commissioner of Higher Education
- Caryl Auslander, Vice President of Education & Workforce Development, Indiana Chamber of Commerce
- Rep. Terri Jo Austin, Indiana House of Representatives
- Allison Barber, Chancellor of WGU Indiana
- Pete V. Bitar, President and CEO of Xtreme Alternative Defense Systems
- Senator Jean Breaux, Indiana State Senate

- Brian Burton, President & CEO, Indiana Manufacturers Association
- Randall W. Collins, Indiana Regional Director, Proteus, Inc., National Farmworkers Jobs Program, (NFJP), U.S. Dept. of Labor Grantee
- Claudia E. Cummings, Vice President Workforce and Education, Conexus Indiana
- Billie Dragoo, Founder & CEO, RepuCare Inc.
- Senator Doug Eckerty, Indiana State Senate
- Tory Flynn, Director of Communications and Public Affairs, Hillenbrand Inc.
- Jessica D. Fraser, Institute for Working Families
- Dr. Jeanne Fredericks, Director of Education, Associated Builders & Contractors of Indiana/Kentucky
- Jay Geshay, United Way of Central Indiana
- Gretchen Gutman, Vice President of Public Policy, Cook Group, Inc.
- Rep. Dick Hamm, Indiana House of Representatives
- Gary Hobbs, President, BWI
- Randy Holmes, Vice President of Operation, Michael's Textile
- Pamela K. Ingram, Public Affairs Officer, NSW Crane
- M. Shannon Kiely-Heider, Director of State Government Relations, Cummins Inc.
- Theresa Koleszar, Director, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services
- Kent Kramer, President & CEO, Goodwill Industries of Central Indiana
- Kay E. Kuenker, Vice President for Government Affairs, Dow Chemical Company
- Nate LaMar, International Regional Manager, Draper, Inc.
- Chris R. Lowery, Chancellor, Ivy Tech Community College
- John Meredith, CEO, SaverSystems
- Mayor Blair E. Milo, Mayor, City of La Porte
- Robert Moore, Adult Education Director, Broadview Learning Center
- Renee Palmer, Talent Management & Organization Development Director, Vectren Corporation
- James T. Patterson, Director of Training, Electrical Training Institute
- Paula Sue Pinkstaff, Production Control Manager, Toyota Motor Manufacturing
- Brad Rhorer, Assistant Senior Manager of Human Resources, Subaru of Indiana Automotive, Inc.
- Joanne Sanders, International Representative, International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees
- Jefferson Shreve, President, Storage Express
- Tami Silverman, President & CEO, Indiana Youth Institute
- Chris Smith, Vice President of Human Resources, NiSource
- Kevin J. Wachtel, Senior Vice President of Client Delivery, Fiserv
- Daniel T. Waldrop, Business Manager/Financial Secretary, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
- Patricia "Trish" L. Whitcomb-Sipes (designee of Superintendent of Public Instruction), Vice President, George K Baum & Co.

SWIC membership and member affiliation is posted publically online here: <http://www.in.gov/dwd/2803.htm>

## 2. Board Activities

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

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

## 4. Assessment and Evaluation of Programs and One-Stop Program Partners

### A. Assessment of Core Programs

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

The State assesses the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs through the following mechanisms:

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

The state also ensures that local areas and providers meet performance accountability measures and will deliver technical assistance when needed.

The Indiana Career Council outlined metrics in the ICC Strategic Plan that are being reviewed and refined by the Implementation Taskforce of the ICC. Many of these metrics will be instructive to the SWIC and to Workforce Development Boards once they are finalized. DWD also plans to evaluate pay for performance contracting as a way to drive quality, effectiveness and improvement of programs.

The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) created the office of business intelligence in the spring of 2016. This office is responsible for WIOA benchmarking that drives a deeper understanding of performance to best serve Hoosier employers and employees. This office will work with the WIOA steering committee and the state workforce board to ensure the vision, goals and strategies of the state plan are moving the state workforce system in a positive direction.

DWD plans to issue a policy on system assessment to ensure that the current actions are being coordinated in a way that allows partners to review relevant information and take action to improve the system. As part of the state's assessment process, performance based on activities and goals outlined in each region's local plan will be reviewed to mark progress on achievement of outcomes.

The State will have a policy established with an effective date no later than July 1, 2017, that fully describes the state's assessment process, including the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs broken down by local area or provider and taking into account local and regional planning goals.

## B. Assessment of One-Stop Partner Programs

Describe how other One-Stop Delivery System partner program services and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan will be assessed each year. Such state assessments should take into account local and regional planning goals.

Many of the One Stop partner programs are under the responsibility of DWD (i.e., Post-Secondary Career and Technical Education (Perkins), Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs Program, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs, and Unemployment Compensation Programs). As DWD establishes policy for assessment of the core programs, the policy will cover the additional One Stop programs. Currently, DWD is providing monitoring and technical assistance to these programs, but DWD will work on a policy to ensure quality and consistency of assessment, including a process for consistent review of partner goals outlined within each region's local plan and the progress made by the partners.

## C. Previous Assessment Results

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

Under WIA, the State had a waiver of the requirement to conduct an assessment. The state will provide assessment results for future state plan modifications starting in 2018 and thereafter.

## D. Evaluation

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

The state intends on implementing an evaluations and research process to promote, establish, implement, and utilize methods for continuously improving core program activities to achieve high level performance and high level outcomes from the workforce development system. The state will facilitate discussions with the state and local boards, DWD, and Vocational Rehabilitation to elicit feedback on recommended evaluation procedures. The evaluations will include the continuous improvement measures prescribed by WIOA and the federal regulations, including how well the One-Stop center supports the achievement of negotiated levels of performance for the indicators of performance for the local area. The state will appropriately coordinate its evaluation studies with the evaluation and research projects undertaken by the Departments of Labor and Education. The state will cooperate with Federal evaluations by providing requested data (in accordance with privacy protections established by the Secretary of Labor), responding to requested surveys, and allowing site visits by the Secretaries or their agents.

## 5. Distribution of Funds for Core Programs

Describe the methods and factors the State will use in distributing funds under the core programs in accordance with the provisions authorizing such distributions.

### A. For Title I programs

For Title I programs, provide a description of the written policies that establish the State's methods and factors used to distribute funds to local areas for —

### 1. Youth activities in accordance with WIOA section 128(b)(2) or (b)(3),

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

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

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

DWD plans to evaluate pay for performance contracting.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## B. For Title II:

### 1. Multi-year grants or contracts

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 Department of Workforce Development is the State's eligible agency for adult education and literacy programs. DWD is responsible for administering funds and providing program/performance oversight to grantees.

Adult education providers approved under Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) requirements will continue to receive funding through June 30, 2017, as long as they adhere to State and federal grant expectations, as measured through annual applications, financial reports, and program performance reports.

During grant year 2016-17, DWD will implement a new competitive application process for all federal AEFLA funding that will determine the eligible providers that will be awarded funds starting July 1, 2017. The review of proposals will include rating responses to the 13 considerations in Title II of WIOA.

**TIMELINE:** The following steps will be taken in conducting the AEFLA competition:

- October -November 2016: DWD will conduct regional meetings to inform potential applicants of upcoming grant opportunity.
- December 2016: DWD publishes three-year federal AEFLA Request for Proposals (RFP) aligned with the priorities in the approved State Unified Plan.
- January 2017: DWD provides technical assistance through a bidders conference.
- February 2017: Due date for AEFLA grant applications.
- March-April 2017: Reviewers review and score AEFLA grant applications.
- April 2017: DWD conducts review of budgets and other grant requirements and develops a rank-ordered slate based on applicant scores.
- April-May 2017: DWD announces AEFLA grant applicants that will receive funding.
- July 1, 2017: AEFLA grant providers begin grant cycle, programming, and funding.

For the initial year of the new grant award a formula method will be used to determine the amount of funding and will take into consideration the number of individuals lacking a high school diploma or equivalency, as well as, the number of unemployed or underemployed individuals in each county. In the remaining grant continuation years the formula will be 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.

To determine if an applicant is an organization of demonstrated effectiveness, all applicants will be required to provide data demonstrating their ability to improve skills of low-literate adults in the applicable academic areas related to the RFP. Prior recipients will use data from the Adult Education student data management system to show how they met State-negotiated performance measures for all student levels, as well as for English language learners. New organizations will be provided forms to show demonstrated student learning gain, including low-literacy level and English language learners.

Applicants will also be required to demonstrate its record of improving the knowledge and skills needed to transition successfully to post-secondary education, skills training, or employment. Each application will be reviewed to determine whether it meets the standard of demonstrated effectiveness. Applications that do not provide sufficient evidence of demonstrated effectiveness will be eliminated from the competition.

## 2. Ensure direct and equitable access

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

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

### Notice of Availability

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

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

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

### C. Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation

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

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

## 6. Program Data

### A. Data Alignment and Integration

Describe the plans of the lead State agencies with responsibility for the administration of the core programs, along with the State Board, to align and integrate available workforce and education data systems for the core programs, unemployment insurance programs, and education through post-secondary education, and to the extent possible, the Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan. The description of the State's plan for integrating data systems should include the State's goals for achieving integration and any progress to date.

#### **1. Describe the State's plans to make the management information systems for the core programs interoperable to maximize the efficient exchange of common data elements to support assessment and evaluation.**

DWD, VR and the State TANF and SNAP agency (the Division of Family Resources (DFR) have had preliminary discussions to establish a vision around more detailed integration including common intake and service delivery. The new DWD case management system is designed to operate under a new integrated service delivery model, to allow the sharing and tracking of information effectively through partner systems that encompass the six core programs.

Currently we have the ability to refer individuals and evaluate program involvement through tracking within our data reporting system. Discussions across core programs will continue as both DWD and FSSA build their new case management systems, which will allow for joint evaluations and assessments to interface within the case management systems.

**2. Describe the State's plans to integrate data systems to facilitate streamlined intake and service delivery to track participation across all programs included in this plan.**

DWD has a case management system and is implementing a new system to allow for integration and interfacing with data systems from other agencies and partners. The state is also working towards a pilot program in which multiple agencies are housed in one facility. Staff will use a common intake process to identify which programs and services would address the needs of the client. This information would be recorded and tracked through DWD case management system and the integration through the other partner systems.

DWD also is collaborating with DFR on employment and training services for SNAP and TANF clients. Through the collaboration, partners have begun discussing the coordination of approaches and the alignment of data systems. As future business processes begin to take shape, the complementary discussions to develop plans for full interoperability between the technology systems will be initiated.

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

Through its activities, the State Board will continue to support strategic planning Goals 1, 2, and 3 of increasing creating system alignment, ensuring a client-centric coordination of services, and ensuring all programs and investments are demand-driven. These goals will necessitate ongoing alignment of technology and data systems across required One-Stop partner. The State Board will assist in this work through taskforces that are currently in existence and ones that will be created as new needs are identified.

As described in the State's goals and strategies, this alignment will create a more seamless One-Stop Delivery System in which individuals, including unemployed individuals, have increased access to and opportunities for employment, education, training, and support services. Alignment will also facilitate more effective data analysis locally as well as across the state. This data analysis will allow the State and all One-Stop partners to constantly measure and improve, then measure and improve again to shape policy and programming

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

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

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

## B. Assessment of Participants' Post-Program Success

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

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

## C. Use of Unemployment Insurance (UI) Wage Record Data

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

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

## D. Privacy Safeguards

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

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

Approved processes that limit access to the data to only those personnel who require access to carry out their daily job functions;

- Network security, monitoring, firewalls, etc. to prevent unauthorized access to data from entities outside of State government;
- Encryption technology; and
- Secure data transport mechanisms.
- All State personnel undergo annual training on the proper handling of confidential data. This training is updated to reflect the most current statutes and interpretations. Those specifically involved in reporting are trained on the various de-identification and aggregation rules that apply.

## 7. Priority of Service for Veterans

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In accordance with Veteran Program Letter (VPL) 07-09, for a service such as classroom training, priority of service applies to the selection procedure, as follows:

- First, if there is a waiting list for the formation of a training class, priority of service is intended to require a veteran or eligible spouse to go to the top of that list.
- Second, priority of service applies up to the point at which an individual is both: (a) approved for funding; and, (b) accepted or enrolled in a training class. Therefore, once a non-covered person has been both approved for funding and accepted/ enrolled in a training class, priority of service is not intended to allow a veteran or eligible spouse who is identified subsequently to "bump" the non-covered person from that training class.

The application of priority of service varies by program depending on the eligibility requirements of the particular program. Qualified job training programs fall into two basic categories: (1) universal access programs and (2) programs that require prospective participants to meet specified eligibility criteria.

The two subsections below describe how priority of service applies to these two basic types of programs:

1. **Universal access programs:** For workforce programs that operate or deliver services to the public as a whole without targeting specific groups, veterans and eligible spouses must receive priority of service over all other program participants.
2. **Programs with Eligibility Criteria:** Eligibility criteria identify basic conditions that each and every participant in a specific program is required to meet. A veteran or eligible spouse must first meet any and all of the statutory eligibility criteria in order to be considered eligible for:
  - a.) enrollment in the program;
  - b.) receipt of priority for enrollment in the program; and
  - c.) priority for receipt of services.

In addition to the eligibility criteria that all participants are required to meet, some programs also have priorities that establish a rank order to be observed in enrolling or serving participants. These priorities can be of two types: (1) Statutory; or, (2) Discretionary.

The following two subsections provide guidance on how priority of service interacts with these two types of priorities:

1. **Programs with Statutory Priorities:** Some programs are required by law to provide a priority or preference for a particular group of individuals or require the program to spend a certain portion of program funds on a particular group of persons. For programs with this type of mandatory priority, program operators must determine the status of each individual veteran or eligible spouse and apply priority of service as described below:
  - i. Veterans and eligible spouses who meet the mandatory priorities or spending requirement or limitation must receive the highest level of priority for the program or service;
  - ii. Non-covered people who meet the program's mandatory priority or spending requirement or limitation then receive the second level of priority for the program or service;
  - iii. Veterans and eligible spouses outside the program-specific mandatory priority or spending requirement or limitation then receive the third level of priority for the program or service; and
  - iv. Non-covered people outside the program-specific mandatory priority or spending requirement or limitation then receive the fourth level of priority for the program or service.
2. **Programs with Discretionary Priorities:** Some qualified job training programs may include a focus on a particular group or make efforts to provide a certain level of service to a particular group without the authorizing law specifically mandating that the target group be served before other eligible individuals. Because a discretionary focus of this type is not a statutorily mandated priority or targeting requirement, veterans and eligible spouses must receive the highest priority for programs or services with a discretionary targeting requirement. Non-covered people within the discretionary targeting group then receive the second level of priority. Non-covered people outside the discretionary targeting group receive the third level of priority. With respect to priority of service, the only feature that distinguishes discretionary targeting programs from universal access programs is the additional application of the discretionary targeting criterion to the non-covered people.

Priority of Service is the responsibility of each staff member with the WorkOne with oversight and compliance provided by the JVSG staff and Regional Operator. Reports and on-site reviews ensure adherence to mandated legislative requirements. These reviews also focus on activities to evaluate processes aimed

at achieving the State's program goals and objectives, expenditure of grant funds on allowable activities, integration and coordination with other resources and service providers in the local area, and overall progress in achieving negotiated performance outcomes.

JVSG staff work closely with all WIOA partners to provide the most effective service to Veterans and other eligible persons possible. The overall priority of service is monitored by the State Veteran Coordinator, or other state veteran staff assigned, who examines: statewide, regional and local policies and procedure. In addition, JVSG staff review reports produced by the current client tracking system and state job board, conduct on-site monitoring, and checks all websites developed with funding from impacted programs or grants ensure priority of service is provided to Veterans

## 8. Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System for Individuals with Disabilities

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

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

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

Within the One-Stop offices, staff will be trained to follow established procedures to ensure inclusion and compliance. Starting with intake, staff is trained to ask every customer if they require accommodations during the intake process. Customer orientations should include a discussion of Equal Opportunity (EO) and the right to file a complaint. Following orientation, services should be reviewed with the client by determining the client's eligibility and need of services in an integrated setting. For example, not all customers should be automatically referred to VR; only those that appear to be eligible and in need of VR services. Ongoing training will need to occur to educate staff on the services, funding, and the resources available to determine when it is appropriate to refer to partner agencies and possibly blend funding. Agency partners will seek to coordinate efforts and leverage funding between partner agencies to meet the employment and training needs of the customer. Memorandums of Understanding may be developed or reviewed, as necessary, to outline the responsibilities of each partner.

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

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

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

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

## 9. Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System for English Language Learners

Describe how the One-Stop Delivery System (including One-Stop center operators and the One-Stop delivery system partners) will ensure that each One-Stop center is able to meet the needs of English language learners, such as through established procedures, staff training, resources, and other materials.

In order to help all clients better understand how to receive benefits and interact with the One-Stop system, DWD initiated a contract with a language interpretation provider. The contract allows for in-person interpretation of dozens of the primary languages spoken in Indiana. The contract also allows for phone interpretation services for additional languages not provided for by in-person interpretation.

Additionally, Title II ABE providers assist clients with Limited English Proficiency through classes that are conducted throughout the state to help them address their language goals. All One-Stop partners will be able to refer these clients to the local ABE program for assistance.

## IV. Coordination with State Plan Programs

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

The State had already taken extensive efforts to develop a strategic plan just months before WIOA passed. As stated above, the Indiana Career Council was statutorily required to develop a strategic plan to align education and training

activities across multiple state agencies (which included all core programs) and in line with business-driven needs for skilled workforce across youth and adults. Over 40 meetings across the state with various stakeholders and 500 man hours were invested in the creation of the Career Council's Strategic Plan, "Align, Engage, Advance: A Strategic Plan to Transform Indiana's Workforce," (<http://www.in.gov/icc/2377.htm>) which was approved in June of 2014. The plan focused on three organizing pillars of transformation: system alignment, worker- and student-centric services, and demand-driven programs and investments. While the work of the Indiana Career Council was progressing, WIOA passed. Thus, the core partners determined that the Career Council's strategic plan could serve as the basis of the WIOA State Plan.

The State Board also created a WIOA Implementation taskforce on July 23, 2015. The taskforce was made up of the core partners, employers, education and training providers and other stakeholders. One of the duties of the taskforce was to oversee the development, implementation, and modification of the State Plan. The taskforce met monthly, presented State Plan updates to the State Board, oversaw the public comment process, and assisted with review of public comments. As to public comment, the draft State Plan was posted on the core partners' websites and notice was sent out broadly that the plan was open for public comment. Additionally three meetings were held throughout the state, coordinated by the core partners, to take live public comment. The state plan was approved by the state board in January, 2016, in anticipation of the March, 2016 submission date. When the new state plan ICR came out and the plan due date was moved back to April, 2016, slight modifications were made to the plan through the taskforce. The State Board approved the revisions at the March, 2016 State Board meeting and the plan was submitted on time in April.

## V. Common Assurances (for all core programs)

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include assurances that—

1. The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts; **Yes**
2. The State has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of State boards and local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes; **Yes**
3. The lead State agencies with optimal policy-making authority and responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified or Combined State Plan, and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served by such programs; **Yes**
4. (a) The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administering the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public; (b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board; **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 in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable; **Yes**
8. The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program; **Yes**
9. The State will pay an appropriate share (as defined by the State board) of the costs of carrying out section 116, from funds made available through each of the core programs; **Yes**
10. The State has a One-Stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all One-Stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); **Yes**
11. Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate; and **Yes**
12. Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor. **Yes**

## VI. Program-Specific Requirements for Core Programs

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

### Program-Specific Requirements for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities under Title I-B

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following with respect to activities carried out under subtitle B--

#### a. General Requirements

##### 1. Regions and Local Workforce Development Areas

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

There are 12 local workforce development areas and they are identified on the map found at the following link: <http://www.in.gov/dwd/2653.htm>. As to Regions, all local workforce development areas are their own region, except for areas 5 and 12. Areas 5 and 12 will be planning regionally. Regions consist of the following counties:

- Region 1: Lake, Porter, LaPorte, Newton, Jasper, Pulaski, Starke
- Region 2: St. Joseph, Elkhart, Marshall, Kosciusko, Fulton
- Region 3: LaGrange, Steuben, DeKalb, Whitley, Allen, Wabash, Huntington, Wells, Adams, Grant
- Region 4: Benton, White, Cass, Miami, Carroll, Howard, Tippecanoe, Warren, Fountain, Montgomery, Clinton, Tipton
- Region 5/12: Marion, Boone, Hamilton, Madison, Hancock, Shelby, Johnson, Morgan, Hendricks
- Region 6: Jay, Blackford, Delaware, Randolph, Henry, Wayne, Rush, Fayette, Union

- Region 7: Vermillion, Parke, Putnam, Vigo, Clay, Sullivan
- Region 8: Brown, Monroe, Owen, Greene, Lawrence, Daviess, Martin, Orange
- Region 9: Bartholomew, Decatur, Franklin, Jackson, Jennings, Ripley, Dearborn, Jefferson, Switzerland
- Region 10: Crawford, Washington, Scott, Clark, Floyd, Harrison
- Region 11: Knox, Gibson, Pike, Dubois, Posey, Vanderburgh, Warrick, Spencer, Perry

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

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

As to consulting with the local boards in identifying regions, DWD took part in a taskforce of the Indiana Career Council, which was focused on assessing system alignment. This taskforce thoroughly reviewed and discussed the workforce development board areas to determine if the 12 areas should be modified. After several meetings, which included input from local boards, the recommendation of the taskforce was to have the WIA local areas remain intact, with the exception of having Region 5 and 12 plan regionally together.

As to the process the State will implement to ensure its local areas meet the criteria for sustained fiscal integrity, in accordance with WIOA sec. 106(a) and (b)(2) and (3), DWD requires fiscal reporting and conducts monitoring to ensure local areas meet these criteria in the last two consecutive years preceding the determination as required for initial and subsequent designation.

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

All local areas under WIA were designated as local areas under WIOA, thus the State Workforce Development Board did not receive any requests for appeal. Any units of general local government or grant recipients that request but are not granted initial or subsequent designation as a local area will have the opportunity to submit an appeal to the State WDB.

DWD will issue a policy outlining the appeal process for local area designation requests for both initial and subsequent designation of an area as a local area under WIOA sec. 106(b)(2) and 106(b)(3). This policy will describe due process procedures for timely request for and prompt resolution of appeals and will include opportunities for a hearing. The policy will indicate that if a decision on the appeal is not rendered in a timely manner or if the appeal does not result in designation, appellants may request review by the Secretary under § 683.640. The State will have the policy established no later than July 1, 2017.

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

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

## 2. Statewide Activities

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

DWD has put into place policy and guidance for the statewide workforce development system. Policies for Title I and II programs can be found at <http://www.in.gov/dwd/2482.htm>. This guidance covers, but is not limited to participant eligibility; priority of service; program standards; performance measures; staff qualifications, roles, and responsibilities; data collection, reporting and validation; confidential and privileged information; monitoring; property/asset management; funding, allocation, and MOUs; state and local board governance, etc. Specific program guidance can be found at the link provided above.

Additionally, all WIOA interim policy can be found here: <http://www.in.gov/dwd/2767.htm>. A selection of policies with direct links to each is included below:

- Interim Guidance for the Competitive Procurement of One-stop Operators ([http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/Competitive\\_Procurement\\_Guidance\\_Memo.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/Competitive_Procurement_Guidance_Memo.pdf))
- Program Year 2016 (PY16) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Formula Allocation ([http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/PY16\\_Allocation\\_Memo\\_Final.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/PY16_Allocation_Memo_Final.pdf))
- Memoranda of Understanding and Shared Infrastructure Costs ([http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/MOU\\_Shared\\_Infrastructure\\_Costs.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/MOU_Shared_Infrastructure_Costs.pdf))
- Local and Regional Plan Instructions for Workforce Development Boards ([http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/2015-4\\_-\\_Local\\_Regional\\_Planning.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/2015-4_-_Local_Regional_Planning.pdf))
- Addendum to Local Plan for PY 15 ([http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/Local\\_plan\\_addendum\\_memo\\_6-3-15.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/Local_plan_addendum_memo_6-3-15.pdf))
- Interim Guidance on WIOA Title I Youth Work Experience ([http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/Policy\\_Youth\\_Work\\_Experience.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/Policy_Youth_Work_Experience.pdf))
- Interim Guidance on WIOA Title I Youth Program Elements ([http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/Policy\\_Youth\\_Program\\_Elements.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/Policy_Youth_Program_Elements.pdf))
- Interim Guidance on Eligibility and Data Validation, Except Youth and Adult Education ([http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/WIOA\\_eligibility\\_and\\_data\\_validation\\_interim\\_guidance\\_final\\_v3.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/WIOA_eligibility_and_data_validation_interim_guidance_final_v3.pdf))
- Interim Guidance on the Delivery of WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker Services and the Impact on Participation and Exit Dates ([http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/Interim\\_Guidance\\_WIOA\\_Services\\_Participation\\_Exit\\_final.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/Interim_Guidance_WIOA_Services_Participation_Exit_final.pdf))
- Interim Guidance on WIOA Title I Adult Priority of Service ([http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/Priority\\_of\\_Service\\_interim\\_guidance\\_final.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/Priority_of_Service_interim_guidance_final.pdf))
- Implementing WIOA; Adult Education policies ([http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/Adult\\_Ed\\_memo\\_6.23.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/Adult_Ed_memo_6.23.pdf))
- Implementing WIOA: Eligible Training Provider List ([http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/ETPL\\_memo\\_6.23.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/ETPL_memo_6.23.pdf))
- On-the-Job Training Guidelines under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) ([http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/OJT\\_policy\\_final\\_6-9-15\\_134\\_P1.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/OJT_policy_final_6-9-15_134_P1.pdf))
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Participant Drug Screening ([http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/WIOA\\_Drug\\_Screen\\_Policy\\_-\\_6-8-15\\_2-45.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/WIOA_Drug_Screen_Policy_-_6-8-15_2-45.pdf))

- Implementing WIOA; State-Level Policy and Required Local Policy ([http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/Implementing\\_WIOA\\_State\\_Level\\_Policy\\_and\\_Required\\_Local\\_Policy\\_6-8-15.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/Implementing_WIOA_State_Level_Policy_and_Required_Local_Policy_6-8-15.pdf))
- Program Year 2015 (PY15) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Formula Allocation ([http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/WIOA\\_Formula\\_Allocation.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/WIOA_Formula_Allocation.pdf))
- Local Workforce Development Board Certification ([http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/WDB\\_Certification\\_WIOA\\_107-P1.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/WDB_Certification_WIOA_107-P1.pdf))
- Definition of Unit of General Local Government, Designation of Regional Chief Elected Official, and Content of CEO Agreement ([http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/CEO\\_policy\\_WIOA\\_107-P2.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/CEO_policy_WIOA_107-P2.pdf))
- Policy Guidance for Local Workforce Development Board Functions ([http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/WDB\\_function\\_policy\\_WIOA\\_107-p3.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dwd/files/WDB_function_policy_WIOA_107-p3.pdf))

DWD is collaborating with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) to ensure WIOA policy alignment. VR policies can be found here: <http://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/3788.htm>. With the publication of WIOA final regulations, DWD and VR will continue to review, edit and create policy for WIOA alignment. Policies currently under review or in creation include:

- Infrastructure Funding
- One-Stop Operator Competitive Procurement
- Eligible Training Provider List
- Local Workforce Development Board Certification
- System Assessment and Continuous Quality Improvement
- Pay-for-performance contracts for the delivery of training services
- Job Quality Criteria for Determining Employer Eligibility for WIOA Funds
- Reasonable Accommodation
- State or Local Board Member Conflict of Interest

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

Use of the Governor’s Discretionary funds will help the State of Indiana: 1) meet employer demands for a pool of highly skilled workers; 2) greatly increase the number of adult low to mid-range incumbent workers and dislocated workers who will receive occupational skill training; 3) increase the competitiveness of business and industry; and 4) provide flexible funds for incumbent worker training initiatives. Thus far in Program Year 2015, DWD has expended funding on competency- based training through Western Governor’s University and 1150 Academy; assessments through CTB McGraw Hill and Kuder; and Business Consultants in each region.

DWD is responsible for overseeing Rapid Response services in Indiana. DWD works closely with local economic development officials, Regional Workforce Boards, and the Indiana Economic Development Corporation to ensure that all stakeholders are strategically involved in the process and that the training needs and skills required by employers are known. Currently, notices of layoffs and impending closures are submitted to the DWD. These notices may be a tip from a local office, a news report, or a WARN

notice. Rapid Response activities are activated once a layoff is confirmed. Services that can be provided include; on site utilization of technology solutions which provide career cross walks, on-site orientations for unemployment insurance and employment services, assessments, labor management committees, and job search workshops. Labor market information and skills assessments are also available to those seeking information on new careers, trends, and average wages for the area. On the Job Training opportunities are also strongly encouraged to return the dislocated workers to meaningful employment. Rapid Response activities are coordinated through state staff, WIA partner staff and local elected officials. The agency also utilizes a network of Business Consultants, partially funded through Rapid Response funds, to gather intelligence on current business trends, local economic conditions and any opportunity for layoff aversion available.

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

In the case of a disaster announcement, workforce services and recovery efforts are coordinated with FEMA, American Red Cross, and other community agencies. Rapid Response staff assists in the identification of businesses adversely affected and workers who lost jobs as a result of the disaster. Information is disseminated on disaster unemployment assistance and re-employment services available. Relevant to public assistance declarations, staff coordinates with local areas to determine if applying for a National Dislocated Worker Grant is needed to secure additional funding for cleanup and/or humanitarian efforts. During a flooding event that was one of the costliest disasters in Indiana, DWD developed a Technical Assistance Bulletin (TAB 2008-01) that created procedures and guidance for a National Emergency Grant (NEG). The Rapid Response Team participated in regional and local area meetings to provide information on filing disaster unemployment claims and workforce services available to both businesses and workers affected by the flood. Indiana utilized the NEG to create temporary jobs (disaster relief employment) to assist in the cleanup and restoration efforts as a result of the disaster. These jobs also included working on projects that provide food, clothing, shelter, and other humanitarian assistance for the disaster victims. Additional outreach was conducted at local area shelters, providing the following information and services to flood victims:

- Disaster Unemployment Assistance/UI claims filing
- Referrals to FEMA to file claims
- Job matching
- Referrals to partner agencies.

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

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

## b. Adult and Dislocated Workers Program Requirements

### 1. If the State is utilizing work-based training models (e.g. On-the-job training, Incumbent Worker training, Transitional Jobs, and Customized Training) as part of its training strategy and these strategies are not already discussed in other sections of the plan, describe the State's strategies for how these models ensure high quality training for both the participant and the employer.

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

Indiana workforce regions have utilized work-based models for many years. On-the-job and customized training have been widely used and are very effective tools. Indiana's policies are developed to ensure that our providers continually evaluate and improve their work-and-learn strategies. Specifically, Indiana's workforce partners are required to review all work-and-learn programs with each company to ensure that the training received truly provides a high quality experience for the participant and helps them either advance at that company or pursue work at another company. Additionally, Indiana's policies require a review of the employment and advancement trends at employers that utilize the work-and-learn models to ensure that participants are completing the training, getting employed and then persisting in that employment.

Indiana is working to increase and improve the work-and-learn models employed in the state. One specific model that the state is working to enhance and increase are Apprenticeships. Indiana has a high number of existing US DOL registered apprenticeships and with our work going forward we hope to only increase the opportunities for companies to develop and implement apprenticeship training for potential employees.

### 2. Describe how the State will incorporate Registered Apprenticeship into its strategy and services.

The state is actively involved in developing a full strategy for the implementation of registered apprenticeships throughout the state. The state will be working with the US DOL Office of Apprenticeship in Indiana to coordinate information, expansion and eligibility of apprenticeships in Indiana. As our economy continues to grow, Registered Apprenticeships are playing an increasingly important role with businesses across all industries by providing a pipeline of skilled workers to help them remain competitive. Many employers are increasing their use of Registered Apprenticeships as a "grow your own" strategy to increase and diversify their pipeline of skilled workers. This proven workforce strategy offers apprentices opportunities to earn a salary while they learn the skills employers demand in a variety of occupations.

Indiana has over 800 active apprenticeship programs and had over 11,000 active apprenticeships in 2015 (all statistics from Department of Labor - [https://www.doleta.gov/OA/data\\_statistics.cfm](https://www.doleta.gov/OA/data_statistics.cfm)). We are one of the largest apprenticeship states in the nation as far as size and number of programs available. Yet, like the rest of the nation, Indiana currently lacks much needed diversity in terms of ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, and business sector roles. Indiana is uniquely suited to diversify and boost its current apprenticeships palette to fit the dynamic needs of the Indiana workforce.

Indiana, DWD specifically, recently received an ApprenticeshipUSA State Accelerator Grant and will pursue other opportunities such as the ApprenticeshipUSA State Expansion Grant in order to grow and expand apprenticeships throughout the state. In order to accomplish this, we intend to work with Indiana's USDOL Office of Apprenticeships and other key stakeholders to:

- Identify ways to integrate registered apprenticeship into state education and workforce systems (i.e. WIOA)
- Engage industry and other partners to expand apprenticeship to new sectors and new populations at scale
- Conduct outreach and work with employers to start new programs
- Identify ways to promote greater inclusion and diversity in apprenticeship

### 3. Provide the procedure, eligibility criteria, and information requirements for determining training provider initial and continued eligibility, including Registered Apprenticeship programs (WIOA Section 122).

The state is currently in the process of updating and finalizing its ETPL policy to be fully compliant under WIOA. The policy will contain the procedures outlined below for eligibility criteria, and information requirements for initial and continued eligibility.

The Initial Eligibility procedure used for Providers/Programs to be included on the ETPL is as follows:

1. The provider will submit an application on the Indiana INTraining website to be determined for ETPL eligibility. This is a two-step process: the provider itself will need to be approved before the programs can be submitted for approval. The provider application includes information about the provider, such as name, costs, etc. The program application includes information about each individual program, such as name, curriculum, etc.
2. Once the provider/program application is reviewed by agency staff, it will either be denied if the information provided is inadequate or approved if information provided meets the base requirements for eligibility.
3. If the provider or program application is denied, the provider may re-apply immediately or appeal the decision.
4. Once the provider application is approved, the provider will be asked to submit the required student-level data for each program. In cases where the program is brand new and student-level data is not yet available, a waiver for a specified period of time may be granted.
5. Once the student-level data or waiver has been submitted, the program will be reviewed to determine if it leads to an in-demand occupation (as determined by the statewide demand list) and meets the state performance requirements. If the program leads to an in-demand occupation and meets the performance requirements, the program will be added to the ETPL and will be eligible to receive WIOA training funds at this time.
  - Each program must meet one of the following performance requirements for ALL PARTICIPANTS, as determined by student-level data:
    - i. Best of 2nd or 4th quarter employment rate greater than 30%; OR
    - ii. Credential rate greater than 50%; OR
    - iii. Median wage of \$10/hr (\$28,000 annually)

The Continued Eligibility procedure used for Providers/Programs to be included on the ETPL is as follows:

1. On an annual basis, the provider must update all application information for both the provider and program, and also update the student-level data.
2. Once the updated information has been reviewed and approved, the state will again check to see if the program still leads to an in-demand occupation and if the program is still in compliance with the performance requirements used in initial eligibility.
3. If the program successfully meets the above criteria, it will remain on the ETPL. If the program fails to meet the above criteria, it will be removed from the ETPL. If removed for failure to meet performance requirements, the provider may re-apply to have program re-assessed for performance after six months.

Registered apprenticeship programs will be required to apply for inclusion on the ETPL using the same application and student-level data submission process described in the initial eligibility procedure. However, apprenticeships will not be subject to the performance requirements. Apprenticeship programs will remain on the ETPL as long as they maintain an active registration or until they indicate they no longer wish to be on the ETPL.

**4. Describe how the State will implement and monitor the priority for public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient in accordance with the requirements of WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(E), which applies to individualized career services and training services funding by the Adult Formula program.**

The state issued interim guidance on WIOA Title I Adult Priority of Service, in which local areas are required to prioritize services for low-income individuals, participants on public assistance, and/or individuals who are basic skills deficient. The guidance requires that at least 50% of each local area's Adult participants that are served must belong to one of these priority categories. Local areas will track in the case management system if a client meets the criteria for priority. Annually the local area's percentage of priority clients will be monitored by DWD, and those local areas who fail to serve at least 50% priority clients will be given technical assistance by DWD to prioritize services to these populations going forward.

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

A WDB may transfer up to 100% of the Program Year 2015 Adult and Dislocated Worker allocations and up to 50% of the Program Year 2014 Adult and Dislocated Worker allocations between the two programs. WIOA states that local entities must seek the approval of the Governor to make such transfers. The Governor is giving blanket approval to local entities to transfer at their discretion as long as the funds to be transferred have not already been drawn down or expended. No funds may be transferred to or from the WIA Youth program. NOTE: Please continue to process a grant modification through your fiscal officer for any transfer. See Program Year 2015 (PY15) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Formula Allocation Memo.

## c. Youth Program Requirements

With respect to youth workforce investment activities authorized in section 129 of WIOA,—

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

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\* Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(V)

As local areas are able to set their own parameters for procurement of youth services, not all areas describe or request specific performance plans related to primary performance indicators in their Request for Proposal. However, some local areas list metrics of success to ensure providers meet or exceed goals, including pay for performance goals. Awards are then made to organizations possessing the demonstrated ability to perform. Some of these metrics include:

- Once determined by USDOL and IDWD, the ability to meet performance goals including:
  - placement in employment, education or training;
  - employment, education or training retention;

- median earnings;
  - credential rate;
  - attainment of degree or certificate; or
  - measureable skills gains
- Valid satisfactory record of past performance in delivering the proposed or similar services, including demonstrated quality of services and successful outcome rates from past programs (including non-WIA/WIOA programming)
  - Ability to provide services that can lead to the achievement of competency standards for customers with identified barriers or deficiencies.

**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, and Combined State Plan partner programs included in this Plan, required and optional One-Stop partner programs, and any other resources available.**

The purpose of WIOA youth services is to assist low-income young people, (ages 14-21 if in-school youth; ages 16-24 if out-of-school youth), who face significant barriers to education and/or employment by providing resources and support to overcome those barriers and successfully transition to self-sufficient adulthood. This will be accomplished by assessing a participant's skills, interests, needs and goals, creating customized service plans in collaboration with the participant, and expanding the participant's connection to the local economy, educational opportunities and community services. This process is coordinated around 14 Youth Program Elements, which must be made available to every participant. The 14 youth program elements are:

**1. Tutoring, study skills training, and dropout prevention strategies:**

- Indiana utilizes the Jobs for America's Graduates program as its dropout prevention strategy.
- Local programs utilize their own strategies for individual tutoring or study skills training as appropriate and necessary.

**2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services as appropriate:**

- Indiana also utilizes the Jobs for America's Graduates out-of-school program model in some local areas for dropout recovery services.
- Additionally, all local areas partner with their adult education providers for dropout recovery/ high school equivalency classes for youth participants.
- Finally, the Indiana Department of Education oversees the alternative education programs in local school corporations. In-school youth participants have access to these programs when appropriate.

**3. Paid and unpaid work experiences including summer employment and other opportunities throughout the year, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, on-the-job training opportunities:**

- Indiana's local areas offer numerous and robust work experiences (including summer employment, job shadowing, internships and on-the-job training) at local employers. These work experiences range in length, but are typically short-term and can last up to 12 weeks. Many work experiences include a "boot camp" or training prior to the start, as well as, milestone trainings regarding the jobsite, industry or individuals onsite performance.

- Indiana is making strides at increasing the pre-apprenticeship referrals and program placements for the local areas. This includes partnerships with the Indiana Plan and the State's Office of Apprenticeships.

**4. Occupational skills training:**

- Indiana offers multiple access points for participants to seek occupational skills training that will result in an industry recognized credential. These could include a specific training program selected by the youth based on their career interest and aptitude results and/or the state's WorkINdiana short-term credential program.
- Additionally, the state also includes apprenticeship programs, JobCorps and YouthBuild in this program element.

**5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities:**

- Local areas offer this program element, as appropriate, for youth who are enrolled in a post-secondary education opportunity (including those in credential programs) and may need a short-term work experience or employability skills training, such as those found in the Jobs for America's Graduates program models. This also includes "boot-camp" programs offered prior to short-term work experience, on-the-job training or internship.

**6. Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors:**

- Local areas offer this program element, as appropriate, through local partnerships with colleges and other leadership training programs or contractors.
- All Jobs for America's Graduates participants participate in leadership development through the application of the Career Association. This includes teambuilding and service learning activities.

**7. Supportive services:**

- Local areas offer this program element, as appropriate, through the use of clothing assistance, transportation assistance, child and dependent care assistance, referrals to medical services, assistance with training materials such as books and equipment and incentives for completion of participant goals. The provider can vary in each local area but could include Speedway gas cards for transportation assistance or a gift card to Kohl's or Wal-Mart for clothing assistance.

**8. Adult mentoring:**

- Local areas offer this program element, as appropriate, through the connections with partner organizations like the Boys and Girls Club, Starfish Initiative, local post-secondary college and university students or other organizations that specialize in mentoring teens and young adults.

**9. Comprehensive guidance and counseling:**

- Often, this program element is provided by the onsite youth case manager, especially for career and education counseling.
- However, if a youth has a specific need for counseling, local areas refer participants to drug and alcohol, mental health and other organizations when appropriate.
- Resource mapping has been completed for all economic growth regions by an outside contractor that includes referral and partner agencies for such services.

**10. Financial literacy education:**

- Local areas have developed partnerships with individual organizations to provide some financial literacy training to participants. These include, but are not limited to, Primerica, Allison.com, FDIC Youth Guide to Financial Literacy, and Old National Bank.
- Indiana received a technical assistance grant for its Jobs for America's Graduates programs through the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau that will provide instruction and marketing materials related to financial capability education through December 2016.

**11. Entrepreneurial skills training:**

- Local areas are still developing curriculum and partnerships to provide this program element. However, some local areas have identified the Small Business Administration, the Chamber of Commerce, Young Entrepreneur's Academy, and Junior Achievement as potential sources of curriculum, guest speakers and mentors.
- Several local service providers have developed curriculum for this program element that focuses on the awareness and understanding of entrepreneurship and the steps to create a detailed business plan.

**12. Services that provide labor market and employment information:**

- Indiana operates a statewide career interest and aptitude website, Indiana Career Explorer, which provides youth participants access to labor market information related to many career pathways and in-demand occupations that align with their interests.
- Indiana also operates Hoosiers by the Numbers, which provides Indiana-specific workforce data that can be broken down by regional and local area. This website also houses census data.
- Indiana operates INReality, an online tool that allows users to select a lifestyle that matches their career interests, or select a lifestyle and then find careers and salary information to help them afford that lifestyle. This website offers information for 35 major communities across the state.
- Local areas have the ability to provide additional information and resources for this program element as appropriate.

**13. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training:**

- The Jobs for America's Graduates program model integrates curriculum and activities such as scholarship, application and financial aid assistance, entrance exam preparation, and other independent living skills that would ensure success in the youth's post-secondary experience.
- Local areas employ other tactics that are regionally specific. They include, but are not limited to, college fairs and visits, Financial Aid application nights, or college bridge programs.

**14. Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation:**

- Indiana requires follow-up services for all participants to occur at least once every 90 days after exit. Jobs for America's Graduates participants are contacted once a month after exit.

The types and duration of services provided may vary based on the needs of the individual, but may include leadership development and supportive services; regular contact with a youth's employer including assistance in addressing work-related problems; assistance in securing better paying jobs, career pathway development, and further education or training; work-related peer support groups; adult mentoring; or services necessary to ensure success in post-secondary training.

The state's major focus for recruiting out-of-school youth and assisting them in achieving their goals is a partnership with Title II Adult Education programs. Over 55% of the Adult Education students statewide are between the ages of 16-24, and nearly all are drop-out students working on achieving their high school equivalency diploma. This partnership increases participation (attendance) in both programs as well as assisting in educating the out-of-school youth for preparation in career pathways and bridge short-term training programs with direct linkages to post-training employment. Joint statewide Youth and Adult Education Director meetings have been ongoing since 2014, as well as a focus for WorkOne youth providers as members of regional Adult Education consortium meetings. Local WorkOne staff participate in Adult Education program participant onboarding or welcome meetings and vice versa to ensure all participants are aware of the array of services available to them in both programs. Adult Education partners serve on local standing youth committees.

In addition to partnership with Title II Adult Education programs, recruiting and referral to Vocational Rehabilitation has been a statewide focus since the implementation of WIOA. This partnership allows out-of-school youth with significant barriers to employment to access funding for both intensive and basic services to assist them in their pursuits. Joint statewide training, local staff meetings and specific referral forms/personal hand-offs are just some of the strategies VR and the statewide WorkOne system have implemented in order to ensure out-of-school youth participants access to programming. VR partners serve on local youth standing committees.

Additional partnerships with the statewide community college system, foster care system, Commission for Higher Education, Department of Education, and Department of Correction assist in helping local areas recruit potentially eligible out-of-school youth or provide them access to education or training funding and resources to assist them in completing goals related to education, training and employment.

### **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.\***

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\* Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(I)

The purpose of WIOA youth services is to assist low-income young people, (ages 14-21 if in-school youth; ages 16-24 if out-of-school youth), who face significant barriers to education and/or employment by providing resources and support to overcome those barriers and successfully transition to self-sufficient adulthood. This will be accomplished by assessing a participant's skills, interests, needs and goals, creating customized service plans in collaboration with the participant, and expanding the participant's connection to the local economy, educational opportunities and community services. This process is coordinated around 14 Youth Program Elements, which must be made available to every participant. The 14 youth program elements are:

- Tutoring, study skills training, and dropout prevention strategies:
  - Indiana utilizes the Jobs for America's Graduates program as its dropout prevention strategy.
  - Local programs utilize their own strategies for individual tutoring or study skills training as appropriate and necessary.
- Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services as appropriate:
  - Indiana also utilizes the Jobs for America's Graduates out-of-school program model in some local areas for dropout recovery services.
  - Additionally, all local areas partner with their adult education providers for dropout recovery/high school equivalency classes for youth participants.
  - Finally, the Indiana Department of Education oversees the alternative education programs in local school corporations. In-school youth participants have access to these programs when appropriate.

- Paid and unpaid work experiences including summer employment and other opportunities throughout the year, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, on-the-job training opportunities:
  - Indiana’s local areas offer numerous and robust work experiences (including summer employment, job shadowing, internships and on-the-job training) at local employers. These work experiences range in length, but are typically short-term and can last up to 12 weeks. Many work experiences include a “boot camp” or training prior to the start as well as milestone trainings regarding the jobsite, industry or individuals onsite performance.
  - Indiana is making strides at increasing the pre-apprenticeship referrals and program placements for the local areas. This includes partnerships with Indiana Plan and the State’s Office of Apprenticeships.
- Occupational skills training:
  - Indiana offers multiple access points for participants to seek occupational skills training that will result in an industry-recognized credential. These could include a specific training program selected by the youth based on their career interest and aptitude results and/or the state’s WorkINdiana short-term credential program.
  - Additionally, the state also includes apprenticeship programs, JobCorps and YouthBuild in this program element.
- Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities:
  - Local areas offer this program element, as appropriate, for youth who are enrolled in a post-secondary education opportunity (including those in credential programs) and may need a short-term work experience or employability skills training, such as those found in the Jobs for America’s Graduates program models. This also includes “boot-camp” programs offered prior to short-term work experience, on-the-job training or internship.
- Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors:
  - Local areas offer this program element, as appropriate, through local partnerships with colleges and other leadership training programs or contractors.
  - All Jobs for America’s Graduates participants participate in leadership development through the application of the Career Association. This includes teambuilding and service learning activities.
- Supportive services:
  - Local areas offer this program element, as appropriate, through the use of clothing assistance, transportation assistance, child and dependent care assistance, referrals to medical services, assistance with training materials such as books and equipment and incentives for completion of participant goals. The provider can vary in each local area but could include Speedway gas cards for transportation assistance or a gift card to Kohl’s or Wal-Mart for clothing assistance.
- Adult mentoring:
  - Local areas offer this program element, as appropriate, through the connections with partner organizations like the Boys and Girls Club, Starfish Initiative, local post-secondary college and university students or other organizations that specialize in mentoring teens and young adults.
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling:
  - Often, this program element is provided by the onsite youth case manager, especially for career and education counseling.
  - However, if a youth has a specific need for counseling, local areas refer participants to drug and alcohol, mental health and other organizations when appropriate.

- Resource mapping has been completed for all economic growth regions by an outside contractor that includes referral and partner agencies for such services.
- Financial literacy education:
  - Local areas have developed partnerships with individual organizations to provide some financial literacy training to participants. These include, but are not limited to, Primerica, Allison.com, FDIC Youth Guide to Financial Literacy, and Old National Bank.
  - Indiana received a technical assistance grant for its Jobs for America's Graduates programs through the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau that will provide instruction and marketing materials related to financial capability education through December 2016.
- Entrepreneurial skills training:
  - Local areas are still developing curriculum and partnerships to provide this program element. However, some local areas have identified the Small Business Administration, the Chamber of Commerce, Young Entrepreneur's Academy, and Junior Achievement as potential sources of curriculum, guest speakers and mentors.
  - Several local service providers have developed curriculum for this program element that focuses on the awareness and understanding of entrepreneurship and the steps to create a detailed business plan.
- Services that provide labor market and employment information:
  - Indiana operates a statewide career interest and aptitude website, Indiana Career Explorer, which provides youth participants access to labor market information related to many career pathways and in-demand occupations that align with their interests.
  - Indiana also operates Hoosiers by the Numbers, which provides Indiana specific workforce data that can be broken down by regional and local area. This website also houses census data.
  - Indiana operates INReality, an online tool that allows users to select a lifestyle that matches their career interests, or select a lifestyle and then find careers and salary information to help them afford that lifestyle. This website offers information for 35 major communities across the state.
  - Local areas have the ability to provide additional information and resources for this program element as appropriate.
- Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training:
  - The Jobs for America's Graduates program model integrates curriculum and activities such as scholarship, application and financial aid assistance, entrance exam preparation, and other independent living skills that would ensure success in the youth's post-secondary experience.
  - Local areas employ other tactics that are regionally specific. They include, but are not limited to, college fairs and visits, Financial Aid application nights, or college bridge programs.
- Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation:
  - Indiana requires follow-up services for all participants to occur at least once every 90 days after exit. Jobs for America's Graduates participants are contacted once a month after exit.

The types and duration of services provided may vary based on the needs of the individual, but may include leadership development and supportive services; regular contact with a youth's employer including assistance in addressing work-related problems; assistance in securing better paying jobs, career pathway development, and further education or training; work related peer support groups; adult mentoring; or services necessary to ensure success in post-secondary training.

**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).**

The state does not have a policy with specific language for “requires additional assistance to enter or complete an education program, or to secure and hold employment” for in-school or out-of-school youth. WIOA allows States and/or local areas to define the “requires additional assistance ...” criterion that is part of the Out of School Youth and In School Youth eligibility. It clarifies that if this criterion is not defined at the State level and a local area uses this criterion in their Out-of-School Youth or In-School Youth eligibility, the local area must define this criterion in their local plan. Examples of local definitions are below.

Region 1 Definition Example:

- Identified substance abuse
- Poor work history such as never worked, held two or more jobs within the last year, or employment retention generally three months or less
- Frequently moves from one place to another, has had two or more addresses in the past six-months
- Has one or more legal issues such as arrests or complaints without convictions
- Has ongoing physical or mental health issues that have not been determined a disability

Region 3 Definition Example:

- Lacks work experience
- Cannot create/complete a budget
- Is the child of an incarcerated parent
- A youth who exhibits poor work readiness skills and/or has been terminated from previous employment

Region 4 Definition Example:

- Is at risk of dropping out of high school due to grades/credits/attendance/not passing proficiency exam or has had an out-of-school suspension or expulsion from school (ISY)
- Has a court/agency referral mandating school attendance (ISY)
- Is attending an alternative school / education program or has been enrolled in an alternative school within the past 12 months (ISY)
- Is or was a Ward of the State
- Has been referred to or treated by an agency for substance abuse/ psychological problems
- A victim of domestic abuse or violence
- Has a currently incarcerated parent(s)
- Has neither the work experience nor the credential required for an occupation in demand for which training is necessary and will be provided (OSY)
- Has been fired from a job within the six months prior to application (OSY)
- Has never held a full-time job (30+ hours per week) for more than 13 consecutive weeks (OSY)

## Region 11 Definition Example:

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

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

Indiana’s definitions are as follows:

- Not attending school; high school dropout: The individual is no longer attending any school and has not received a secondary school diploma or its equivalent.
- Not attending school; high school graduate: The individual is not attending any school and has received either a secondary school diploma or its equivalent.
- Enrollment in adult education, Job Corps or YouthBuild is “not attending school.”
- Indiana’s Compulsory School Attendance age, per Indiana Code 20-33-2-6, begins the fall school term for the school year in which the student becomes seven (7) years of age, and continues until the date on which the student: (1) graduates, (2) becomes 18 years of age, or (3) becomes 16 years of age but is less 18 years of age and the requirements concerning an exit interview are met enabling the student to withdraw from school before graduation.
- Attending school means to be physically present: (1) in a school; or (2) at another location where the school’s educational program in which a person is enrolled is being conducted; during regular school hours on a day in which the educational program in which the person is enrolled is being offered. See Indiana Code 20-33-2-3.2.
- Indiana also defines a school year as “at least one hundred eighty (180) student instructional days.” See Indiana Code 20-30-2-3. Not later than June 15 of each school year, the superintendent of each school corporation shall certify to the department the number of student instructional days conducted during that school year. While there may be extenuating circumstances that a school district may request a waiver of these 180 days, which could include weather related cancellations, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development would consider 180 student instructional days as the “school year.”
- For the purposes of out-of-school youth eligibility calculations, a “school calendar quarter” would be defined as 45 student instructional days. Weekends, holidays or cancelled days in which school was closed would not count towards the 45 student instructional days. Some school corporations may define these 45 days as a “semester,” but calculations for accuracy of total instructional days should still be verified by the case manager at the time of application and enrollment.

**6. If not using the basic skills deficient definition contained in WIOA Section 3(5)(B), include the specific State definition.**

The State's definition is as follows:

- The youth has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below 8.9 grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; **or**
- The youth is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society. This is defined as:
  - Lacks a high school diploma or equivalency and is not enrolled in secondary education; **or**
  - Scores 8.9 or below on the TABE; **or**
  - Is enrolled in Title II adult education (including enrolled for ESL); **or**
  - Has poor English language skills (and would be appropriate for ESL even if the individual isn't enrolled at the time of WIOA entry into participation); **or**
  - Is WorkINdiana eligible (Title II participants are eligible for WorkINdiana up to a year after exit); **or**
  - The case manager makes detailed observations of deficient functioning and records those detailed observations as justification in a case note.
- For in-school youth only:
  - Behind in credits to graduate on time with peer cohort; **or**
  - GPA 2.5 or below; **or**
  - Has taken and did not pass the End of Course Assessment (ECA) in English 10 or Algebra I.

**d. Single-area State Requirements**

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

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

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

**e. Waiver Requests (optional)**

States wanting to request waivers as part of their Title I-B Operational Plan must include a waiver plan that includes the following information for each waiver requested:

- 1. Identifies the statutory or regulatory requirements for which a waiver is requested and the goals that the State or local area, as appropriate, intends to achieve as a result of the waiver and how those goals relate to the Unified or Combined State Plan;**

2. **Describes the actions that the State or local area, as appropriate, has undertaken to remove State or local statutory or regulatory barriers;**
3. **Describes the goals of the waiver and the expected programmatic outcomes if the request is granted;**
4. **Describes how the waiver will align with the Department’s policy priorities, such as:**
  - A. **supporting employer engagement;**
  - B. **connecting education and training strategies;**
  - C. **supporting work-based learning;**
  - D. **improving job and career results, and**
  - E. **other guidance issued by the Department.**
5. **Describes the individuals affected by the waiver, including how the waiver will impact services for disadvantaged populations or individuals with multiple barriers to employment; and**
6. **Describes the process used to:**
  - A. **Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver;**
  - B. **Provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver;**
  - C. **Provide any local board affected by the waiver an opportunity to comment on the request;**
  - D. **Ensure meaningful public comment, including comment by business and organized labor, on the waiver.**
  - E. **Collect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State’s WIOA Annual Report**

The Secretary may require that States provide the most recent data available about the outcomes of the existing waiver in cases where the State seeks renewal of a previously approved waiver;

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

## **Title I-B Assurances**

The State Plan must include assurances that:

1. The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients and basic skills deficient; **Yes**
2. The state has implemented a policy to ensure local areas have a process in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program’s Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist; **Yes**
3. The state established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members. **Yes**
4. The state established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2). **Yes**
5. Where an alternative entity takes the place of a State Board, the State has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under WIOA section 101(e) and the legal requirements for membership. **Yes**

6. The State established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the State Workforce Development Board help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the state consults with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the state in determining the distributions. **Yes**
7. The State will not use funds received under 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**

## Program-Specific Requirements for Wagner-Peyser Program (Employment Services)

All program-specific requirements provided for the WIOA core programs in this section must be addressed for either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

### A. Employment Service Professional Staff Development.

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

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

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

#### 2. Describe strategies developed to support training and awareness across core programs and the Unemployment Insurance program, and the training provided for Employment Services and WIOA staff on identification of UI eligibility issues and referral to UI staff for adjudication.

The state of Indiana has implemented technology solutions to help UI claimants with all aspects of their claim. These solutions were implemented in every one-stop office across the state. The state identified designated computer terminals and phone lines in every office. These computers are identified specifically for UI customers who come into

the office. The phones connect directly with the UI customer service call center for immediate help with their claim/issue. All claimants are directed to the computers and phone lines for all UI issues.

When this transition occurred, all Wagner Peyser and WIOA staff were trained on the new system and features. One of the features added was a remote desktop system called Bomgar. This system gives the call center staff the ability to take over the screen of a UI claimant so they can help walk the claimant through their claim. Any claimant that comes into the office is directed to these computers and to the call center for all questions and all one-stop staff are trained to direct all questions to the UI staff at the call center.

The state has also begun assisting clients through a marketed toll free phone number which is available to the public. All partners have been informed of this hotline and are encouraged to refer clients for all UI related services.

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

## **B. Explain how the state will provide information and meaningful assistance to individuals requesting assistance in filing a claim for unemployment compensation through One-Stop centers, as required by WIOA as a career service.**

The State will provide assistance as follows:

**Over the shoulder.** The office will continue to have individuals to assist in completing the application process along with direct links to tutorials to guide an individual through the process.

- **UI presence.** Local offices will continue to have a presence although it will be in more of a support role than a direct assistance role.
- **Web Chat.** Customer terminals with a link to where a customer can speak via 'chat room' to someone who can check into their particular issue and provide helpful information.
- **Dedicated phone lines** to the Call Center will be available in the lobbies for claimants to get in direct touch with a customer service rep who can walk through the claimant's issue with them and either provide answers, assistance or refer for additional service.

## **C. Describe the state's strategy for providing reemployment assistance to Unemployment Insurance claimants and other unemployed individuals.**

All Indiana Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claimants:

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

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

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

RESEA participants will receive all of the mandatory RESEA program requirements and additional re-employment services during the four (4) additional weeks of intensive services provided following orientation day activities. Jobs for Hoosiers (JFH) is a fast-track REA program which provides information on the vast re-employment services available through the WorkOne centers statewide.

While the state of Indiana brings in every eligible UI claimant for re-employment activities, there are numerous other clients who are long-term unemployed, underemployed or are re-entering the workforce. Indiana's WorkOne offices and staff utilize numerous tools to help these individuals find re-employment. Specifically, the state has partnered with its workforce regions to provide the same re-employment services and strategies that are provided for the RESEA and JFH claimants. Our expertise gained through the RESEA and JFH programs have helped our staff build the skills necessary to help all Hoosiers find employment.

#### **D. Describe how the State will use W-P funds to support UI claimants, and the communication between W-P and UI, as appropriate, including the following:**

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

Since 2013, Indiana has worked hard to fully connect all UI claimants with the state's employment service. The Indiana legislature put into effect the Jobs for Hoosiers program and further strengthened that legislation in the 2016 session. The Jobs for Hoosiers program requires all UI claimants at the 4th week to physically go to an orientation session of the employment services in one of Indiana's WorkOne offices. This action directly connects these claimants with the Wagner Peyser system and funding. Additionally, all claimants are required to enter the state's Wagner Peyser funded labor exchange system and complete an assessment, a resume and look for employment opportunities.

##### **2. Registration of UI claimants with the State's employment service if required by State law;**

Since 2013, Indiana has worked hard to fully connect all UI claimants with the state's employment service. The Indiana legislature put into effect the Jobs for Hoosiers program and further strengthened that legislation in the 2016 session. The Jobs for Hoosiers program requires all UI claimants at the 4th week to physically go to an orientation session of the employment services in one of Indiana's WorkOne offices. This action directly connects these claimants with the Wagner Peyser system and funding. Additionally, all claimants are required to enter the state's Wagner Peyser funded labor exchange system and complete an assessment, a resume and look for employment opportunities.

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

The Uplink system identifies potential eligibility issues by the claimant's responses to questions during the application for benefits process. The claimant view of Uplink will become more interactive capturing more detailed information

regarding potential issues. The RES programs will ensure that a complete application is in Indiana Career Connect as well as will provide introduction to workshops to enhance the job seekers ability to create an efficient, thorough and systematic work search plan. Review of the claimants work search efforts by WP staff will determine whether or not a realistic effort to find suitable employment is being followed by the claimant. Staff will provide guidance through WP and WIOA case managers to assist claimants to pursue employment goals.

#### **4. Provision of referrals to and application assistance for training and education programs and resources.**

Many years ago Indiana took great steps to integrate our Wagner Peyser and WIA programs together in our WorkOne offices. Now that WIOA is in effect and this is a requirement, Indiana has an integrated system already in place. Because of this system, the referral process is engrained in our processes. Direct supervision of Indiana's WorkOne staff is in the hands of the One-Stop operator. So the integration of Wagner Peyser and WIOA is well connected in Indiana. This has enabled Indiana to blur the lines between state staff and service provider staff. The referral to training can happen without a transition of which staff is managing the client.

As part of this, most of the training that is provided to WorkOne staff is provided to all staff regardless of funding stream. The state integrates training across Wagner Peyser, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Education, TAA and JVSG at a minimum. While each funding stream has specific responsibilities, the state works hard to train all staff in the basics of the other programs and provide services that are consistent across all funding streams.

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

#### **1. Assessment of Need**

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

Because of its consistent crops, overall agricultural production, and planting/harvest cycles, needs of farmworkers in Indiana remain generally constant from year to year and range from education-related for farmworkers and farmworker families (GED, ESL, etc.) to non-agricultural job training and more standardized housing opportunities.

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

The top labor-intensive crops and percentage of total agricultural economic activity continue to be corn (and corn for grain and soy beans) 53%, melons .5%, tomatoes .7%, tobacco .3%, and select berries .1%. Corn, melon, tomatoes are predominantly in the southern, southeastern, and northern parts of Indiana. Tobacco and select berries are located in southern Indiana. In general, employers have expressed a lack of available local workers and have demonstrated a steady demand for foreign labor, as in past seasons. Farm labor contractors using H-2A workers have accounted for the majority of the need (approx. 2,000 workers) for corn detasseling during peak season (June - July). Economic factors are projected to be stable, with a balanced, effective net result of new employers replacing those ceasing operations. Weather extremes are the primary variable that has the potential for the most impact on agriculture and agricultural operations.

**Sources:** Purdue Agriculture Extension, Indiana Farm Bureau, USDA National Agriculture Statistics Service.

**b. 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.**

Indiana's MSFW population is almost exclusively from Mexico, or other Spanish-speaking countries; any additional source is essentially negligible due to low numbers. During peak planting/harvesting periods in the Spring and Fall, the population, consisting chiefly of migrant workers, is estimated to be between 4,000 to 6,000. Conversely, at its lowest phase, it is estimated to be between 500-700.

Source: Indiana H-2A activity.

## 2. Outreach Activities

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

For over a decade, Indiana has partnered with the contracted National Farm Worker Jobs Program/167 WIA Grantee (Proteus©) to provide outreach to MSFW potential clients. Through this strong partnership, Proteus© has embedded four of its locations in the local WorkOne office. The ability to access talent above and beyond what the state would be able to attract has been a key factor in the continuation of this partnership.

The state will immediately develop an appropriate job description and coordinate with Indiana's State Personnel Department to hire a state merit staff with the required qualifications outlined in section 653.107 Outreach.

*(3) For purposes of hiring and assigning staff to conduct outreach duties, and to maintain compliance with SWAs' Affirmative Action programs, SWAs must seek, through merit system procedures, qualified candidates who:*

- (i) Are from MSFW backgrounds;
- (ii) Speak a language common among MSFWs in the State; or
- (iii) Are racially or ethnically representative of the MSFWs in the service area.

As the contracted partner has multiple staff that are from MSFW backgrounds, speak Spanish (key Indiana MSFW) and racially or ethnically represent the MSFWs in Indiana's MSFW regions, in the interim, to ensure consistent provision of outreach activities, Indiana will maintain its current contract with Proteus until we have hired the staff to fulfill these services. We will partner with Proteus to train and then provide the outreach services as required by WIOA.

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

From an initial cooperative agreement, DWD and the National Farm Worker Jobs Program / 167 WIA Grantee have expanded their partnership to include out-stationing of NFJP staff at four (4) WorkOne centers in South Bend, Kokomo, Columbus, and Vincennes. This agreement to share office space in our WorkOne centers with NFJP staff has improved access to employment and training services for farm workers and has provided the agency with staff who are bilingual and who have experience in working with farm workers. In addition, the staff from the National Farm Worker Jobs Program / 167 WIA Grantee has forged strong partnerships with the local WorkOne staff to ensure one-stop services are accessible to MSFW.

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

Historically, the State has always used outside entities to conduct Outreach. Through that partnership our WorkOne offices are able to reach a much broader MSFW audience than the WorkOne office staff are able to do in their normal intake activities. The strategy to co-locate offices helps drive MSFW clients into the one-stop office. This partnership has long been a cornerstone of Indiana's MSFW program and a key strategy to increasing our overall activities.

As the state transitions from a contract with Proteus for provision of outreach activities to state merit staff conducting outreach, the SMA will work with Proteus, the Regional Monitor Advocate, and local office staff with respect to the Outreach function (in general) as well as developing additional strategies for technical assistance, increasing awareness across core programs, Outreach worker professional development activities, coordination with NFJP partner, etc.

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

Historically, the State has always used outside entities to conduct Outreach. Through that partnership our WorkOne offices are able to reach a much broader MSFW audience than the WorkOne office staff are able to do in their normal intake activities. The strategy to co-locate offices helps drive MSFW clients into the One-Stop office. Proteus© is co-located in multiple DWD offices, and, as such, has access to all One-Stop services referenced above, along with updates, changes, and any peripheral training material. The State Monitor Advocate is also available to assist with all technical assistance aspects.

This partnership has long been a cornerstone of Indiana's MSFW program and a key strategy to increasing our overall activities. The co-location of offices affords our SMA to provide technical assistance to outreach workers and state staff that work with MSFW clients in those offices. As the state transitions from a contract with Proteus for provision of outreach activities to state merit staff conducting outreach, the SMA will work with Proteus, the Regional Monitor Advocate, and local office staff with respect to the Outreach function, (in general), as well as, developing additional strategies for technical assistance, increasing awareness across core programs, Outreach worker professional development activities, coordination with NFJP partner, etc.

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

Historically, the State has always used outside entities to conduct Outreach. Through that partnership our WorkOne offices are able to reach a much broader MSFW audience than the WorkOne office staff are able to do in their normal intake activities. The strategy to co-locate offices helps drive MSFW clients into the one-stop office. This partnership has long been a cornerstone of Indiana's MSFW program and a key strategy to increasing our overall activities.

The state of Indiana has implemented technology solutions to help UI claimants with all aspects of their claim. These solutions were implemented in every One-Stop office across the state. The state identified designated computer terminals and phone lines in every office. These computers are identified specifically for UI customers who come into the office. The phones connect directly with the UI customer service call center for immediate help with their claim/issue. All claimants are directed to the computers and phone lines for all UI issues. When this transition occurred, all Wagner Peyser, and other partner staff were trained on the new system and features.

Over the next 12-month period, the SMA and our newly hired state staff for MSFW outreach will work with Proteus, the Regional Monitor Advocate, and local office staff with respect to the Outreach function, (in general), as well as,

developing additional strategies for technical assistance, increasing awareness across core programs, Outreach worker professional development activities, coordination with NFJP partner, etc.

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

For over a decade, Indiana has partnered with the contracted National Farm Worker Jobs Program/167 WIA Grantee (Proteus©) to provide outreach to MSFW potential clients. Through this strong partnership, Proteus© has embedded four of its locations in the local WorkOne office. The ability to access talent above and beyond what the state would be able to attract has been a key factor in the continuation of this partnership.

The state will immediately develop an appropriate job description and coordinate with Indiana's State Personnel Department to hire a state merit staff with the required qualifications outlined in section 653.107 Outreach.

*(3) For purposes of hiring and assigning staff to conduct outreach duties, and to maintain compliance with SWAs' Affirmative Action programs, SWAs must seek, through merit system procedures, qualified candidates who:*

- (i) Are from MSFW backgrounds;
- (ii) Speak a language common among MSFWs in the State; or
- (iii) Are racially or ethnically representative of the MSFWs in the service area.

As the contracted partner has multiple staff that are from MSFW backgrounds, speak Spanish (key Indiana MSFW) and racially or ethnically represent the MSFWs in Indiana's MSFW regions, in the interim, to ensure consistent provision of outreach activities, Indiana will maintain its current contract with Proteus until we have hired the staff to fulfill these services. We will partner with Proteus to train and then provide the outreach services as required by WIOA.

As discussed in a previous section, the co-location of Proteus © in Indiana's WorkOne system has helped provide a connection between outreach and One-Stop office activities. Because this organization is focused on MSFW completely, they have more professional development opportunities than the state could provide. The state will leverage this capability to provide professional development opportunities for the newly hired state staff for MSFW outreach.

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

The SWA and the SMA maintain a close working relationship with Proteus© with respect to the outreach function. Through this partnership our WorkOne offices are able to reach a much broader MSFW audience than the WorkOne office staff are able to do in their normal intake activities. The strategy to co-locate offices helps drive MSFW clients into the one-stop office. This co-location has specifically helped Indiana coordinate the activities between the state and partner One-Stop staff and the MSFW staff.

The SWA and SMA are also active with the Indiana MSFW Coalition which consists of several entities (Indiana Dept. of Education, Transition Resources, Indiana Health Centers, Migrant Services Law Center, Indiana Housing, among others) dedicated to a variety of advocacy-related issues involving agricultural farmworkers.

Over the next 12-month period, the SMA and our newly hired state staff for MSFW outreach will work with Proteus, the Regional Monitor Advocate, and local office staff with respect to the Outreach function, (in general), as well as, developing additional strategies for technical assistance, increasing awareness across core programs, Outreach worker professional development activities, coordination with NFJP partner, etc.

**3. Services provided to farmworkers and agricultural employers through the One-Stop Delivery System.**

Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

**(A) Providing the full range of employment and training services to the agricultural community, both farmworkers and agricultural employers, through the One-Stop Delivery System. This includes:**

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

Indiana's Department of Workforce Development has a strong and growing focus on employers and the importance to provide outreach and support to those businesses. The agriculture industry is an important industry to the state. As such, the department is developing round table discussions with its critical industry partners and will work to create these round table discussions with Indiana's key MSFW agriculture organizations with the goal of explaining services provided, removing barriers to processing, addressing complaints, and maintaining/enhancing dialogue between growers and the State Monitor Advocate.

DWD provides MSFWs with information about, and access to, applicant services available through our WorkOne centers. To ensure MSFWs have access to services at Indiana's WorkOne centers and WorkOne Express sites, the State Monitor Advocate continually seeks ways to increase the ability for all those involved in MSFW service delivery to be able to dialogue in order to understand and improve on their particular roles and functions. The State Monitor Advocate meets with service providers at the local level to identify priority issues and to develop a continuous consensus building process to determine the appropriate technical assistance necessary for improving service delivery for the MSFW customer - whether farmworker or employer.

**(B) Marketing the employment service complaint system to farmworkers and other farmworker advocacy groups.**

As a result of its statewide outreach efforts, Proteus© continually provides presentations and associated material to farmworkers and farmworker advocacy groups as it pertains to the employment service complaint system. The State Monitor Advocate also ensures applicable posters are prominently displayed in the Job Centers, explains the complaint system during regular meetings with Indiana's ad hoc farmworker coalition group meetings (which include a cross-representation of farmworker-related members), and during outreach sessions with farmworkers.

As the state transitions from a contract with Proteus for outreach services to state staff providing that function, we will look to include this person as a partner in all of these activities and help develop plans to grow the knowledge of employment service complaint system to farmworkers and other advocacy organizations.

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

During its statewide outreach efforts, Proteus© continually provides presentations and associated material to agricultural employers as it pertains to the Agricultural Recruitment System. The SMA also reaches out to agricultural employers through workshops and informational meetings as scheduling permits.

DWD continues to provide agricultural employers assistance with their labor needs. When local workers are not available, DWD provides technical assistance to growers to aid them in accessing the interstate agricultural recruitment system. Our local office staff continues to provide farm labor contractors assistance in preparing application for certification with the U.S. Department of Labor. Additionally, the SWA will attempt to use its relationships with existing entities to branch out and network with similar organizations at the rate of 2-3 per calendar quarter.

As the state transitions from a contract with Proteus for outreach services to state staff providing that function, we will look to include this person as a partner in all of these activities. Specific tactics will be developed as this position develops and evolves throughout this and subsequent years.

## 4. Other Requirements

### (A) Collaboration

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

Although the Wagner-Peyser grant does not contain funds targeted for MSFW activities, Department of Labor Regulation 653.1 mandates that DWD accomplish outreach to this group. DWD continues to meet its outreach responsibilities to MSFWs with its financial support of Proteus via an ongoing grant. The grant DWD has with Proteus allows for a more efficient use of MSFW resources by minimizing duplication of effort, since Proteus also functions as the NFJP grantee. Proteus staff provides participants with current information regarding the distribution of the MSFW population in Indiana and informs MSFW of the employment and training services DWD has to offer them. Proteus staff consists of permanent and multilingual outreach workers. Outreach staff are located in those areas of the State in which migrant workers are most heavily concentrated (Kokomo - West Central, Vincennes - South, and South Bend - North). Proteus staff continues to seek out and locate small pockets of workers in isolated areas of the State in order to increase the ability of MSFW to access core, intensive, and training services in WorkOne centers and WorkOne Express sites.

### (B) Review and Public Comment.

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

In accordance with 20 CFR Subpart B, 653.107, and as prescribed by Region V, the Monitor Advocate participated in the preparation of the agricultural plan and has been afforded the opportunity to approve and comment on the plan. Such review indicates that the plan has been prepared properly, omitting none of the prescribed requirements and properly describes the activities planned for providing services to both agricultural employers and migrant seasonal farmworkers.

WIA Section 167 NFJP grantee, Indiana Farm Bureau, Purdue Agriculture Extension, PathStone Corporation, Indiana Family & Social Services, Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, Indiana Dept. of Education, and Teaching & Mentoring Communities were solicited for information and suggestions in the formulation of this plan and/or provided the opportunity to comment. No comments were received.

### (C) Data Assessment.

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

A review of Indiana's data reports on performance shows that in the early part of this decade, Indiana consistently failed two of the five measures relative to equity, "Referred to Support Service" and "Career Guidance". Since the 9/30/2013 report, Indiana has hit 4 out of 5 equity measures in every quarter except for one report where we were 3 out of 5. Indiana has met the equity indicator for "Referred to Support Service" for the past 6 quarterly reports and we are pleased with that improvement since the beginning of 2010. The inclusion of the Proteus staff in our WorkOne offices has helped Indiana to focus on these areas.

Although Indiana is not a significant MSFW state and has no designated MSFW-specific local offices, labor exchange services continue to be enhanced, refined, and/or developed to meet the goal of providing MSFWs the same qualitative and quantitative service needs that are proportionate to those provided to other applicants. Also, visits and discussion with local office staff/customers revealed no presence of inequities in the delivery of services to farmworkers. Ongoing review of performance data and continued discussions with local office staff and customers will be used to improve services in order to meet MSFW goals.

#### (D) Assessment of progress

The plan must include an explanation of what was achieved based on the previous AOP, what was not achieved and an explanation as to why the State believes the goals were not achieved, and how the State intends to remedy the gaps of achievement in the coming year.

Progress goals from the previous AOP were met within acceptable limits: H-2A job orders were all handled in a timely manner; continuation of MOUs with the Indiana State Department of Health (for H-2A pre-occupancy housing inspections) and Proteus© (for Outreach services and statistical compilation) were successfully renewed and are ongoing.

Complete integration of Proteus staff training in local office system was not fully met, but will be addressed through a series of training sessions in the next 4-6 months as the state transitions from a contract with Proteus for outreach services to state staff providing that function. The SMA and Proteus© continue to cultivate positive relationships, as previously outlined, with farmworkers, farmworker advocacy groups, agricultural employers, and state agency staff.

#### (E) State Monitor Advocate

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

The state monitor advocate has reviewed and approved the AOP.

#### F. Wagner-Peyser Assurances

The State Plan must include assurances that:

1. The Wagner-Peyser Employment Service is co-located with One-Stop centers or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time. (sec 121(e)(3)); **Yes**
2. The State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111 (State agency staffing requirements) if the State has significant MSFW One-Stop centers; **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 services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and **Yes**
4. State agency merit-based public employees provide Wagner-Peyser Act-funded labor exchange activities in accordance with Department of Labor regulations. **Yes**

## Program-Specific Requirements for Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs

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

### A. Aligning of Content Standards

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

The Department of Workforce Development adopted the *College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education* (CCRS) for the Adult Education Program (<https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/CCRStandardsAdultEd.pdf>). Indiana has adopted the TASC test for the Indiana High School Equivalency Assessment, which is aligned with the national College and Career Readiness standards and the Indiana K-12 standards.

### B. Local Activities

Describe how the State will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA, fund each eligible provider to establish or operate programs that provide the adult education and literacy activities, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of local activities.

#### Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Section 203 of WIOA)

- Adult education;
- Literacy;
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities;
- Family literacy activities;
- English language acquisition activities;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- Workforce preparation activities; or
- Integrated education and training that—
  1. Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
  2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

PY 16 was a grant continuation year for Indiana Adult Education regional consortia and partner providers. Funding was allocated to each economic growth region using a formula allocation that took into account regional program performance, percentage of statewide enrollments, and regional unemployment rates. Each regional consortia subsequently allocated funds to eligible consortia partner providers based on a variety of performance based formulas.

Indiana funds all section 203 eligible adult education and literacy activities. These include:

- Adult education;
- Literacy;
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities;

- Family literacy activities;
- English language acquisition activities;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- Workforce preparation activities; or
- Integrated education and training.

Examples include:

- **Serving clients most in need of service** - One area of focus is increasing the number of low-skilled individuals' transition to post-secondary education and employment. DWD will fund all eligible providers to integrate workforce preparation activities into all adult education, literacy, and English language acquisition activities by the mandatory use of the Integrating Career Awareness curriculum. DWD made use of this tool a requirement in 2016. Additionally, use of Indiana Career Explorer a state funded career exploration assessment tool, is a recommended best practice for all programs. Both of these initiatives, integrated into the adult education class prepare students for transitions. Other targeted activities include strong collaboration with One-Stop agencies, increased collaboration with post-secondary institutions, integrating technology, employability skills, and financial literacy in classes and lessons. DWD is coordinating efforts between the K-12, post-secondary, One Stop and Adult Education systems to establish consistent employability skills benchmarks recognized and supported by Indiana employers. DWD is also exploring the potential of system wide career advisor training, which will focus on all WIOA Core Partners, as well as, others mentioned above.
- **Immigrant integration initiatives** - Due to growth in English Language Learner enrollments, DWD has been working on immigrant integration initiatives. Indiana was a participant in the ESL Pro Technical Assistance Program in 2016. Our focus was on ELL and Career Pathways. In 2016 DWD, using a newly established train the trainer model, will disseminate resources to the field on understanding barriers ELL face when entering Career Pathways and learning strategies for assisting ELL's as they transition through programming. This is being done with the goal of increasing ELL participation in the WorkINdiana occupational skill training program. WorkINdiana, a state funded program, is available to all students concurrently while enrolled in any WIOA Section 203 funded programming. Students can enter a career pathway and earn one of approximately 30 entry-level certifications. Eligible certifications are determined by each economic growth region and align with occupations in demand in the region. While transitioning in PY16, in PY 17, WIOA Section 243 providers will be required to offer, or partner with training providers to offer occupational skills training to program participants. DWD anticipates using WorkINdiana, as well as, additional WIOA Title I to fund the occupational training portion of these classes.
- **Workplace Education** - One promising practice DWD funds and plans to expand in PY 17 is the provision of Workplace Education. Several providers are offering workplace classes this year, and several more are in the development process. These employer adult education partnerships offer adult education and literacy activities that concurrently include workforce preparation activities so that low-skilled incumbent workers can improve their skills and more easily advance to more high-demand occupations with their current employers.

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

Adult Education grant applicants are required to describe in their funding proposals the activities that are planned to support the Family Literacy Activities purpose of the act and meet the needs of undereducated parents in their area. Specifically, applicants will be asked to discuss (1) outreach efforts for attracting parents with low literacy skills to the program; (2) program design accommodations particularly focused on the needs of parents (i.e., child care, class

times and locations, curriculum content, and materials); and (3) linkages established with schools and community partners to facilitate the integration of services for families. At the State Level, DWD is reaching out to providers of early childhood education and home visiting programs to share information and discuss potential partnerships or collaborations to address family literacy from a Two-Generation Approach.

Indiana's English language acquisition programs are designed for non-native speakers of American English whose communicative competence in the language is nonexistent or significantly limited. Furthermore, these programs are to target adults who intend to remain in the United States. English will be the primary medium of instruction, even when all students in a class speak a common language. The goal is not to produce students with perfect pronunciation or fluent English grammar, but rather to produce students whose ability to communicate in English (which includes reading, listening, comprehension and speaking) is proficient enough to function adequately in other educational settings, on the job, in the family, and/or in society.

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

The English language acquisition component of integrated English literacy and civics education activities is required to align to the College and Career Readiness content standards. In their application for funds, eligible providers are required to describe the curriculum and instructional materials to be used for the civics component of integrated English literacy (which includes reading, listening, comprehension and speaking) and civics education, which must, at a minimum, include instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation. DWD also requires that the civics educational component include basic instruction in U.S. history and workforce preparation activities and align to the Indiana Employability Skills Benchmark tool. Eligible local providers are required to describe in their application for funds how the curriculum and instructional materials that will be used are aligned to the Indiana Employability Skills tool.

All adult education, literacy, and English language acquisition activities are required to be based upon the DWD adopted College and Career Readiness standards for English language arts/literacy and mathematics. Eligible local providers are required to describe, in their application for funds, their plans for supporting the transition to and implementation of these standards. Local providers are required to address professional development and ongoing assistance for all instructors; development and acquisition of curriculum and instructional materials aligned to the standards; and monitoring and ongoing technical assistance.

All workplace adult education and literacy activities must be based on the College and Career Readiness content standards. All workforce preparation activities must be based on Indiana's Employability Skills Benchmark tool. Eligible providers are required to describe in their application for funds how the instructional materials to be used meet these requirements.

All integrated education and training activities must align the contextualized curriculum and materials they will use for the adult education component of the integrated education and training to the DWD adopted College and Career Readiness content standards. They must also align all workforce preparation activities to Indiana Employability Skills Benchmark tool. Finally, the occupational training component must be based on industry standards. Eligible providers are required to describe in their application for funds how the contextualized instructional materials they will use meet these requirements.

DWD will hold a competition for PY 17 funds in the winter of 16/17. For the initial year of the grant, funds will be allocated by county using a formula comprised of several metrics including the number of individuals without a HSE/HSD as well as an unemployment metric including discouraged and under-employed individuals into the UI rate. DWD will use the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA to fund eligible providers by incorporating each of the considerations into the narrative portion of the application. DWD is developing a point-based scoring rubric weighting each of the considerations. Applicants will be required to provide narrative detail to demonstrate how they will meet each consideration.

The remaining specifications of the competition will be determined by October 2016.

## Special Rule

Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

## C. Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individuals

Describe how the State will establish and operate programs under section 225 of WIOA for corrections education and education of other institutionalized individuals, including how it will fund, in accordance with the requirements of Title II, subtitle C, any of the following academic programs for:

Adult education and literacy activities;

- a. Special education, as determined by the eligible agency;
- b. Secondary school credit;
- c. Integrated education and training;
- d. Career pathways;
- e. Concurrent enrollment;
- f. Peer tutoring; and
- g. Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.
- h. Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.

Adult education providers approved under Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) requirements will continue to receive funding through June 30, 2017, as long as they adhere to State and federal grant expectations, as measured through annual applications, financial reports, and program performance reports. DWD will spend at least one percent but not more than 20 percent of its federal allocation for local activities on corrections education or education for other institutionalized individuals, as required by the Act.

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

Local activities for carrying out educational programs for criminal offenders and other institutionalized individuals are similar to those discussed in section (b) above. Correctional education funded by DWD has largely been provided by the Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC). Other providers have served individuals at county jails and individuals in and/or from various types of institutions other than correctional facilities through the adult education programs.

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

During grant year 2016-17, DWD will implement a new competitive application process for all federal AEFLA funding that will determine the eligible providers that will be awarded funds starting July 1, 2017. The review of proposals will include rating responses to the 13 considerations in Title II of WIOA. Additionally, for section 225 funds as part of the State agency rating criteria, specific consideration is given to eligible applicants that indicate priority of service to individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program. Applicants will be required to provide narrative detail to demonstrate how they will meet each consideration. All applicants must prove effectiveness when they apply, similar to the requirements of those proposing for AE/ELA funding.

**TIMELINE:** The following steps will be taken in conducting the AEFLA competition:

- October -November 2016: DWD will conduct regional meetings to inform potential applicants of upcoming grant opportunity.
- December 2016: DWD publishes three-year federal AEFLA Request for Proposals (RFP) aligned with the priorities in the approved State Unified Plan.
- January 2017: DWD provides technical assistance through a bidders conference.
- February 2017: Due date for AEFLA grant applications.
- March-April 2017: Reviewers review and score AEFLA grant applications.
- April 2017: DWD conducts review of budgets and other grant requirements and develops a rank-ordered slate based on applicant scores.
- April-May 2017: DWD announces AEFLA grant applicants that will receive funding.
- July 1, 2017: AEFLA grant providers begin grant cycle, programming, and funding.

## D. Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program

### 1. Describe how the State will establish and operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs under Section 243 of WIOA, for English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries.

Under WIA, the State has a history of providing English literacy and civics education, serving adult English language learners, including professionals with degrees and credentials from their native countries, with programming designed to develop competence in English, as well as employability, citizenship, and parenting knowledge and skills. The State will leverage these past successes to meet the new requirements under WIOA. The State's application for IELCE (i.e., section 243) funds will require applicants to describe how they plan to provide services that include instruction in literacy and English Language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, and are designed to:

Prepare adults who are English Language Learners (ELLs) for and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency; and integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

Applicants must show how services will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training IET activities. Eligible activities must include the following three components, Adult education and literacy activities, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

Workforce training can be provided by co-enrolling participants in integrated education and training that is provided within the local or regional workforce development area from sources funded outside IELCE funds or by using IELCE funds to support integrated education and training activities as described in subpart D.

The proposed activities and budget will be reviewed by the State to ensure that they meet all statutory requirements.

## 2. Describe how the State will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II, subtitle C, Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education services and how the funds will be used for those services.

DWD requires all eligible providers for sections 225, 231, and/or 243 to use the same application process. This ensures that all applications are evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria. The agency ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for grants or contracts. It also ensures that the same grant or contract announcement, application, and proposal process is used for all eligible providers through the grant management system.

During the initial period of the grant submission process, any eligible provider that contacts the agency with an interest in participating will be provided the information needed. The agency believes that these approaches meet the requirements specified in AEFLA and is satisfied that every effort is made to ensure direct and equitable access. The agency uses the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA to fund eligible providers by incorporating each of the considerations into the narrative portion of the application. The agency attaches a point-based scoring rubric weighting each of the considerations. Applicants must provide narrative detail to demonstrate how they will meet each consideration.

Section 243 funds will be awarded to eligible providers through the competitive application process outlined above. Funds will be used to support the operational expenses of local IELCE programs, including teacher salaries and benefits, classroom supplies, textbooks, and other items necessary to carry out instruction in English language acquisition, workforce preparation activities, and civics education.

## E. State Leadership

### 1. Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out the required State Leadership activities under section 223 of WIOA.

The Department of Workforce Development will use funds made available under section 222(a)(2) to enhance the quality of programming in the adult education system. Not more than 12.5 percent of the grant funds made available will be used to carry out State Leadership activities under section 223. Activities to be supported with federal leadership funds and extended using State funding include:

- The Department of Workforce Development will work collaboratively with other core programs to align and coordinate services for program participants. Leadership funds will be used to build the capacity of grantees to coordinate and align services by cross-training staff on intake/orientation, eligibility screening, and referral between partners, and other joint mechanisms developed through agency partnerships. In addition, the development of all components of career pathways will continue to be a priority with a focus on our WorkINDiana bridge programming and integrated education and training.
- DWD will continue to use funds to operate high quality professional development programs aimed at improving the instruction provided to adult learners. In PY16 DWD will post a Request for Proposals (RFP) Competition for professional development training design and delivery with services starting in January of 2017. The scope of work for this RFP will include:
  - Intensive needs evaluation at local and regional levels
  - Delivering Indiana's Adult Numeracy Instruction training
  - Locating/developing and delivering evidence-based reading instruction training for instructional staff
  - Locating/developing and delivery training train-the-trainer content for program administrators on Adult Learning Theory, Andragogy, Adult Learning Plans, & Teacher Induction/Onboarding
  - Refining and delivering Indiana's College and Career Readiness Standards Implementation training

- Refining and delivering Indiana’s ESL-4-ESL training focused on brain-based and problem-based learning for ELLs
- Refining the current model for Adult Education staff credentialing, and competencies, in partnership with local postsecondary institutions

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

- In PY16 and beyond, DWD will utilize regional Adult Education Coordinators (AECs) to assist in developing professional development plans for local programs, in coordinating with the professional development vendor to communicate these needs, in connecting local programs with statewide initiatives that fit program professional development plans, and in designing local interventions to support local implementation of statewide activities or to address needs not met through statewide professional development. Local program professional development plans will also be informed by the results of regular program monitoring and evaluation and the identification of proven and promising models and practices.
- Other professional development priorities include training on data reporting via our InTERS data management system, using data for improved classroom instruction, retention and other program improvement practices, training on Indiana Career Explorer, Indiana’s statewide tool for career exploration, and implementation of the Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom (ICA) Curriculum Guide through online training delivered via LINCS and World Education. We will continue to follow up with local programs on implementation of the ICA curriculum in classrooms through PY16 and beyond as needed. We will also continue to run cohorts of staff through LINCS online courses which match any staff development needs identified through professional development evaluations and surveys. These online courses are combined with additional implementation activities, webinars, and online discussion forums to support application of the content covered.
- Annual events such as our Summer Institute and Director Meeting will continue to be used to for the dissemination of information about models and promising practices. For more information, please visit <http://www.in.gov/dwd/2952.htm> for a historical listing of all professional development events.
- DWD employs Adult Education Coordinators (AECs) who are responsible for providing adult education programs with technical assistance on a variety of topics. AECs work with local program leadership to build strong links between program and data monitoring, local and statewide professional development, and the delivery of technical assistance. AEC’s also act as a liaison between DWD Central office staff, the local One Stop Centers, local Vocational Rehabilitation services and the local Adult Education providers, ensuring consistent communication of policies, procedures and quality assurance.
- At the State Level, emphasis continues to be on strengthening and role modeling the partnership between AE and Youth Services, with continued joint meetings. This past year, the Workforce Youth Team visited each region’s youth staff. Adult Education was represented at these meetings to assist facilitating discussions on how youth and AE providers can create strong local partnerships. It is noteworthy that in many regions a strong local partnership already occurs. Also at the State level, AE is participating in monthly joint meetings between all Core Partners.
- The Department of Workforce Development will provide grantee oversight through program monitoring and evaluation and improvement of activities. This includes data monitoring, site visits, the sharing of evidence-based and promising practices, and a program improvement process for low-performing grantees. This will take place through our program quality team which includes Central Office staff and regional adult education coordinators.

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

DWD will carry out the following State Leadership Activities:

- **The support of State or regional networks of literacy resource centers.** In the current model Literacy Programs can request funding from the AE Consortia. Some regions partner with local literacy groups by reciprocal referrals, co-enrollments and/or using literacy volunteers as part of the AE programming.
- **The development and implementation of technology applications, translation technology, or distance education, including professional development to support the use of instructional technology.** DWD continues to encourage a transition to online testing, promotes a hybrid delivery mode for distance education and allows the use of local funds for the other activities listed here.
- **Developing content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways.** Currently, DWD is using the following models/tools as examples of integrated education and training and career pathways:
  - Employability skills framework;
  - Indiana Career Explorer (ICE) and Indiana Career Connect (ICC) for career assessments (AE programs and many Local One Stops require participants to complete the 3 ICE assessment which assess career interests, career skills and career values).
  - As of January 2016, all AE programs will be required to incorporate an Integrated Career Awareness (ICA) curriculum.
  - Many ESL program sites are exploring a new online curriculum that integrates career awareness into the classroom. As this is the first year of implementation, data is not yet available.
  - One local region is assisting students in building a career focused portfolio that houses all important and relevant documents, such as their HSE, career assessment and college readiness testing results, resume, cover letters and college and career research.

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

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

Currently, DWD is using the following models/practices/tools as examples of programs and services to meet the needs of English language learners:

- Burlington English being used by many sites for ELLs and low level learners;
- AE sites partner with local literacy groups to co-enroll low level learners;
- Testing and learning accommodations are offered;
- Offer course leveling: low level learners are separated to get more targeted instruction

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

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

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

- Many regions have a specific referral form to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) when disabilities are identified
  - VR representative attends all consortia meetings to understand AE
  - VR and AE reciprocal training occurs at state and regional level
- Outreach to instructors, students, and employers.
  - **Employers:** Regional operators that serve on AE consortia represent regional employers. In January of 2016, AECs will take on coordinating one Regional Works Council, which is another regional voice for employers.
    - **Teachers:** DWD has a listserv specifically for instructors. Instructors can attend or watch the recorded statewide monthly webinars that address updates and important information for Indiana Adult Education, as well as, local, regional and national resources. Professional Development opportunities are also discussed on the monthly webinars. When appropriate, the AECs may also reach out directly to instructors. Instructors also receive the bi-monthly WorkINdiana newsletter and are encouraged to submit topics for articles and student success stories.
    - **Students:** DWD is exploring a path to communicate directly to students. This may include getting feedback on the best way to market AE services across the state.
  - **Other activities of statewide significance that promote the purpose of this title.** DWD is engaging Community Based Organizations, who serve similar populations to better leverage resources. To date: DWD has made presentations to several Department of Child Services teams, Community Action programs, Immigrant Welcome and Support Centers, providers of Home Visiting and Early Childhood Education programs. At the State Level, DWD is reaching out to other State Agencies, such as Indiana State Department of Health, Indiana Department of Child Services and local providers of home visiting and early childhood education services to share information and discuss potential partnerships or collaborations to address family literacy from a Two-Generation Approach.

## F. Assessing Quality

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

Monitoring and evaluation of adult education providers is completed in multiple ways. Using information from the grant continuation submissions, a risk-based monitoring process designed by DWD Adult Education, data monitoring, information provided by regional Adult Education Coordinators (AECs), programs that need technical assistance are identified.

As to the risk-based monitoring tool, Program, Fiscal, Performance, and Data Management are weighed to determine a program's risk score. Once these programs are identified, they are asked for information in order to conduct an initial (Desk) review. Using information from the initial review and the risk assessment, the Adult Education team determines whether a program is in need of an onsite review. The onsite review is more thorough and can lead to the implementation of a corrective action plan. Additionally, program and performance data is monitored by AECs and discussed at monthly Consortia meetings.

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

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

As to how the quality of professional development programs will be assessed, DWD is developing a process to review and assess the quality of its professional development programs, including programs designed to improve instruction in the essential components of reading instruction, instruction related to the specific needs of adult learners, instruction provided by volunteers or paid personnel, and the dissemination of information about models and promising practices. DWD is in the process of procuring a new vendor for professional development services. A professional development assessment process will be developed and implemented along with the awarding of a new vendor no later than January 2017.

## Certifications

States must provide written and signed certifications that

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. **Yes**
8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program. **Yes**

## Certification Regarding Lobbying

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

- (1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
- (2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.
- (3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all sub-awards at all tiers (including sub-contracts, sub-grants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all sub-recipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

### Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Applicant's Organization      **Indiana Department of Workforce Development**

Full Name of Authorized Representative:      **Steve Braun**

Title of Authorized Representative:      **Commissioner**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable) (<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>). If applicable, please print, sign, and email to [OCTAE\\_MAT@ed.gov](mailto:OCTAE_MAT@ed.gov)

### Assurances

The State Plan must include assurances that:

1. The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding supplement and not supplant provisions). **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. The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities; **Yes**
5. The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to (1) prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency and (2) integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program; and **Yes**
6. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program. **Yes**

## Program-Specific Requirements for Vocational Rehabilitation

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

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\* Sec. 102(b)(D)(iii) of WIOA

### a. Input of State Rehabilitation Council

All agencies, except for those that are independent consumer-controlled commissions, must describe the following:

1. **Input provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, including input and recommendations on the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, recommendations from the Council’s report, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other Council reports that may have been developed as part of the Council’s functions;**

### BENEFITS COUNSELING

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

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

## COLLABORATION WITH DWD AND WIOA PARTNERS

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

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

## TRANSITION

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

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

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

**VR Response:** VR continues to facilitate a Statewide Transition Workgroup and will address these recommendations with the group. VR has implemented modifications to the VR employment service model and Discovery services. One of the changes is increased access to work experiences by all VR consumers, including youth. Discussions are already underway between the VR Director and the DWD Youth Program Directors. Both parties are very interested in better collaboration on programs such as Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG).

## VR STAFF QUALIFICATIONS AND RETENTION

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

VR Counselor in Indiana is a barrier to obtaining and retaining qualified staff. The commission also suggested a pay differential for VR Counselors who do have a Master's degree and/or are a CRC.

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

## OTHER

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

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

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

## 2. The Designated State unit's response to the Council's input and recommendations; and

Please see the DSU's responses in section 1, following each specific are of input from the State Rehabilitation Council.

## 3. The designated State unit's explanations for rejecting any of the Council's input or recommendations.

N/A

## b. Request for Waiver of State-wideness

When requesting a waiver of the state-wideness requirement, the designated State unit must identify the types of services to be provided by the program on a non-statewide basis. The waiver request must also include written assurances that:

### 1. A local public agency will provide the non-Federal share of costs associated with the services to be provided in accordance with the waiver request;

This section is non-applicable in Indiana.

### 2. The designated State unit will approve each proposed service before it is put into effect; and

This section is non-applicable in Indiana.

### 3. All State plan requirements will apply

Requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan will apply to the services approved under the waiver.

This section is non-applicable in Indiana.

### **c. Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Development System.**

Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system with respect to:

#### **1. Federal, State, and local agencies and programs;**

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

Within VR, the area of Community and Business Engagement was added over one year ago to address the necessity of getting a consistent message of VR and the services it can provide to eligible applicants. Various partners who are in contact with current and potential consumers include schools, employers, other state agencies, and national partners. Since new leadership came to VR in late 2014, the emphasis continued to be “getting back to the basics” and educating existing partners about VR and what the program can do to assist individuals with disabilities find, retain and maintain employment. While the message is basic, the method of distribution to the potential consumers of our services will be state-of-the-art and with innovation in mind. Today’s youth are well versed with cutting edge technology such as social media and VR has developed two social media initiatives on Twitter and most recently with Facebook to benefit them in finding their way to healthier, self-sufficient and productive lives. The *Work4LifeIN* campaign was a Twitter campaign to increase the awareness for youth on the benefits of working. Photos were taken of working-age youth with signs stating, “I work for \_\_\_\_\_” and the individuals were asked to fill in who they worked for, or what gave them the motivation for going to work. It was a very successful campaign and followers on Twitter have reached 600 “followers” during the campaign and the number continues to grow. Authorization to use Facebook has just recently come through and the Business and Community Engagement team looks to continue to expand its reach through this social media platform. Such platforms continue to provide a vehicle to educate Hoosiers and entities about VR and other resources and related information.

Written cooperative agreements with appropriate entities are identified below.

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

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

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

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

Veterans Administration (VA): Employment can play a major role in the recovery of wounded and injured service members. To support these brave men and women in their return to civilian life, VR works with various local, state and federal entities concerning statewide veterans' services. VR has a collaborative working agreement that will assist veterans in receiving seamless information and referral services from both the state and federal VR service agencies. The Memorandum of Agreement with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services was developed to afford service-connected veterans with disabilities, opportunities to seek employment, career advancement, job mobility, family economic well-being, and greater financial security. VR Counselors in each respective agency are expected to work together to maximize the services they provide on behalf of veterans with disabilities and other eligible people. Joint activities may include staff in-service trainings focused on 'best-practices', routine reviews by VRCs of both agencies on service provision processes and employment outcomes and troubleshooting to streamline services focusing on continuous improvement.

Business & Community Engagement Staff served as workgroup members of the Paul Newman Foundation and Easter Seals Crossroads Military and Veterans Hiring Initiative. This community collaboration model evaluated, informed, organized, and advocated community solutions for military veterans and their families. The goal is to ultimately reduce the unemployment rate among Indianapolis area Central Indiana Veterans. Because of the relationships that were developed within the workgroup, continued collaboration when meeting employers continues. Frito Lay, WGS and various other veteran events are well attended with Business & Community Engagement and Veterans Administration partners.

Statewide outreach and networking initiatives including:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Small Business Administration (SBA): As consumers explore small business ventures, VR utilizes the resources available through local SBA facilities. SBA has specialized staff that frequently work with VR consumers on developing business plans. Consumers also participate in classes through SBA. There is a renewed and strengthened relationship with SCORE, the nation's largest network of free, expert business mentors. Discussions have begun on increasing and strengthening the resources available for VR counselors when it comes to providing support to consumers who would like to begin a small business or become self-employed.

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

Indiana Association of People Supporting Employment First (IN-APSE): BRS and IN-APSE share a common mission in that competitive, integrated employment should be the first and preferred option for all individuals with disabilities. BRS participates in IN-APSE events including the annual IN-APSE conference, and BRS staff regularly participate in planning, as well as, presenting at the conference. The IN-APSE statement on Employment First is based on several underlying principles including a presumption that all work-age adults and youth with disabilities can work in jobs fully integrated with the general workforce, earning minimum wage or higher; and that employees with disabilities, as with all other individuals, require assistance and support to ensure job success and should have access to adequate, long-term supports necessary to succeed in the workplace. These underlying principles are very much in line with BRS priorities, especially in light of WIOA and enhanced requirements to ensure that individuals receiving counseling, information and referral regarding alternatives to subminimum wage employment.

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

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

## **2. State programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998**

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

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

## **3. Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture**

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

## **4. Non-educational agencies serving out-of-school youth**

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

## 5. State use contracting programs

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

### d. Coordination with Education Officials

Describe:

#### 1. DSU's plans

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.

Indiana VR and key partners are working to build an infrastructure for purposeful collaboration for the purposes of transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of VR services, including pre-employment transition services. Ongoing Indiana initiatives and WIOA requirements are aligned for VR to coordinate with education officials and other key partners (e.g., Department of Workforce Development) to identify best practices for providing successful transition services to students.

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

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

VR works closely with the Indiana Institute of Disability and Community (IIDC) and Indiana University on several transition-related priorities. IIDC promotes partnerships between Indiana schools and various state agencies and other support organizations. IIDC's focus is on career development, secondary education, and transition to adult life. As

part of the need to establish an infrastructure and ensure sustainability of transition services, including pre-employment transition services, VR works with the existing Transition Cadres in Indiana. Established in 2011 and dedicated to improving secondary transition outcomes for students, a network of Transition Cadres throughout Indiana, funded by the Department of Education, is working collaboratively, both regionally and statewide. The efforts are focused on implementing promising practices and creating innovative strategies, tools, and resources for teachers and other transition professionals. VR has provided training on VR and its services to the Cadres and is attending the regularly scheduled Cadre meetings to continue the joint collaboration. For more information please see: <http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/pages/cadre-leaders>. Through IIDC and a study entitled *Effects of Embedded Employment Resources on the Employment Outcomes of Transition-age Youth*, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living, (Grant H133A130028), VR is working with IIDC through the five-year research project examining the effectiveness of a team approach to providing students with disabilities, those who have an IEP, with employment coaching and resources prior to leaving high school. These sites are referred to as the “Indiana School-to-Work Collaborative.” At the five designated sites across the state, career coaches are working with students and families, their Transition IEP teams, and a VR counselor to ensure students have internship opportunities before they leave school. The collaborative site features the following benefits for participating students: collaboration of schools, VR, and community rehabilitation providers, single point of contact to be a liaison between VR and school personnel, personal student profile, immersed internship, student empowerment training, benefits planning, and family training. The outcomes of this research will provide data, information, and best practices that will continue to shape transition services, including pre-employment transition services for Indiana. For more information, please see: <http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/pages/indiana-school-to-work-collaborative>.

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

## **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**

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

In coordination with IIDC, VR has developed VR-specific products for educators and students. Three VR fact sheets, entitled “Working with Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation” are now part of the Indiana State Individualized Education Program (IEP) system. The fact sheets provide automated resources for students, teachers, and families about VR at students’ Transition IEP meetings. Another important informational and educational tool that was created to improve outreach and education about VR is the “Working with Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation” Video. This video provides

a quick minute overview of VR in an entertaining manner in hopes to provide a unique mode of educating transition-aged students and families. (Video may be viewed at [www.vrs.in.gov](http://www.vrs.in.gov).)

### **B. Transition planning by personnel of the designated State agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and implementation of their individualized education programs**

Transition services are a cooperative effort. VR counselors are invited to assist with the planning related to transition services. The local school corporation takes the lead while the individual is a student, and when the student exits the school program, VR becomes the lead agency, when appropriate. The VR counselor is then the responsible party for the provision of transition services to eligible students. Please also see response to item (1) above for more details on transition planning.

### **C. Roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services**

The interagency agreement states that: the roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services are:

1. The student's IEP will define the services and responsible payer for each of the services. (34 CFR §300.301 (a) If VR is responsible for payment of a service, this will be defined on the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Services will be provided in accordance with the student's IEP, the requirements of 511 IAC Article 7, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Rules at 460 IAC 14-1 and policies.
2. Each agency will maximize coordination in the use of public funds.

### **D. Procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need Transition Services**

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

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

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

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

### **e. Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations**

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(3)). Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.

VR purchases an array of services from a variety of vendors and community rehabilitation providers. Community Rehabilitation Providers specifically provide discovery, employment services, vocational evaluation, job shadow, placement, and supported employment services. VR promotes consumer informed choice in the provision of services. There are a total of 87 agencies with Provider Agreements for providing employment services in Indiana. The 87 providers include Community Rehabilitation Programs and Community Mental Health Centers.

Purchased employment services follow a new Employment Service Model that is based on an outcome-based payment model with hourly rates for Discovery activities and Supported Employment services, as well as other specialized services. The new Employment Services Model was implemented July 1, 2015 and was designed to be more consumer-centric by allowing for more flexibility and individualization in meeting the needs of all consumers, including those with the most significant disabilities. The new model address unintended consequences of the previous Results Based Funding model, which was not adequate in serving consumers with high support needs. The new model also increased availability of supports to consumers to achieve stabilization on the job, and increased consumer access to more intensive career exploration process through an enhanced menu of Discovery activities.

### **f. Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services**

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(4)). Describe the designated State agency's efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide supported employment services and extended employment services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

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

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

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

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

## Reimbursable Activities

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

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

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

## g. Coordination with Employers

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(5)). Describe how the designated State unit will work with employers to identify competitive, integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of

### 1. VR services

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

The Director of Business & Community Engagement focused time on identifying executive-level opportunities to educate about the VR Program. It is often stated that the number one reason for businesses developing diversity hiring initiatives is because of executive level support. Within the state, agencies were introduced to the VR program. A sample of state agencies receiving educational outreach is as follows: Department of Workforce Development, Indiana Civil Rights Commission, Department of Child Services and their service providers, the Native American Affairs Commission, Commission on the Social Status of Black Males, Department of Correction, Department of Education, Department of Veterans Affairs, Division of Aging, and Commission on Higher Education. The thought behind developing strong education about the VR program within state agencies is to begin laying the groundwork for potential work experiences that may eventually occur at these agencies. It is the hope that the State of Indiana, as an employer, will begin to explore ways to increase the number of people with disabilities being hired. As the Indiana

State Personnel explores this as an option, agencies are already being educated on the VR program and services. One recent example of a successful connection is with the Lieutenant Governor's office. The Lieutenant Governor is in charge of the coordination of the Indiana State Fair. This year, the office reached out to DWD and VR with an interest in hiring persons with disabilities, specifically youth to work the Indiana State Fair.

VR continues to work with employers to support their needs. The Business & Community Engagement team often calls upon and meets with human resources representatives of businesses who are hiring and explain that the Business & Community Engagement team is the employer's resource for disability hiring. Most recently, a panel presentation on "How to Engage People with Disabilities" was given at the AmeriCorps 2015 Fall Conference. The collaboration with the Indianapolis Mayor's Advisory Council on Disability has been extraordinary. The Council has given disability awareness trainings to internal new staff and at Business Leadership Network events. The team met with national employer partner Macy's and hopes to develop "lunch and learn" type events focused around Disability awareness and relevant topics.

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

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

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

## **2. Transition Services, including Pre-employment Transition Services, for students and youth with disabilities**

Please see section (1) above. All strategies regarding coordination with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities will include provision of Transition Services, including Pre-employment Transition Services, for students and youth with disabilities.

### **h. Interagency Cooperation**

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

## 1. The State Medicaid plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act

The Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services (DDRS) and Office of Medicaid Policy and Procedure (OMPP) maintain a written agreement to outline responsibilities in serving consumers. This MOU states that OMPP has financial responsibility for necessary medical services covered by Indiana's Medicaid Program for consumers who are eligible for both VR and Medicaid. VR has provided education and outreach regarding Indiana's Medicaid buy-in program (called M.E.D. Works) to increase access to competitive, integrated employment for individuals with disabilities receiving Medicaid. Through the VR-funded Benefits Information Network (BIN), VR consumers also receive information about M.E.D. Works and how this program can enable them to both work and maintain their needed Medicaid benefits. The BIN process also educates VR consumers to make overall informed choices about working, providing education not only about the impact on Medicaid, but also the impact on other federal and state benefits, and the use of federal and state work incentives to assist in achieving gainful employment.

## 2. The State agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities

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

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

## 3. The State agency responsible for providing mental health services

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

### i. Comprehensive System of Personnel Development; Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.10)). Describe the designated State agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professional and para-professional personnel for the designated State unit, including the following:

#### 1. Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

##### A. Qualified Personnel Needs.

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:

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

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

FFY15 ACTUAL (Applicants: 12,004 Eligible: 10,133)

FFY16 ESTIMATE (Applicants: 12,244; Eligible: 10,336)

FFY17 ESTIMATE (Applicants: 12,489; Eligible: 10,542)

FFY18 ESTIMATE (Applicants: 12,739; Eligible: 10,753)

FFY19 ESTIMATE (Applicants: 12,994; Eligible: 10,968)

FFY20 ESTIMATE (Applicants: 13,253 Eligible: 11,188)

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

Row	Job Title	Total positions	Current vacancies	Projected vacancies over the next 5 years
1	Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors	175	24	115
2	VR Area Supervisors	22	2	10
3	VR Region Managers	4	0	3
4	BRS Management/ Leadership Staff	6	1	1
5	VR Case Coordinators	60	7	12
6	VR Area Secretaries	19	5	20
7	Blind/VI/Deaf programs	8	0	1
8	BRS Central Office Staff	16	3	10

**ii. The number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category**

Please see response (i) above

**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 five-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.**

Please see response (i) above

**B. Personnel Development**

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:

**i. A list of the institutions of higher education in the State that are preparing VR professionals, by type of program;**

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

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

**ii. The number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program**

Please see response (i) above

**iii. The number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of these 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.**

Please see response (i) above

**2. Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel**

Describe the development and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated State unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

VR acknowledges a long-standing challenge with recruitment and retention of VR counselors who have met CSPD requirements in the past. While VR does regularly recruit new VR counselors as well as interns from Ball State, the single CORE Accredited Rehabilitation program in the state, the number of graduates from the Ball State Rehabilitation Program is small. Additional recruitment strategies are necessary to meet hiring needs. In 2014, VR successfully implemented a comprehensive restructuring of the field services staffing model to improve the quality of service provided to our consumers. The addition of a new VR Case Coordinator role helped to ensure that the VR Counselor role is focused primarily on rehabilitation counseling and guidance, and to a lesser extent on case management and administrative tasks, which assists to improve job satisfaction among VR Counselors, potentially leading to improved job retention. The newly developed case coordinator role also serves as a training ground for upcoming VR Counselors. Individuals entering VR as a case coordinator may find incentive to continue their education and promote into a VR Counselor role.

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

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

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

VR continues to offer counselors and support staff opportunities to participate in special agency projects outside of their regular work routines, which sends the message that leadership values and desires the input of field staff. In the coming year, VR will work to establish a more targeted focus on reaching out to local universities as a recruitment source for identifying qualified individuals with master's degrees in rehabilitation counseling or closely related areas. VR is also taking better advantage of offering financial incentives to staff through awarding of state spot bonuses in recognition of contributions to special projects, training, and other initiatives.

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

### 3. Personnel Standards

Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) and 34 CFR 361.18(c) to ensure that designated State unit professional and para-professional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

**A. Standards that are consistent with any national or State-approved or recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing VR services.**

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

**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.**

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

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

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

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

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

Other preferred experience includes:

- Vocational counseling skills, motivational interviewing skills, or related counseling skills
- Awareness of cultural diversity, medical and psychological aspects of disability, counseling theories, assessment tools, job development and placement, Rehabilitation Act, ADA, IDEA, Social Security, Medicaid, Medicare, other state/federal programs, DWD programs, rehabilitation technology, economic and labor market trends, community organizations, and financial aid
- Excellent oral and written communication skills, creativity, problem-solving, evaluation of services, and time management skills
- Ability to communicate with diverse populations, flexibility, handling multiple tasks, maintaining professional demeanor, and ability to empathize
- Ability to interpret psychological/medical evaluation reports and medical terminology
- Familiarity with Assistive Technology and how to access AT services

- Knowledge of local community and statewide resources preferred
- Knowledge of local and statewide job market preferred
- Willingness to obtain necessary continuing training/education for CRC maintenance, or if not a CRC willingness to work toward becoming eligible to sit for CRC examination

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

#### 4. Staff Development

Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section 101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of

##### A. System of staff development

A system of staff development for professionals and para-professionals 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

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

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

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

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

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

## B. Acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge

Procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.

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

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

## 5. Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs

Describe how the designated State unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.

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

## 6. Coordination of Personnel Development Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated State unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

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

## j. Statewide Assessment

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.11(a)).

### 1. Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, particularly the VR services needs of those with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services

#### Data Collection

While Indiana's formal comprehensive statewide needs assessment is conducted every three years, data is gathered on a continuous basis. It is a joint effort of the Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) and the Commission on Rehabilitation Services (CRS). The Commission provides on-going input, especially in the acquisition of satisfaction data. It also provides input into the development and content of the final report. Commission members have an opportunity to review and offer comments prior to the release of the triennial needs assessment. Indiana's 2017 comprehensive statewide needs-assessment reflects a synthesis of quantitative and qualitative data addressing the State's overall vocational rehabilitation needs. The data collection techniques varied as well. They included review of demographic data for Indiana, feedback from the Commission on Rehabilitation Services, input from providers, VR staff, Workforce Development staff, WIOA partners, advocates, and consumers.

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

#### Demographic/Economic Data

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

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

#### EMPLOYMENT

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

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

## EMPLOYMENT DEMAND IN INDIANA

Indiana's Department of Workforce Development has a list of Hoosier Hot 50 Jobs. The list's ranking is based on expected demand and wages in 2022 for the state of Indiana. It is anticipated that there will continue to be a need for employees over the next decade for each of the following, from most to least; registered nurses, K-12 teachers, truck drivers (heavy and tractor-trailer), sales representatives, (wholesale and manufacturing), general operations managers, licensed practical nurses, post-secondary educators, accountants/auditors, office managers, and electricians. Even though this list reflects needs through 2022, all 10 of these positions are listed as currently in demand.

## POVERTY

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

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

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

## SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME

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

Nationally, in December 2012, of the 8,262,877 individuals who received federally administered payments from the SSI program, 1,156,188 were eligible based on age, (65 or older), 67,725 were eligible based on blindness, and 7,038,964 were eligible based on disability. In Indiana, of the 124,998 individuals who received SSI, 873 were eligible based on blindness and 118,655 were eligible based on disability.

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

## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

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

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

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

## VETERANS WITH A SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY

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

In 2013, there were 412,317 Indiana civilian veterans, ages 18 years and over, living in the community; 129,291 of whom were individuals with disabilities—a prevalence rate of 31.4%. In that same year, the poverty rate of civilian veterans with disabilities in Indiana, ages 18 to 64 years, living in the community was 16.9%, while the poverty rate of individuals without disabilities, ages 18 to 64 years, living in the community was 6.7%—a poverty gap of 10.2%.

## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

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

## INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

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

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

## Commission on Rehabilitation Services Input

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

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

## Consumer Input

Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services surveyed 697 consumers who had their VR cases closed due to successful job placements, and 168 individuals whose cases were closed unsuccessfully. This survey was for the first six months of 2015. The table below compares the outcomes of this survey to the past two years.

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

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

## Current Service Levels

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

- In period FFY 2015, VR assisted 3,996 customers to become competitively employed working a combined 116,289 hours per week and earning a combined \$1,505,653.00 per week.
- This totals to \$77,121,371.43 annually for all successfully closed cases.
- This is an increase of \$38,542,383.57 in annual salary reported at application to that reported at closure, for all successfully closed cases.
- For competitively employed customers, this is an average increase of \$9,645.24 in annual salary reported at application to that reported at closure.
- VR was able to help 1,904 customers gain jobs so that their own earnings have become their primary source of support.
- In fiscal year 2015, VR achieved 4,103 successful closures and a rehabilitation rate of 58.59%.
- VR spent a total of \$42,914,783 in federal year 2015 for case services. The majority of these funds went to job placement and training services.

- In FFY 2015, 12,044 individuals applied for VR services, with 7,155 consumers completing Individualized Plans for Employment with VR. VR served 28,287 consumers in the year 2015.

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

### Populations Served by Primary Impairment Group

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

### Indiana Employment Outcomes and Federal Indicators

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

- In FFY 2015, Indiana reported 4,103 successful rehabilitations, which was lower than the 4,377 rehabilitations in 2014. This is below the Federal Indicator.
- The rehabilitation rate was 58.59% for FFY 2015, with 97.39% being competitively employed.
- The percentage of people with significant disabilities who were competitively employed was 83.40%.
- The ratio of average wage of individuals employed, as compared to all employed Hoosiers, was .59 in FFY 2015 well above the Federal Indicator of .52.
- Individuals placed by VR earned an average wage of \$12.06 an hour compared to all Hoosiers at \$20.11.
- Indiana did not meet the Federal Indicator of income being the largest source of support as compared to when starting the program. This indicator has a required ratio of 53. Indiana's ratio for this indicator was 47.65.
- The ratio of the service rate for minorities to the service rate for whites for FFY 2015 was .90 which is above the Federal Indicator of .80 (ratio).

### SURVEY RESULTS

Respondents: 460

School personnel 30%

Community Rehabilitation staff/Mental Health staff 18%

Vocational Rehabilitation staff 12%

Advocate/Case Manager 10%

Family member 8%

Consumer 4%

Rehabilitation Commission Member (4 responses) 1%

WorkOne staff (4 responses) 1%

(1) Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, particularly the VR services needs of those with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services.

*What are barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities?*

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

*What barriers exist in serving individuals through supported employment?*

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

## **(B) Who are minorities?**

*What minority groups are unserved or underserved?*

African American 31%

Amish 16%

Burmese 12%

Hispanic 10%

Haitian 7%

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

*What are the service gaps for minority groups?*

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

## **(C) Who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program?**

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

Mental illness 40%

Cognitive disabilities 22%

Autism 20%

Traumatic brain injuries 12%

Other: 20 of the 372 respondents indicated that all groups were underserved.

Deaf and hard of hearing also was listed frequently under “Other.”

*Who do you see as being unserved or underserved populations?*

Individuals residing in rural areas 48%

Individuals with most significant disabilities 42%

Veterans 10%

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

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

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

#### **(D) Who have been served through other components of the statewide workforce development system?**

*Please rate the current relationships between Vocational Rehabilitation Services and WorkOne offices [1].*

Great	9%
Good	62%
Poor	30%

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

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

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

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

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

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

The 222 individuals who responded to this question rated disability awareness and assistance with making necessary accommodations as being equally important services to provide to employers. Following close, was the need

to inform employers of incentives such as tax credits and how employment of individuals with disabilities benefits employers. The over-arching response was to make the process easier for employers.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[1] With rounding, the responses may not equal 100%.

## **B. Who are minorities?**

Please see section (A) above. Sections A-E are clearly marked.

## **C. Who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program?**

Please see section (A) above. Sections A-E are clearly marked.

## **D. Who have been served through other components of the statewide workforce development system?**

Please see section (A) above. Sections A-E are clearly marked.

## **E. Who are youth with disabilities and students with disabilities, including, as appropriate, their need for pre-employment transition services or other transition services?**

Please see section (A) above. Sections A-E are clearly marked.

## **2. Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State**

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

A workgroup was established to guide the development of the revised Employment Service Model. The workgroup is composed of BRS Leadership Staff, VR field staff, Community Rehabilitation Program, Community Mental Health Centers, INARF, and the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community (IIDC) at Indiana University. The workgroup continues to meet monthly to evaluate the revisions, and to obtain feedback on emerging best practices as well as additional areas of improvement. Some additional modifications to the Model have already been implemented in response to feedback from the workgroup and other stakeholders.

The new Employment Service Model is substantially different from the prior model. Services are more individualized, the menu of Discovery services has expanded, consumer access to supported employment has increased, expectations for service provision have increased, documentation requirements have been substantially modified, and funding has been shifted. Feedback from the workgroup has revealed that providers must consider needed changes to business practices such as staffing structure, staff training, billing mechanisms, etc. These changes are needed to improve Community Rehabilitation programs (CRPs) to better align with the new VR Employment Service Model, and to ensure quality service provisions to consumers. BRS is exploring the use of funding for the establishment, development, and specifically, improvement of CRPs in order to accomplish this necessary shift.

Introductory one-day training on Discovery was attended by 285 individuals. A more detailed, two-day training on the Discovery process was held statewide, with 268 individuals attending from over 74 community rehabilitation programs. Indiana currently has VR employment service agreements with 87 community rehabilitation programs across the state.

*What are your perceived needs to improve Community Employment Programs?*

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

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

### Community Rehabilitation Program Training Needs

In the fall of 2015, VR staff and staff of Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP) were surveyed as to their training needs. Surveys were received from 622 individuals - 60% were from CRP personnel and 28% from VR staff.

The top five General Employment needs were identified as:

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

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

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

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

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

The survey included specific questions regarding Transition Services and training needs. Top responses included:

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

Identified training needs for Job Site Training and Supports were:

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

Off-site support training needs included:

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

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

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

Additional identified transition needs and training include:

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

The survey also asked respondents to identify strategies for coordination with employers on transition services for students and youth with disabilities. Responses were as follows:

Work experiences at local business 54%

Disability Awareness Training 26%

Employers as mentors 23%

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

#### *Overall Comments or Suggestions That Have Not Been Covered*

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

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

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

#### **Conclusions**

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

Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) has made significant strides and impact in the last three years. The leadership has continued to obtain stakeholder input in identifying needed modifications to VR employment services. System revisions were rolled out in July 2015 and are designed to ensure that all VR consumers, including those with the most significant disabilities, have better access to the services and supports needed to prepare for, obtain, retain, and advance in competitive, integrated employment. The new system is more consumer focused, or *consumer-centric*, allows for more individualization of services and supports, and increases accountability of both VR and provider staff. These significant programmatic changes are moving a system from a one size fits all “conveyor belt” approach to one that is more focused on the individual and their needs. In order to ensure success of the new Employment Service Model, additional training is necessary for both provider and BRS staff, as well as identification of additional support and infrastructure changes with provider organizations to ensure capacity to service consumers under the new model and meet increased expectations.

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

**PAST AND PRESENT:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Through the newly created Business & Community Engagement role, there was an increased effort to provide outreach to Indiana's minority groups through agencies and organizations with which minorities have regular contact. For example, the Native American Indiana Affairs Commission, The Latino Institute, the Burmese American Association and the Haitian American Association, The Commission for the Social Status of Black Males and the Indiana

Civil Rights Commission are recent partners of engagement activities. The ratio of VR services provided to minorities has increased steadily over the past few years (ratio of services to minorities to whites was .90 in FFY15, compared to .82 in FFY12).

## **FUTURE**

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

**Transportation - the lack of access to transportation is a recurring theme and a significant barrier to all people with disabilities.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Continued provision of comprehensive training to stakeholders, especially those of Community Rehabilitation Providers, is needed and has been clearly communicated. Training specific to developing quality work experiences, working with transition-aged youth and providing PETs will continue. VR has entered into contractual agreements with training and technical assistance entities that will be providing a wide range of training to employment service providers. Training topics will include but are not limited to, development of natural supports, job readiness training techniques, and hands-on job coaching techniques. Further exploration is needed to determine how BRS can support providers in improving service provision under the new VR Employment Service Model through not only training, but also modifications to infrastructure, such as, changes in business practices and staffing models to build capacity. The improvement of community rehabilitation programs is essential in ensuring that quality employment services are appropriately carried out, and that opportunities to increase the quantity and quality of employment outcomes are maximized utilizing the new VR employment service model.

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

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

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## k. Annual Estimates

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.11(b)). Describe:

### 1. The number of individuals in the State who are eligible for services;

The current population in Indiana, based on 2011 U.S. Census Bureau estimates, is more than 6.5 million with approximately 62 percent of the population of working-age (18 through 64).

Of the working-age population, 8.9% have self-reported as diagnosed with a disability.

A total of 1.7% of this population is employed (VonSchrader, S., Lee, C. G. (2015). *Disability Statistics from the Current Population Survey (CPS)*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Employment and Disability Institute (EDI). Retrieved August 17, 2015 from [www.disabilitystatistics.org](http://www.disabilitystatistics.org)).

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

### 2. The number of eligible individuals who will receive services under:

#### A. The VR Program

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

Projected FFY17 Expenditures equal a maximum of \$75,955,000 (\$74,480,000 Title I including Federal grant and non-federal match, \$475,000 Title VI-B, \$1,000,000 SSA/VR Program Income). Of the projected total expenditures, \$53,168,500 is the maximum projected cost for case services, leaving \$22,786,500 projected for administrative costs.

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

Title VI B - \$475,000 (estimate)

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

Total cost of client services, if serving 20,034 individuals under an IPE, is anticipated to be \$53,168,500 (Title I 51,693,500 + Title VI-B 475,000 + Program Income 1,000,000).

FFY18 projections are expected to be very similar to FFY17 projections.

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

#### B. The Supported Employment Program

Please see response to section (2) (A) above.

### C. Each priority category, if under an order of selection

N/A - BRS does not operate under an order of selection

### 3. The number of individuals who are eligible for VR services, but are not receiving such services due to an order of selection

N/A - Indiana is not under an Order of Selection.

### 4. The cost of services for the number of individuals estimated to be eligible for services. If under an order of selection, identify the cost of services for each priority category

Please see response to section (2) (A) above.

## I. State Goals and Priorities

The designated State unit must:

### 1. Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed

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.

Goals and priorities were reviewed with the State Rehabilitation Council and modifications were made based on feedback from the SRC.

### 2. Identify the goals and priorities in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Priority 2.3:** Develop a targeted education campaign to elevate the importance and expectation of employment for individuals with disabilities. This includes information and education related to benefits planning and economic independence to families, students, and beneficiaries of Social Security Income or Social Security Disability Insurance. VR will partner with INSOURCE, a parent group for youth with disabilities, the Client Assistance Program, and Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security, on developing the campaign and disseminating information. Strategies for increased education and awareness will be developed during FFY 2016.

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

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

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

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

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

**3. Ensure that the goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following areas:**

See sections 3A, B, and C below.

**A. The most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates;**

Goals outlined in section (2) align with the comprehensive statewide assessment.

**B. The State's performance under the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA**

Goals outlined in section (2) align with performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA.

**C. Other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council and finding and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107.**

N/A

**m. Order of Selection**

Describe:

**1. Whether the designated State unit will implement an order of selection. If so, describe:****A. The order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided VR services.**

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

**B. The justification for the order.**

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

**C. The service and outcome goals.**

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

**D. The time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order**

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

**E. How individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities**

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

**2. If the designated State unit has elected to serve eligible individuals, regardless of any established order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment**

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

**n. Goals and Plans for Distribution of title VI Funds**

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

Indiana has established three goals for its SE program.

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

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

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

**Measure:** VR will invest in training for supported employment providers including classroom-based, web-based, and hands-on workshops that focus on job coaching and job readiness training techniques. Training will be initiated on or before October 2016 with at least one-third of providers (29) participating in one or more training events by January 2017. BRS will also examine strategies for improvement of community rehabilitation providers to ensure capacity to carry out increased expectations under the new model.

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

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

## 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

BRS will be collaborating with agencies that currently fund extended services, including the Bureau of Development Disability Services, (BDDS), and the Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA), and others as applicable, to identify extended services needs that are currently not being met through other funding sources. The BRS Director meets monthly with the BDDS Director and this is one of the ongoing topics discussed. BRS anticipates that VR funding for extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities will be available to consumers who require extended services to sustain competitive, integrated employment, however; are not eligible for funding through another agency. This will likely include individuals with traumatic brain injury, severe mental illness, developmental disabilities, and other impairments as applicable. Criteria for VR-funded extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities will be developed in partnership with other applicable state agencies and stakeholders. BRS anticipates finalizing criteria within 3-6 months of release of federal regulations. Based on this collaboration as well as the anticipated release of the federal regulations. BRS will develop a written policy or procedure for provision of extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities, for a period not to exceed 4 years.

### B. How the State will leverage other public and private funds to increase resources for extended services and expanded supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities

VR will purchase Supported Employment (SE) services for consumers with the most significant disabilities, (MSD), with the funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act. Consumers are able to access SE services through Community Rehabilitation Programs, (CRPs), which include Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs)

across the state. SE services, if appropriate for the individual's plan for employment, are provided through Title VI-B dollars. VR will continue to supplement funding of Supported Employment services to meet demand through Title I funds.

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

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

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

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

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

## **o. State's strategies**

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

### **1. The methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities**

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

- To develop a system that is responsive to all, including individuals with high support needs, as well as, consumers with minimal support needs
- To re-focus on Discovery, especially for individuals with minimal or no prior work experience

- To ensure that individuals with MSD have access to adequate Supported employment services which includes ongoing support services
- To ensure that individuals reach stabilization, or their highest level of independence, prior to VR case closure
- To retain a system that focuses on outcomes, but also recognizes quality and individualization and allows for flexibility
- To retain a system that is not difficult to administer
- To aim to improve the consumer experience

Key revisions included:

- Increased focus and re-emphasis on Discovery and Supports needed to achieve true stabilization
- Discovery activities are provided prior to milestone payments, funded per activity, and are no longer paid under a milestone. The menu of VR-funded Discovery activities is greatly enhanced.
- SE services, including ongoing support services, may be provided and funded outside of, and in addition to, milestone payments.
- Increased flexibility to allow for more individualization based on consumer needs
- Elimination of two separate-tiered milestone payments
- Development of three new milestones
  - Milestone 1 = **Job Development and Placement (1 week on the job)**
  - Milestone 2 = **Support and Short-term Retention (4 weeks on the job)**
  - Milestone 3 = **Retention (90 days AFTER stabilization)**
- Reduced financial incentive to quickly reach stabilization and closure by ensuring adequate supports are available, including up to 24 months of VR-funded SE services to ensure true stabilization.
- Changes to rates and expectations
- Increased VR counseling engagement in the employment services process

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

Furthermore, VR is increasing the provision of training to both VR staff and provider staff to improve the quality of services provided to VR consumers. VR has contracted with additional training entities to bring increased training to staff in FFY2016, including counseling and guidance training for VR counselors, and employment services training to provider staff. Training will be delivered through a variety of modalities including web-based, classroom-based, and hands-on workshops. BRS will also examine strategies for improvement of community rehabilitation providers to ensure capacity to carry out increased expectations under the new model.

## **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**

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

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

### **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.**

Outreach procedures that are currently being used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities, who are minorities, as well as, those who have been unserved or underserved begin with state agency level outreach, and trickle down to local field relationships with various partners. While no formal written agreements for identifying and serving individuals with disabilities, who are minorities, currently exist, VR has initiated inter-agency cooperation with the following programs in order to address underserved and unserved populations: Indiana Civil Rights Commission, the Native American Affairs Commission, the American Indian Center of Indiana, the Latino Institute, Commission on the Social Status of Black Males, Indiana Black Expo, the Haitian American Association, and the Burmese American Association. BRS' Director of Business and Community Engagement regularly conducts outreach to meet and, as needed, provide VR 101 training to these various groups. The Director of Business and Community Engagement then disburses information to appropriate VR field staff and serves as a liaison to obtain additional resources as needed. BRS also has several staff attend the Black Expo event, annually, to provide information to individuals with disabilities, or family members of individuals with disabilities. The Black Expo event is very well attended and is one of the city's largest non-sports affiliated events each year.

For consumers with the most significant disabilities, VR continues to collaborate with BDDS, DOE, local educational agencies, INARF, IPAS/CAP, and others to ensure opportunities are afforded to these individuals to achieve competitive, integrated employment. BRS maintains a written agreement with DOE. The BRS Director regularly attends and presents at quarterly INARF events. And, staff attend annual INARF and INAPSE conferences. VR Counselors are assigned as liaisons to each local educational agency, and BRS Leadership regularly meets with IPAS/CAP and BDDS. All of these partners are also included on workgroups and advisory boards, and are invited to present at training events and meetings, as appropriate. Additionally, VR field offices are co-located with BDDS field offices to improve local relationships, better service mutual consumers, and facilitate a cross-referral process.

### **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 post-secondary life, including the receipt of VR services, post-secondary education, employment, and pre-employment transition services**

One of the key VR employment service revisions is the increase of VR-funded Discovery activities. These activities were developed, in large part, with transition students in mind as many of the activities are pre-employment transition services, such as, work experience, situational assessments, job shadows, informational interviews, and others. Prior to these revisions, VR counselors often struggled to identify VR services that could be provided to transition-aged youth who were not quite ready to exit and enter the workforce or continue into post-secondary training. Many of those students require pre-employment transition services to identify and prepare for careers. These youth will have much better access to Discovery activities in the new VR Employment Service Model.

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

#### **5. If applicable, plans for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs within the State**

There are no immediate plans for establishing, developing or improving CRP programs within the state; however, this may become a viable strategy based on continued feedback on needed improvements to CRPs, to ensure capacity to serve VR consumers under the new employment service model, particularly those with the most significant disabilities. VR continues to explore innovative strategies to address needed transition initiatives and services for individuals with the most significant disabilities as identified in the triennial needs assessment.

#### **6. Strategies to improve the performance of the State with respect to the performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA**

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

#### **7. Strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce development system in assisting individuals with disabilities**

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

#### **8. How the agency's strategies will be used to:**

##### **A. Achieve goals and priorities by the State, consistent with the comprehensive needs assessment**

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

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

## B. Support innovation and expansion activities

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

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

## C. Overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State, VR Employment Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program

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

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

## p. Evaluation and Reports of Progress: VR and Supported Employment Goals

Describe:

- 1. An evaluation of the extent to which the VR program goals, described in the approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, for the most recently completed program year were achieved. The evaluation must:**

### A. Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals

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

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

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

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

**2015 OUTCOME:** Not achieved. There were 12,044 VR applicants in FFY15, a 7.6% decrease in applicants. Factors impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities were largely related to substantial staff shortages, as well as, a need for an increased number of VR counselors. Indiana VR experienced a larger than average turnover rate of

VR counselors in the last year due to retirements, resignations, and staff promotions. This has resulted in a longer timeframe for meeting with new referrals. It should be noted that referrals to VR have not decreased, in fact referrals have increased approximately 8% which indicates that outreach strategies have been effective. However; VR staff shortages have prevented VR from processing new referrals as expeditiously as needed. VR received approval in October 2015 to hire nine additional VR counselors, seven itinerant VR counselors, and seven VR case coordinators to help mitigate this and decrease the length of time it takes to process a new referral. VR is also working with FSSA/DDRS on strategies for staff retention.

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

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

**2015 OUTCOME:** Not achieved; 1463 individuals, with a primary impairment of cognitive impairment, achieved a successful VR outcome in FFY15, which is a decrease of 12%. The primary reason for the decrease is that there was a decrease in overall successful outcomes in FFY15 when compared to FFY13 due to an overall decrease in the number of consumers served. The number of successful outcomes dropped by 11.8% from FFY13 (4,652) to FFY15 (4,103). The number of consumers served in FFY13 was 28,889 compared to 26,632 in FFY15, reflecting a 7.8% decrease in consumers served. An additional factor that impeded achievement of this priority is the staff shortages mentioned above. Due to staff shortages, caseloads have also increased.

**Priority 3.** Identify two-four specific partners for collaboration and targeted outreach to populations who may benefit from VR services.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**2015 OUTCOME:** Achieved. A VR employment provider application was released in FFY15 resulting in the development of 87 provider agreements. This process better allows for VR to ensure appropriate accreditation requirements are met. Information collected through the application process has also enabled VR to develop a tool for VR counselors and consumers to quickly identify appropriate service providers in each geographic area across the state. Additionally, VR rolled out substantial changes to the VR Employment Service Model in July 2015, which increases provider accountability for providing individualized services and supports by strengthening the requirements about identification and changing the funding structure for services to reduce the financial incentive for quick stabilization and closure.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## B. Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities

See response to section (A) above.

## 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.

Supported Employment Goals:

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

**Measure:** Implement necessary system changes by July 2015.

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

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

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

**Outcome:** Achieved. The graduating SEARCH class of 2014 resulted in 66% of SEARCH interns obtaining competitive, integrated employment resulting in 54 individuals out of 81 total participants. There were 85 participants in the

2015 SEARCH class that just graduated in May 2015. As of September 2015, 32% or 38% of interns have obtained employment so far, with additional SEARCH graduates still actively seeking employment. The average wage for those 32 graduates is \$8.46/hour which is an increase from the average wage from the prior year of \$8.18/hour and the average weekly hours, of 27, worked remained the same as the prior year.

#### **B. Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.**

See response to section (A) above.

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

The new performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA are targeted to become effective July 2016. BRS will begin to collect the required data elements over the next several months.

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

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

### **q. Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services**

Include the following:

#### **1. The quality, scope, and extent of Supported Employment Services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.**

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

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

reach optimal independence. VR acknowledges that fading may not always occur in a completely linear process, and levels of SE support may ebb and flow depending on the needs of the consumer. However, a fading pattern should be evident prior to the identification that stabilization has occurred for a consumer needing SE services. More specifics regarding Supported Employment may be found in the Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services - Manual of Employment Services at [www.vrs.in.gov](http://www.vrs.in.gov).

- The scope of SE services may include, but are not limited to, the following: Preparation for employment, job development and placement services
- Intensive job coaching; on-site or off-site
- Gathering information regarding the people referred (e.g., through appropriate Discovery activities)
- Analyzing the information to determine opportunities for employment in the labor market geographically accessible to them
- Providing counseling or training to obtain and maintain the desired employment
- Identifying and/or developing job opportunities
- Providing on-site job analysis, consultation, and recommendations for worksite and job modifications when appropriate
- Maintaining an organized system of recording job openings and contacts
- Developing appropriate natural supports
- Providing feedback to people seeking employment

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

SE Funding Source	SE Services From Placement to Retention
Discovery	Discovery hourly services (i.e., job shadows, situational assessment, work experience, etc.) are provided to assess strengths, interests, talents, ideal work environments, etc. in order to identify an appropriate SE outcome.
Milestone 1: Job Development and Placement	Job development placement services are provided to assist individuals to obtain employment in line with the SE IPE.
Milestone 2: Support and Short-Term Retention	Supports are provided day one on the job through completion of four calendar weeks on the job.
SE Hourly Funding	Supports typically start after the fourth week on the job and are provided through achievement of stabilization. Fading (decreasing the amount of support as a consumer becomes more proficient in completing job duties) of support should occur during this period.
Milestone 3: Retention	Supports are provided from stabilization through the 90-day retention period.

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

## 2. The Timing of Transition to Extended Services

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

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

### Certifications

Name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate      **Bureau of Rehabilitation Services**  
 Name of designated State agency      **Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services**  
 Full Name of Authorized Representative:      **Theresa Koleszar**  
 Title of Authorized Representative:      **Director, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services**

### States must provide written and signed certifications that:

1. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, listed above is authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under Title 1 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA\*, and its supplement under Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.\*\*      **Yes**
2. As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of VR services, the designated State agency listed above agrees to operate and administer the State VR Services Program in accordance with the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations, policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of VR services and the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;      **Yes**
3. As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act for supported employment services, the designated State agency agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan\*, the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations, policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under 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;\*\*      **Yes**

4. The designated State agency and/or the designated State unit has the authority under State law to perform the functions of the State regarding the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement; **Yes**
5. The State legally may carry out each provision of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement; **Yes**
6. All provisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement are consistent with state law; **Yes**
7. The authorized representative listed above 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; **Yes**
8. The authorized representative listed above has the authority to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and the supplement for Supported Employment Services; **Yes**
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. **Yes**

## Footnotes

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### Certification 1 Footnotes

- \* Public Law 113-128.
- \*\* Unless otherwise stated, “Rehabilitation Act” means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA, signed into law on July 22, 2014.

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### Certification 2 Footnotes

- \* All references in this plan to “designated State agency” or to “the State agency” relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.
- \*\* No funds under Title 1 of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- \*\*\* Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76,77,79,81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3485; and the State VR Services Program regulations.

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### Certification 3 Footnotes

- \* No funds under Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- \*\* Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in \*\*\* under Certification 2 footnotes

## Additional Comments on the Certifications from the State

### Certification Regarding Lobbying – Vocational Rehabilitation

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements, the undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all sub-awards at all tiers, including sub-contracts, sub-grants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements, and that all sub-recipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, Title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

### Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that if any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, Title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Applicant's Organization      **Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services (DDRS)**

Full Name of Authorized Representative:      **Theresa Koleszar**

Title of Authorized Representative:      **Director, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable) (<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>). If applicable, please print, sign, and email to [MAT\\_OCTAE@ed.gov](mailto:MAT_OCTAE@ed.gov)

### Certification Regarding Lobbying – Supported Employment

Certification for contracts, grants, loans, and cooperative agreements the undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative

agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,” in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all sub-awards at all tiers, including sub-contracts, sub-grants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements, and that all sub-recipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, Title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

### Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that if any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,” in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, Title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Applicant’s Organization      **Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services (DDRS)**

Full Name of Authorized Representative:      **Theresa Koleszar**

Title of Authorized Representative:      **Director, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services**

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

### Assurances

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances: The State Plan must provide assurances that

#### 1. Public Comment on Policies and Procedures:

The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.

#### 2. Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement

The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102

of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.

### 3. Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:

- a. The establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- b. The establishment of either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act.

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable.

(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council

- c. Consultations regarding the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- d. The financial participation by the State, or if the State so elects, by the State and local agencies, to provide the amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of carrying out the VR program in accordance with section 101(a)(3).
- e. The local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.

The designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds **No**

- f. The shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act.

The designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs: **No**

- g. State wideness and waivers of state wideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act.

Is the designated State agency requesting or maintaining a waiver of state wideness for one or more services provided under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan? See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan. **No**

- h. The descriptions for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(B); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- i. All required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act .
- j. The requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- k. The compilation and submission to the Commissioner of statewide assessments, estimates, State goals and priorities, strategies, and progress reports, as appropriate, and as required by sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2), and 606(b)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- l. The reservation and use of a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of VR services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities.
- m. The submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act.

#### 4. Administration of the Provision of VR Services:

The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:

- a. Comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- b. Impose no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for VR services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State in accordance with section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act .
- c. Provide the full range of services listed in section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services in accordance with section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act?

Agency will provide the full range of services described above

- d. Determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- e. Comply with the requirements for the development of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- f. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- g. Provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- h. Comply with the requirements for the conduct of semi-annual or annual reviews, as appropriate, for individuals employed either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as required by section 101(a)(14) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- i. Meet the requirements in sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act if the State elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs
- j. With respect to students with disabilities, the State,
  - i. Has developed and will implement,
    - A. Strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments
    - B. Strategies to achieve the goals and priorities identified by the State, to improve and expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities on a statewide basis
  - 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:

- a. The designated State unit assures that it will include in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- b. The designated State agency assures that it will submit reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under Title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.

- c. The designated state unit will coordinate activities with any other State agency that is functioning as an employment network under the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency program under Section 1148 of the Social Security Act.

## 6. Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program:

- 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 % of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(G) and (H) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- b. The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the Individualized Plan for Employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act.

## 7. Provision of Supported Employment Services:

- a. The designated State agency assures that it will provide supported employment services as defined in section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- b. The designated State agency assures that:
  - i. The comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act
  - ii. An individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act, which is developed and updated with Title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act.

Additional Comments on the Assurances from the State

## VII. Program-Specific Requirements for Combined State Plan Partner Programs

States choosing to submit a Combined State Plan must provide information concerning the six core programs: The Adult Program, Dislocated Worker Program, Youth Program, Wagner-Peyser Act Program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Program. And also submit relevant information for any of the 11 partner programs it includes in its Combined State Plan. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program.\* If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the "common planning elements" in Sections II and III of that document, where specified, as well as, the program-specific requirements for that program (available on [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) for public comment). The requirements that a State must address for any of the partner programs it includes in its Combined State Plan are provided in this separate supplemental document. The

departments are not seeking comments on these program-specific requirements, which exist under separate OMB control numbers and do not represent requirements under WIOA. For further details on this overall collection, access the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> by selecting Docket ID number ETA-2015-0006.

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

## Appendix 1. Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Include the State's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability indicators based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA.

### Instructions: Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each State submitting a Unified or Combined Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The State is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education on state adjusted levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

**Table 1. Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)**

Program	PY 2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	72.00	72.00	72.00	72.00
Dislocated Workers	73.00	73.00	73.00	73.00
Youth	55.00	68.00	55.00	68.00
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	62.00	62.00	62.00	62.00
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 1

### Requested Revision(s)

Requested Revision - Enter missing performance goals.

**Table 2. Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)**

Program	PY 2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	72.00	72.00	72.00	72.00
Dislocated Workers	72.00	72.00	72.00	72.00
Youth	57.00	69.00	57.00	69.00
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	62.00	64.00	62.00	64.00
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 2

**Requested Revision(s)**

Requested Revision-Enter missing performance goals.

**Table 3. Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)**

Program	PY 2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	5,000.00	5,250.00	5,000.00	5,250.00
Dislocated Workers	5,800.00	5,800.00	5,800.00	5,800.00
Youth	2,100.00	2,100.00	2,100.00	2,100.00
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	4,500.00	4,600.00	4,500.00	4,600.00
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 3

**Requested Revision(s)**

Requested Revision-Enter missing performance goals.

**Table 4. Credential Attainment Rate**

Program	PY 2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	20.00	48.00	20.00	48.00
Dislocated Workers	21.00	46.00	21.00	46.00
Youth	25.00	58.00	25.00	58.00
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 4

**Requested Revision(s)**

Requested Revision-Enter missing performance goals.

**Table 5. Measureable Skill Gains**

Program	PY 2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Dislocated Workers	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Adult Education	49.00	49.00	50.00	50.00
Wagner-Peyser	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 5

**Requested Revision(s)**

Requested Revision-Enter missing performance goals.

**Table 6. Effectiveness in Serving Employers**

Program	PY 2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Dislocated Workers	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 6

**Table 7. Combined Federal Partner Measures**

Measure	PY 2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level

User remarks on Table 7

## Appendix 2. Other State Attachments (Optional)